View on Work-family Linkage
and Work-family Conflict Model

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Abstract

Separate pattern, mutual pattern and blending pattern are the relationship between work and family which can be explained by role theory, spillover theory, Compensation theory and Boundary theory. Work family conflict represents six dimension. Role conflict model, Gender differences model, work-family interface model give an explanation of causation and outcomes of work-family conflict.

Keywords: Work-family conflict, Work-family linkage, Model of work-family conflict

The issue of work and family interaction attracts a lot of attention in the academic field. More and more researchers devoted their energy into the exploration of the mystery of how people manage themselves to live in the work domain and family domain at the same time. Through the discovery of influence of work-family linkage, people may know to adjust themselves between the work life and family life. People can try to change their linkage patterns in order to reduce their work-family conflict.

1. Work-Family Linkage and Related Theory

Many researchers pay attention to work-family linkage from 1960s.Work and family become one of the important issues in domain of sociology, organize behavior, HR management.

There are four patterns in work-family linkage. Each one is related with its theory.

1.1 Separate spheres pattern ------roles theory

In sociology domain, sociologist think it is Industrial Revolution that lead work and family separate which roots from sex role difference. Role is defined as expected behaviors rooted from some social status. Sex role has psychology and social dimension. Moreno (1934) firstly studied role issue. Subsequently role theory grows as a compositive theory.

The separate spheres pattern sees family and work as distinctive systems, with the family as a domestic haven for women and work as a public arena for men (Zedeck 1992). Further, family and work should remain separate in order to function properly and the division of labor by sex should be maintained in order to avoid conflict. So work and family are separated, absoluted from each other and not effected mutually (Lambert, 1990).

In the separate spheres pattern, role segmentation comes from different expectations on men and women. Women are expected to be good wife and mother. Men are expected to work for family. Such social expectation is not changed much as society development.

In China, traditional culture ranks women to family which gives a much bigger influence on women. Not coming singly but in pairs, a research named "what is the important thing in life" in America shows that 75% of married men give an answer of "my work" and women "my family" contrarily.

Based on the role theory, the Separate spheres pattern treats work and family as independent domains. Involvement in the two spheres does not therefore affect each other. But at present, women are not only housewife but also businesswoman, politician etc. So this pattern is rarely used by social scientists. Additionally, this pattern assumes actors can separate the two spheres in terms of time, physical location, emotions, attitudes, and behavior .But this segmentation is not absolutely. Work and family are in another mutual pattern.

1.2 Mutual pattern-spillover theory and Compensation theory

From the 1970s, some researchers came to study the mutual effects between work and family (Kate-kahn, 1978).

Spillover theory recognizes that either system may have spillover effects on the other (Staines 1980). Excess work may have an effect on family (Belsky, Perry-Jenkins, Crouter, 1984a; Kelly,Voydanoff, 1985; Piotrkowsi,1979). Experiences gained from family domain may have effects on work (Belsky et al., 1985; Crouter, 1984b).

Simultaneous membership in the two systems often entails strain and overload for individuals, families, and work units. In general, the spillover effects pattern shifts attention from the effects of social institutions on each other to the effects of family members on each other, ignoring the social and political consequences of the context in which family and work are located. Spillover can be positive or negative.

Positive spillover refers to fact that satisfaction and achievement in one domain may bring along satisfaction and achievement in another domain.

Negative spillover refers to the fact that difficulties and depression in one domain may bring along the same emotion in another. Domain.

Compensation theory is the one most often contrasted with spillover (Zedeck, 1992). It hypothesizes that there is an inverse relationship between work and family such that work and non-work experiences tend to be antithetical. It further proposes that individuals make differential investments of themselves in the two settings (Champoux, 1978), so that what is provided by one makes up for what is missing in the other (Evans and Bartolome, 1984). Deprivations experienced in work are made up or compensated for in nonwork activities.

The theory of compensation views workers as actively seeking greater satisfaction from their work or family life as a result of being dissatisfied with each other (Lambert, 1990). It provides a plausible explanation of why some workers become more involved in their work when experience family problems (Lambert, 1990).Therefore, when people experience compensation from work, it represents that they feel more job satisfaction than family satisfaction. When compensation happens, one would expect high involvement on one sphere to be accompanied by low involvement in the other. In other words, when people try to compensate for a lack of satisfaction at home, they become more involved in their work and their work involvement will increase.

Generally speaking, unlike the separate sphere pattern, which denies the connection between family and work, mutual pattern recognizes work and family are mutual effect. But both spillover and compensation theories view the work-family linkage statically. The developmental approaches proposed the longitudinal analysis of work-family linkages in the life span of a person or a couple. The developmental approach therefore adopted a psychological/developmental framework to explore the dynamics of the relationship between individual, family and career developments in the life span of person/couple.Furthermore mutual pattern regards individuals behaviors as passive ones not initiative.

1.3 Integration pattern-Boundary Theory

Work and family linkage presents integration trend in the times if information. Boundary between work and family are more illegible because of IT.

Boundary theory was first brought forward by Sue Campbell Clark (2000) who believes there is a boundary between work and family. Mental boundary, time boundary, physiological boundary are the three forms. Many individuals, then, are border-crossers who make daily transitions between the domains of work and home. Boundary theory is widely used in work and family issues such as work at home, flexible time, etc (Desrochers,Sargent, 2002).Individuals try to find a suitable boundary between work and family.

Boundary is characterized by permeability, flexibility and blending. Permeability refers to the bound one role penetrates to another. For example, operator working in call center is not allowed to private phone. Flexibility refers to boundary tractility between roles. For example, telecommuting female also play a mother role. When permeability and flexibility both exit in two or more roles, blending happens.

Based on boundary theory, though it is difficult to change some sides of work and family, individuals can change the boundary between two domains to some extent (Clark, 2000; Desrochers & Sargent, 2002). It is indicated that individuals are reactive in work and family domain.

2. Definition of Work Family Conflict

Definition of work family conflict was formally brought forward by Greenhaus in 1980s.

Work-family conflict, as defined by Kahn, is a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressure from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role (Higgins, Duxbury, Irving, 1992). Kopelman and Greenhaus defined interrole conflict as the extent to which a person experiences pressures within one role that are incompatible

with the pressures that arise within another role.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) identified three types of antecedents or source of the work-family conflict, which are time-based conflict, stress-based conflict, and behavioral-based conflict.

Time based conflict can take two forms: (1) time pressures associated with membership in one role may make it physically impossible to comply with expectations arising from another role; (2) pressures also may produce a preoccupation with one role even when one is physically attempting to meet the demands of another role.

Strain-based Conflict exists when strain in one role affects one's performance in another role. The roles are incompatible in the sense that the strain created by one makes it difficult to comply with the demands of another.

Behavior-based conflict happens when the behavioral styles that one exhibit at work (impersonality, logic, power, authority) may be incompatible with behaviors desired by their children within the family domain.

Insert Figure 1 here

Early research treated work-family conflict primarily as a unidimensional construct, recent research (Frone,Russell,&Cooper,1992) suggests that it is reciprocal in nature, in that work can interfere with family (work-to-family conflict; WFC) and family can interfere with work (family-to-work conflict; FWC).WFC and FWC are generally considered distinct but related constructs. Research to date has primarily investigated how work interferes or conflicts with family.

Insert Table 1 here

3. Models of Work -Family Conflict

3.1 Role conflict model

Kopelman et al.(1983)provided a conflict model which proposed that work conflict and family conflict had a positive relationship with interrole conflict and the these three kinds of conflict individually had a negative relationship with job and family satisfaction; at last the job and life satisfaction were related to life satisfaction positively.

Insert Figure 2 here

In this model, work-family conflict is based on role conflict. This model views work-family conflict statically which regards work and family separately.

3.2 Sex Difference model

Higgins, Duxbury and Irving (1992)extended the previous model and developed a more extensive and complete one. They added two more antecedent variables, which are role involvement and role expectation. As to the consequence variables, they also substituted quality of work and family life for job and family satisfaction in order to eliminate the weakness–the lack of a significant relationship between work-family conflict and job and family satisfaction.

Higgins, Duxbury and Irving(1992)paid attention to sex difference in work-family conflict. Afterward many researchers study the sex effects to conflict. Addition of role involvement and role expectation makes it possible to view work-family conflict in the sight of sociology. Social judgment for men usually comes from work role. If men involve much in family, it will differ from social expectation which will lead to work-family conflict in a high degree. Social judgment for women usually comes from family role. If women involve much in work, it will differ from social expectation which will lead to work-family conflict in a high degree.

But this model still views work-family conflict statically. The roles of men and women are in a change which leads to new role expectation and so contents of work-family conflict for men and women are in a change accordingly.

Insert Figure 3 here

3.3 Double Direction model

Frone (1992) gave a Double Direction model considering the direction of work-family conflict in which of stressors variable and depression outcomes are added.

Insert Figure 4 here

Based on this model, job stressors and FWC are positive to job distress; job involvement is negative to job distress. Family stressors and WFV are positive to family distress; family involvement is negative to family distress. Job and family distress are positive to depression.

This model gives an way to think work-family conflict in a double direction which is important for future study.

4. Future study

Work - family linkage and model of work-family conflict are mentioned in this article. A lot of future studies such as the outcomes of work-family conflict, policies to balance work and family are needed in the issues of work and family conflict.

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Table 1. Multidimensional Measure of Work-Family Conflict

		Direction to work-family conflict	
		WFC	FWC
Origin of work and family conflict	Time	Time based WFC	Time based FWC
	Strain	Strain based WFC	Strain based FWC
	Behavior	Behavior based WFC	Behavior based FWC

Source: Carlson,D.S.,K.M.Kacmar,L.J.Williams. (2000). Construction and Initial Validation of a Multidimensional Measure of Work-Family Conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, (56):249—276.
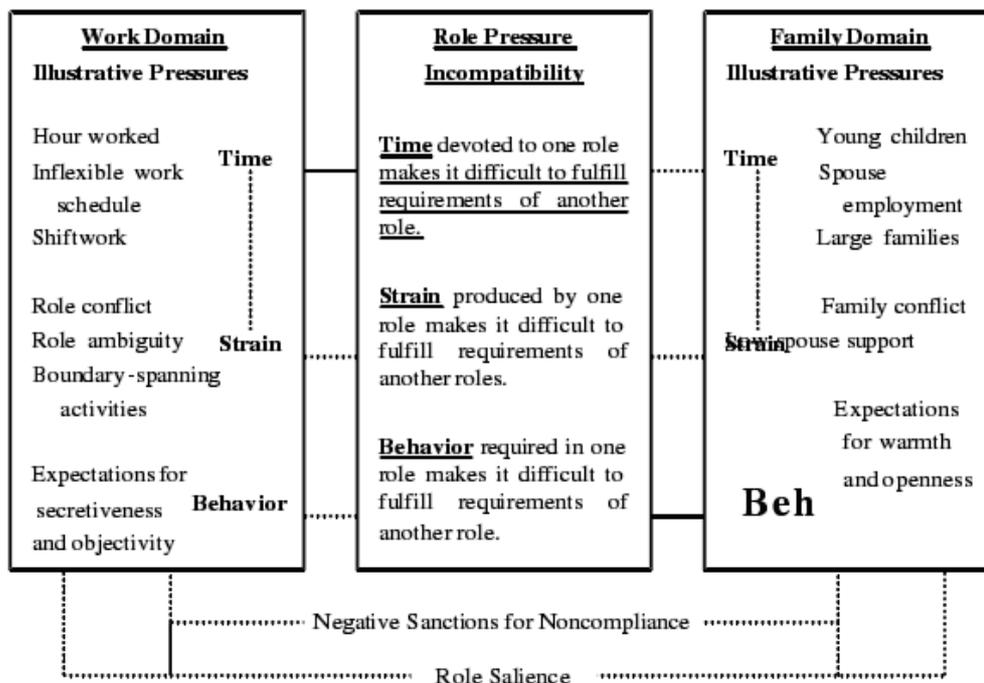

Figure 1   Work-family Role Pressure Incompatibility
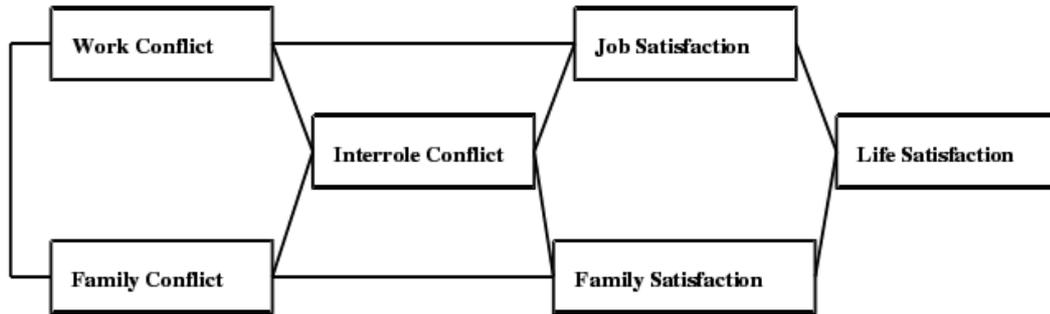
Greenhaus & Beutell (1985)

Figure2 Model of work-family conflict 1

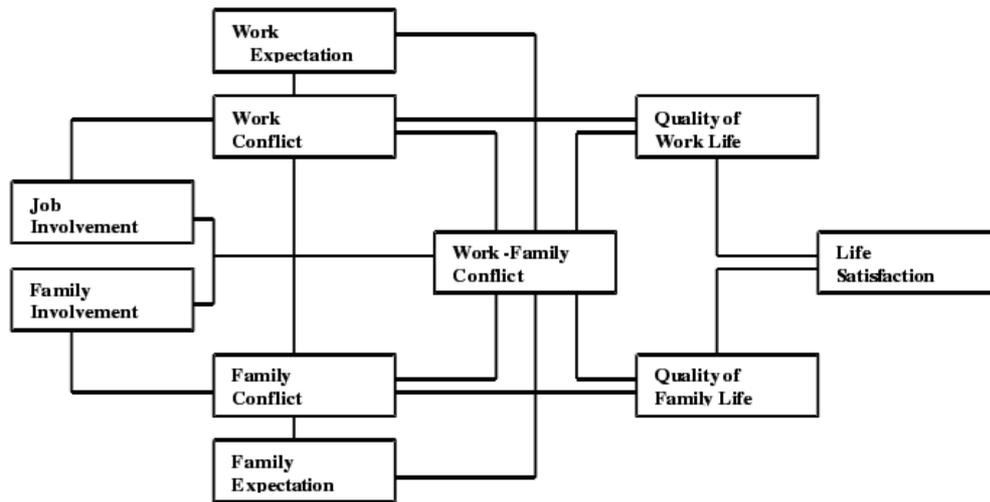Kopelman, R. E.,Greenhaus, J. H., & Connolly, T. F. (1983)

Figure 3 Model of work-family conflict 2
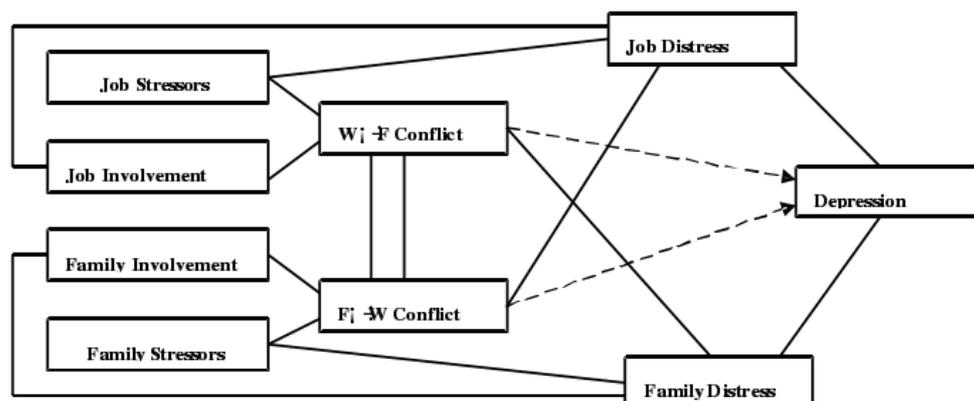
Higgins, C.A., & Duxbury, L.E. (1992)

Figure 4 Model of Work-family Conflict 3

Frone, M. R., Russell & Cooper, M. L. (1992)