

Does Psychological Contract on Work-family Benefits Improve Employee Commitment?

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Received: September 16, 2014 Accepted: February 11, 2015 Online Published: May 16, 2015

doi:10.5539/ass.v11n13p71

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n13p71>

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of work-family psychological contract fulfillment as a mechanism through which work-family factors affect employees' organizational commitment. The data for this study were collected from media organization employees in Malaysia using self-administered questionnaires. The results indicate that work-family psychological contract fulfillment correlates significantly with work-family conflict, work-family facilitation and organizational commitment. Work-family psychological contract fulfillment has a mediating effect on the relationships between the work-family factors (work-family facilitation and work-family conflict) and organizational commitment. The results underscore the important role of work-family psychological contract fulfillment in improving organizational commitment. The findings point to the importance of organizations investing in work-family benefits since this investment has the potential of improving organizational commitment of employees. Organizations should plan for interventions that could reduce work-family conflict and enhance work-family facilitation. In future, there is a need for researchers to give more attention to work-family benefits in psychological contract research.

Keywords: work-family conflict, work-family facilitation, psychological contract, commitment

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

With the increase in women joining the workforce leading to more couples having to cope with both work and family roles, organizations formulate work-family policies to help employees integrate work and family roles (Richmana, Civiana, Shannona, Hillb, & Brennan, 2008; Yanadoria & Katob, 2009; Mätzke, 2010). Work-family policy is a formal program that provides support such as dependent care, family health benefits, and flexible work schedules and arrangements that help employees integrate work and family responsibilities more successfully (Haar & Spell, 2004; Rothbard, Phillips, & Dumas, 2005). Work-family policies are also known to have an impact on employees' attitudes, including job commitment (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Kelly et al., 2008; Butts, Casper, & Yang, 2013).

Despite the importance of work-family policies in Malaysia, there is no legislative pressure enforced by the government to urge employers to provide work-family policies (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Malaysia, 2009). Organizations in Malaysia are still in the early stages of work-family policy development (Aminah & Zoharah, 2008), and the provision of work-family policy is still very new and not very common (Subramaniam & Silvaratnam, 2010). In Malaysia, the inadequate work-family policies results in the reliance on informal workplace family support. A study conducted on Malaysian employees has shown that informal workplace family support plays an important role to reduce negative work-related outcomes (Aminah & Zoharah, 2013). Similarly, the absence of a strong regard for legal contracts or formal contracts concerning work-family benefits suggests that employee/employer relationships on these issues may depend on unwritten agreements instead of formal policies.

Rousseau (1995) defined psychological contract as “individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (p. 9). According to this definition, where promises have been made and a consideration has been offered in exchange for it, the contract binds the parties to some set of reciprocal obligations. Obligations and expectations are considered part of the contract if they are based on perceived promises, and the psychological contract can include implicit promises that arise from the perception of patterns of past behaviors (Conway & Briner, 2005). For example, when employees contribute their time and energy to their organization, they believe that the organization has to reciprocate by supporting them based on their past experience.

Psychological contract is a useful tool for understanding employee and employer expectations of a job and the job environment including not only expectations of pay, tenure or promotion but also expectations of entitlement to work-family benefits (Smithson & Lewis, 2004). Coussey (2000) argued that work-life integration can be a crucial factor in ascertaining a positive psychological contract which is based on mutual trust. A noticeable number of studies have been conducted on psychological contract, but most of these studies do not focus on work-family element as the content of the contract (Conway & Briner, 2005). The concept of psychological contract is important in understanding employees’ expectations of their benefits and work arrangements related to work-family balance (Smithson & Lewis, 2004). This is because employees’ beliefs on the extent to which their organizations have fulfilled or failed to meet their obligations would have important implications for both parties. Undeniably, several studies have been conducted on psychological contract and work-family issues. For example, Taylor et al. (2009) examined psychological contract fairness and work-family related issues and the contract was studied as a global concept, not specific to work-family programs. Moreover, there has been little interest in fulfillment of contract and more interest in violation of contract (Smithson & Lewis, 2004).

Another gap in the literature is that very limited studies have examined psychological contract as a mediator in relationships between work-family interface and employee behavior. Previous studies have shown that psychological contract acts as a key mediating variable in understanding the link between career management and organizational commitment (Sturges, Conway, Guest, & Lieffooghe, 2005), and the relationships between employees’ perceptions of organizational support, leader member exchange, and employee behavior (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008). However, these studies have not focused on work-family issues in the exchange relationship with the exception of the study by Abdul Mutalib, Aminah, Zoharah, and Abu Daud (2012). Abdul Mutalib, Aminah, and Zoharah (2011) had proposed a model on the mediating role of work-family psychological contract in the relationships between family supportive organizational perceptions, family supportive supervisor, temporal flexibility, job autonomy and affective commitment, however, the model had not been tested.

The linkages between work-family factors and job and employee behavioral outcomes have been emphasized by researchers (Balmforth & Gardner, 2006; Karatepe & Kilic, 2009; Noraani, Aminah, Jegak, & Khairuddin, 2011). Previous studies have shown that work role is more likely to interfere with family role, than family with work role (Boyar, Maertz, & Pearson, 2005; Aminah & Zoharah, 2008), and hence organizations should consider their obligations toward reducing work interference with family, which is referred to in this study as work-family conflict. Employees may develop a psychological contract or the expectation that their employer will help them integrate work and family roles, or the belief that they are entitled to provisions such as work-family benefits and flexible work arrangements, in return for loyalty or commitment to the organization. Employees who are unable to successfully cope with work and family roles, because of perceptions of insufficient time and energy, have low levels of organizational commitment (Rothbard et al., 2005). Since employee’s organizational commitment is one of the factors contributing to the overall effectiveness and success of organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1996), organizations are increasingly seeking ways to support their employees in balancing work and family responsibilities, and in reducing the possible threat of work-family conflict that may lead to lower commitment (Allen, 2001; Poelmans, Chinchilla, & Cardona, 2003).

Based on the above argument and the existing gap in research on psychological contracts dealing with work-family issues, we focused on work-family psychological contract (WFPC) to understand employees’ expectations of employers’ support in managing the interface of work and family roles. This study examines WFPC fulfillment rather than breach or violation of the contract, since research into the fulfillment of the contract has been neglected. In addition, previous studies on psychological contracts have focused more on traditional contents, such as job, pay, promotion, and training (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005; Truong & Quang, 2007; Anvari, Salmiah, & Salbiah, 2010; Kim & Choi, 2010), while studies on psychological contracts focusing on work-family issues are very limited (Smithson & Lewis, 2004; Conway & Briner, 2005). Sturges et al., 2005 suggested that a psychological contract is an important mediating variable in understanding employee and

employer relationships. Hence, we tested a mediation model to examine the role of WFPC fulfillment as a mediator in the relationships between work-family factors and organizational commitment.

1.2 Works-family Facilitation, Work-family Conflict and WFPC

Work-family facilitation has been defined by Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) as what occurs when one's role enhances one's ability to perform the expectations and behaviors of another role. Taylor et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between work-family facilitation and the perception of psychological contract fairness among Hispanic business professionals in the United States. The results indicated that employees reporting high facilitation in the direction of work-to-family were more likely to report that the psychological contract was fair. Similarly, Frone (2002) found that employees who experienced high work-family facilitation had favorable perceptions of psychological contract fairness. Since both fairness and fulfillment refer to the favorable state of the psychological contract (Guest, 2004), it can therefore be expected that the experience of work-family facilitation could result in favorable perceptions of contract fulfillment.

Part of employees' expectations that constitute the psychological contract may involve working hours and workload, and the anticipated returns that are associated with these stipulations. If the organization fulfills its promises in helping employees manage work and family roles, then work-family conflict can be reduced. Therefore, organizations should elect to take a proactive approach by providing work-family support in an effort to overcome work-family conflict. A study by Taylor et al. (2009) found that an employee who experienced low work-family conflict had favorable perceptions of psychological contract. It must be acknowledged that the contract was studied in terms of fairness. Based on the same premise that both fairness and fulfillment refer to the favorable state of the psychological contract (Guest, 2004), it can be argued that there is a potential link between work-family facilitation, work-family conflict and psychological contract fulfillment and therefore, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested.

H1a: There is a positive relationship between work-family facilitation and WFPC fulfillment.

H1b: There is a negative relationship between work-family conflict and WFPC fulfillment.

1.3 Work-family Facilitation, Work-family Conflict and Organizational Commitment

When employees feel that the work environment provided by their organization generates greater resources for employees' work-family facilitation (Voydanoff, 2004; Van Steenbergen, Ellemers, & Mooijaart, 2007), they are more committed to their organization. For example, employees may find that income from work enables them to make purchases that meet their family's needs, and hence, their attachment to or identification with the organization increases. Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan (2005) found that work-family facilitation enhanced Indian employees' organizational commitment. The association between work-family facilitation and organizational commitment has been demonstrated among New Zealand employees (Balmforth & Gardner, 2006). Karatepe and Kilic (2009) investigated the effects of work-family facilitation on organizational commitment among hotel employees in Northern Cyprus and found that work-family facilitation enhanced employees' organizational commitment.

When work interferes with the family domain, it decreases employees' emotional reaction towards the organization. Empirical findings have shown that work-family conflict reduces employees' organizational commitment (Rothbard et al., 2005; Karatepe & Magaji, 2008). Ali and Baloch (2009) investigated the impact of work-family conflict on organizational commitment among employees in national pharmaceutical companies in Pakistan. They found a negative association between conflict and commitment. Similar findings were reported by Akintayo (2010) who investigated the impact of work-family conflict on organizational commitment among industrial workers in Nigeria. Given these results, work-family facilitation and work-family conflict could predict organizational commitment among employees and therefore, we tested the following hypotheses.

H2a: There is a positive relationship between work-family facilitation and organizational commitment.

H2b: There is a negative relationship between work-family conflict and organizational commitment.

1.4 WFPC and Organizational Commitment

Studies have shown that the employees' perceptions of met expectations could lead to employees being more obligated as well as loyal to their organizations. In a study among employees of a new-media company in the United Kingdom by Sturges et al. (2005), psychological contract fulfillment increased employees' organizational commitment. Similar results were obtained by Ali, Haq, Ramay, and Azeem (2010) in their study on employees of four private sector organizations in Pakistan, where fulfillment of the psychological contract contributed to increased organizational commitment. Although there is no specific research on WFPC fulfillment and

organizational commitment, based on the above findings, it is possible that the perception that their expectations have been fulfilled in terms of work-family benefits, may have an impact on employees' commitment. Hence, we tested the following hypothesis.

H3: There is a positive relationship between WFPC fulfillment and organizational commitment.

2. Mediation Model

The mediation model is developed using the psychological contract theory which is grounded in social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) which is reciprocity-based (Gouldner, 1960). When an employee believes that a promise has been made and a consideration has been offered in exchange for it, the parties involved are bound by a set of reciprocal obligations (Rousseau, 1989). An individual feels obligated to reciprocate when the individual personally benefits from another's actions (Lambert, 2000). In line with the psychological contract theory, employees' experiences of low work-family conflict and high work-family facilitation may lead to perceptions that the organization cares for both their work and family roles, and hence, employees may develop perceptions or beliefs that the organization should help them in integrating work and family responsibilities. In such a situation, an exchange of commitments can take place, with the employer committed to fulfill organizational obligations to help employees integrate work and family roles, resulting in employees being loyal or committed to the organization. It is likely then, that an employee who experiences low work-family conflict and high work-family facilitation would have favorable perceptions of WFPC fulfillment, which, in turn, would lead to greater loyalty to the organization.

Based on previous literature, there are some indications that WFPC fulfillment could possibly have a positive effect on organizational commitment (Sturges et al., 2005; Ali et al., 2010), and work-family factors have been linked to both WFPC and organizational commitment (Aryee et al., 2005; Balmforth & Gardner, 2006; Karatepe & Kilic, 2009). Hence, it is possible that the link between work-family factors and organizational commitment may not be a direct one but operates through WFPC, and the following hypotheses were proposed and tested.

H4a: WFPC fulfillment mediates the relationship between work-family facilitation and affective organizational commitment.

H4b: WFPC fulfillment mediates the relationship between work-family conflict and affective organizational commitment.

Based on previous research findings and the psychological contract theory, a research model was developed to investigate WFPC fulfillment as a mediating variable in the relationships between work-family interface factors and organizational commitment. In this model, we propose that work-family facilitation and work-family conflict are linked to organizational commitment via fulfillment of the psychological contract. The relationships between the variables proposed in the hypotheses are shown in Figure 1.

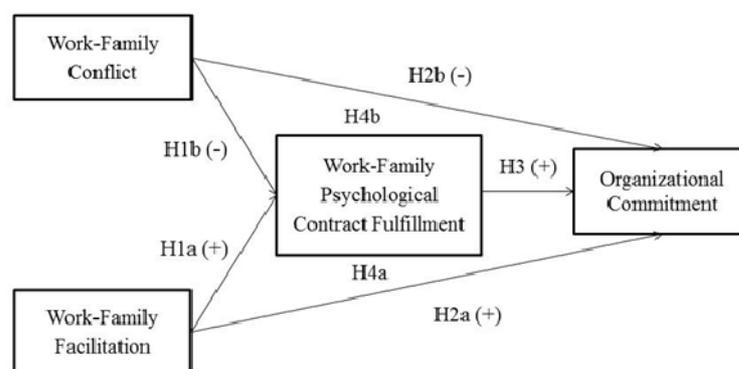


Figure 1. Research model

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample

The study sample consisted of employees from 15 private media organizations in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Media organizations were chosen for this study because five of the top 10 most stressful jobs are media related where employees experience the highest work pressure (CareerCast.com, 2011). Among the reasons that many

employees experience stress is unhappiness with how little their companies are doing to help them achieve work-life balance. A large body of research also shows that employees who experience job stress have difficulties in handling work and family roles (Lu et al., 2010; Jianwei & Yuxin, 2011; Schieman & Glavin, 2011) and have low levels of organizational commitment (Jaramill, Mulki, & Boles, 2011; Judeh, 2011).

We gathered data from 307 employees, a sample size adequate for conducting analyses using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (Hoe, 2008). Employees in this study were limited to executives and professionals of Malaysian media organizations since employees belonging to these job categories reported that they experienced a greater intensity of work-family conflict compared with those in other job categories (Schieman & Glavin, 2011). The employees comprised of 50.2% males and 49.8% females with an average age of 33.96 (SD = 8.15) and work experience of 7.90 years (SD = 7.96).

3.2 Measurement

3.2.1 Work-family Facilitation

Work-family facilitation was measured using a scale developed by Greenhaus and Powell (2006) that measures the degree to which an individual's engagement in one social system (work) contributes to growth in another social system (family). Response options ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items included "I have developed skills in my job that are useful at home," and "The self-confidence I have developed in my job makes me more effective in my family life." Greenhaus and Powell (2006) reported a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .78 for this scale.

3.2.2 Work-family Conflict

Work-family conflict was measured using four work-family conflict items from Kopelman et al. (1983). Employees were asked to indicate their agreement with statement items by rating on a scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Higher scores indicate higher levels of work-family conflict. Sample items included "After work, I come home too tired to do some of the things I'd like to do," and "My work takes up time that I'd like to spend with family/friends." Judge, Ilies, and Scott (2006) reported a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .78 for this work-family conflict scale.

3.2.3 WFPC

The WFPC scale was developed based on a composite measure used by previous researchers (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005; Truong & Quang, 2007; Anvari et al., 2010; Kim & Choi, 2010). Employees were asked to check, from a list of work-family benefits, those benefits they believe their employer has promised to provide, and the extent to which their employer has fulfilled the promises. Examples of promises made by an organization included "flexible leave" and "flextime" (flexible start and end time), and response options ranged from "not fulfilled" (1) to "very well fulfilled" (5).

3.2.4 Organizational Commitment

The six-item scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) was used to measure organizational commitment. This scale measures affective organizational commitment which has been shown to be not only the strongest but also the most reliable predictor of preferred outcomes such as employee retention (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). The response options for this scale ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This scale measures the degree to which an employee feels a sense of loyalty to the organization. Sample items included "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this company," and "This company has a great deal of personal meaning to me." The measure has been found to have a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .89 (Muse, Harris, Giles, & Field, 2008).

4. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between variables, were computed. The SEM procedure, which integrates a measurement model and a structural model (Iacobucci, 2008) was used to assess direct, indirect, and mediated relationships among variables. Since, according to Hoe (2008), data from a sample size of 200-350 participants are sufficient for conducting SEM analysis, the data gathered from 307 participants in this study were deemed sufficient for such analysis.

5. Results

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and Cronbach alpha values of the variables in the model and correlation coefficients between the variables. The Cronbach alpha values for all scales were greater than the minimum requirement of .60 suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010), indicating that the reliabilities of the measuring scales are acceptable. The average variance explained (AVE) values which range

from .519 - .676 suggest that all the latent variables have high convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All the bivariate correlation coefficients are significant.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, correlation coefficients, and AVE

Variable	Mean	SD	α	WFC	WFF	WFPCF	OC
WFC	2.85	.847	.84	(.519)			
WFF	3.96	.569	.89	-.021	(.676)		
WFPCF	3.23	.814	.91	-.145*	.209**	(.622)	
OC	3.74	.739	.89	-.184**	.333**	.474**	(.663)

Note. **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05; α = Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient; AVE values are presented in parentheses; WFC = work-family conflict; WFF = work-family facilitation; WFPCF = work-family psychological contract fulfillment; OC = organizational commitment; AVE = average variance extracted

5.1 Measurement Model

5.1.1 Internal Consistency and Convergent Validity

The internal consistency or reliability of a construct with .7 or greater is considered acceptable as recommended by Nunnally (1978). All scales met this acceptable threshold, thus demonstrating adequate reliability. Cronbach α value were all acceptable. Convergent validity was evaluated using the average variance extracted (AVE) measure. AVE values of .5 or greater are considered acceptable (Barclay et al., 1995). The AVE values for all the constructs in this study were acceptable. Table 1 provides the convergent validity values.

5.1.2 Discriminant Validity

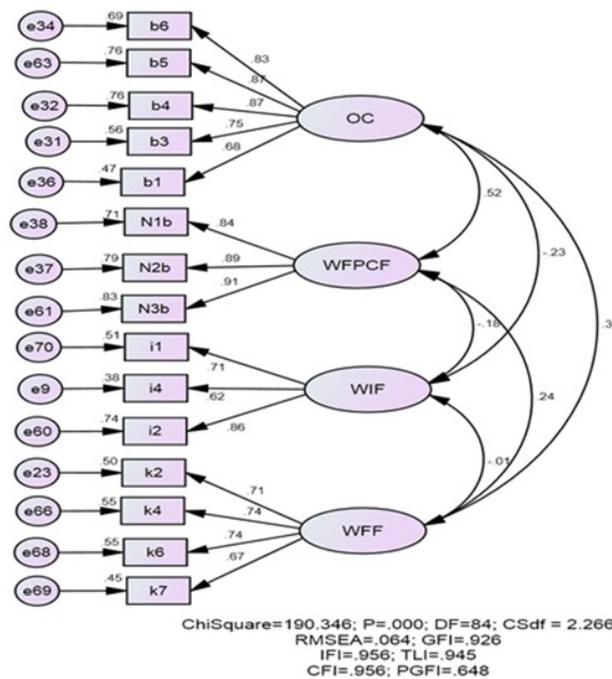


Figure 2. Measurement model

Discriminant validity is assessed through the average variance shared, between the latent variables and their indicators. Discriminant validity is supported when the AVE value for each of the constructs is greater than the variance shared with any other construct. AVE values of .5 or greater are considered acceptable (Barclay et al., 1995). In a measurement model, a variable that is highly correlated with another variable ($r \geq .90$) should be rejected (Byrne, 2009). The correlations between variables in this study, which ranged from -.01 to .52 (Figure 2)

suggest that the discriminant validities of the variables are established. Overall, based on the assessments of reliability and validity, the measures exhibit good convergent and discriminant validities.

A measurement model with a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) coefficient of less than .08 (Steiger, 1990), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), incremental fit index (IFI), Tucker-Lewis coefficient index (TLI) and comparative fit index (CFI) coefficients of .90 or higher (Byrne, 2001), and a parsimony goodness-of-fit (PGFI) coefficient of .50 or higher (Mulaik et al., 1989) show a satisfactory model fit. The fit indices for the measurement model in this study are satisfactory (Table 2).

Table 2. Indices for measurement model

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	PGFI
Measurement	190.346	84	2.266	.064	.926	.956	.945	.956	.648

5.1.3 Structural Model

The fit indices for the direct relationship model (model 1), the indirect model (model 2), and the partial mediation model (model 3) are shown in Table 3. Among the three models, the partial mediation model (model 3) with a significant chi-square value of 190.346 ($p = .000$), illustrated a better fit compared to model 1 and model 2. Researchers have suggested the chi/df index is a useful ratio for evaluating the model fit instead of using the chi-square alone (Marsh & Hau, 1996). An index value of less than 5, indicates a reasonable model fit, and a value close to 2 indicates a good fit. The chi/df value (2.27) for this measurement model was less than 5 and close to 2. Thus, the data fit the CFA model relatively well. The RMSEA value (.064), which is within the range of .01 to .08 (Kline, 2010), suggests a good model fit. The values for GFI (.926), IFI (.956), TLI (.945), CFI (.956) and PGFI (.648) are all greater than .90, which, according to Byrne (2009), indicate model fit.

Table 3. Goodness-of-fit indices

Model	χ^2/df	χ^2	RMSEA	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	PGFI
Model 1	3.11	270.594	.083	.901	.924	.908	.924	.653
Model 2	2.53	217.347	.071	.917	.946	.933	.945	.657
Model 3	2.27	190.346	.064	.926	.956	.945	.956	.648

Note. RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis coefficient index; CFI = comparative fit index; PGFI = parsimony goodness-of-fit

The regression coefficients of the mediation, indirect, and direct models are presented in Table 4. The path coefficients indicate that work-family facilitation and work-family conflict are significantly linked to WFPC fulfillment. These results provide support for Hypotheses 1a and 1b. The results show a significant path from work-family facilitation to organizational commitment and from work-family conflict to organizational commitment, in the direct model, thus supporting Hypotheses 2a and 2b. The path from WFPC fulfillment and organizational commitment is significant, and hence, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Table 4. Standardized regression coefficients

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Partial mediation model	Indirect model	Direct model
WFPCF	<--- WFC	-.178**	-.186**	
WFPCF	<--- WFF	.242***	.256***	
OC	<--- WFPCF	.422***	.523***	
OC	<--- WFF	.272***		.376***
OC	<--- WFC	-.151**		-.226***

Note. WFC = work-family conflict; WFF = work-family facilitation; WFPCF = work-family psychological contract fulfillment; OC = organizational commitment

In testing the mediation model, the results show that the regression coefficients for the direct influence of work-family facilitation on organizational commitment ($\beta = .272, p < .01$) and work-family conflict on organizational commitment ($\beta = -.151, p < .05$), shrink with the inclusion of WFPC fulfillment (the mediator) in the model. This suggests that WFPC fulfillment partially mediates the relationships between work-family conflict and work-family facilitation, and organizational commitment. Hence, the results support Hypotheses 4a and 4b.

The regression analysis of the direct relationship between work-family facilitation, work-family conflict and organizational commitment yielded an R^2 of .19. Including WFPC fulfillment in the model increased the value of R^2 to .36, resulting in an R^2 change of .17. WFPC accounted for an additional 17% of the variance in commitment, thus suggesting that WFPC fulfillment plays an important mediating role in the hypothesized model. The amount of variance explained by the endogenous variables was 9% for WFPC fulfillment and 36% for organizational commitment.

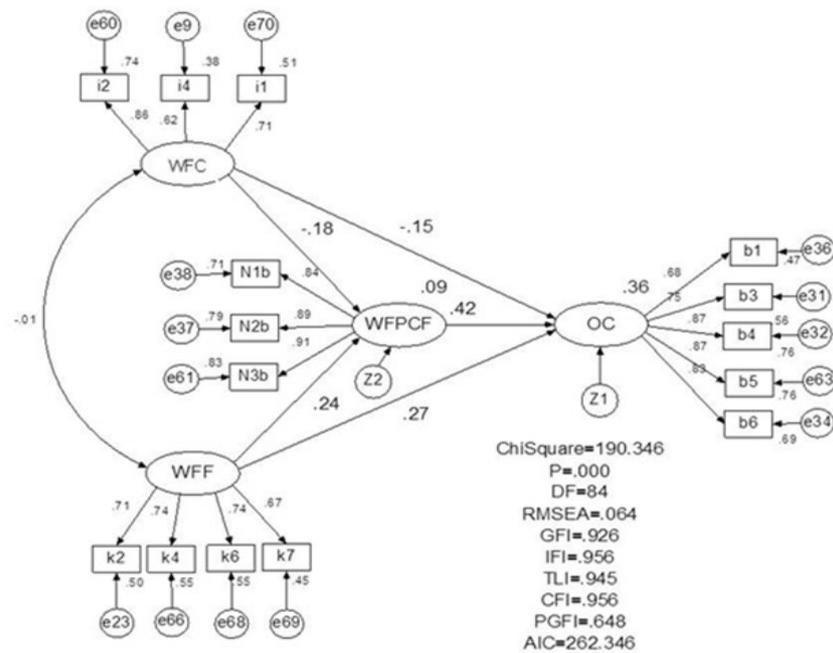


Figure 3. Estimated path coefficients of the partial mediation model

6. Discussion

The hypothesis suggesting that work-family conflict decreases WFPC fulfillment was confirmed by the results of this study. Similar findings were reported by Taylor et al. (2009), in which employees who experienced low work-family conflict were more likely to report positive perceptions of the psychological contract. WFPC fulfillment was found to be significantly and positively related to organizational commitment. The results indicate that employees increase their commitment towards their organizations when they believe that organizations have fulfilled their promises in helping employees manage their work and family responsibilities. The findings are consistent with those of Sturges et al. (2005). The results on the mediating effect of WFPC in the relationship between work-family conflict, work-family facilitation, and organizational commitment is in line with what has been suggested by the psychological contract theory. Based on this theory, it can be reasoned that employees' experiences of low conflict and high facilitation have generated perceptions that the organization is concerned about both their work and family roles, and hence, employees may develop perceptions that the organization should support them in managing work and family responsibilities. In such a situation, an exchange of commitments has taken place, with the employer committed to fulfill organizational obligations to help employees manage work and family roles, resulting in employees being loyal or committed to the organization. In other words, the experiences of reduced levels of work-family conflict and increased work-family facilitation generate positive beliefs and expectations on fulfilling work-family benefits and hence improve commitment to organizations.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on psychological contract theory and work-family

interface by combining studies in both areas since this is one of the few studies that has focused on fulfillment of psychological contract together with work-family benefits as the content of psychological contract, and work-family factors as antecedents of the contract fulfillment. The psychological contract theory has been shown to be a useful tool for understanding employee and employer expectations of a job and the job environment, including not only expectations of pay, tenure or promotion but also expectations of entitlement to work-family benefits and the motivation to reciprocate in the form of commitment when they consider the obligations are fulfilled by the employer. Additionally, this study contributes to employee behavior literature, namely organizational commitment whereby the commitment can be further understood by including WFPC fulfillment in organizational commitment models.

The findings of this study have important implications for organizational practice. In general, the findings would benefit employers in countries where the rate of women joining the workforce is fast increasing, resulting in more dual-career couples having to cope with both work and family roles, and where the issue of work-family interface becomes more critical. It will also benefit organizations where work-family policy development is still at its early stage, and the provision of work-family policy is not very common, and where a strong regard for legal or formal contracts concerning work-family benefits is absent. The influence of work-family conflict and work-family facilitation on perceptions of WFPC fulfillment underscores the essential role of WFPC fulfillment and points to the importance of organizations investing in work-family benefits since this investment has the potential of improving organizational commitment of employees. Organizations should plan for interventions that could reduce work-family conflict and enhance work-family facilitation by providing work-family support to help employees manage work and family responsibilities, as employees who are able to handle work-family conflict are more likely to be committed to their organizations than those who do not receive support, such as leave to attend to a sick child, childcare, family health care and flexible work arrangements. For example, a study on work-family conflict among Malaysian employees has shown that informal workplace family support (such as greater discretion in managing work, and granting approval to leave work earlier than usual to deal with urgent family matters) has the potential of reducing work-family conflict (Aminah & Zoharah, 2013). Work-family facilitation can be enhanced by providing autonomy to employees (Baral & Bhargava, 2008; Innstrand et al., 2010; Siu et al., 2010) since autonomy is laden with resources including time-management skills, initiative, and self-confidence (Voydanoff, 2004) which could be applied to family activities. Another initiative is to increase employee job involvement since this is linked to work-family facilitation (Aryee et al., 2005). Employees need to experience greater involvement in their jobs, since involvement in family roles benefit from involvement in work roles through development (e.g., skills, knowledge, behaviors), positive affect (e.g., moods, attitude), and capital resources (e.g., security, confidence) (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, 2006).

7. Limitations

A significant limitation of this study is that the sample consists of participants who belong to the executive and professional job categories in media organizations. Therefore, the findings from this sample may not be generalized to other job categories since job characteristics, which are of crucial importance when studying contract-related relationships (European Commission, 2004), may vary with types of professions. The testing of hypotheses among Malaysian employees limits the applicability and generalizability of our findings to employees situated within other contexts where greater adoption of work-family policy resides. Another limitation lies in differences in economic and cultural context where less favorable economic situation could represent a threat to the employer-employee exchange relationships (King, 2000), and culture plays a significant role in developing an individual's psychological contract (Thomas, Au, & Ravlin, 2003). The cross-sectional design of this study limits the ability to make conclusions on causal relationships since results confirming mediation do not serve as evidence for causation (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Hence, it is possible to obtain relationships contrary to the direction that was hypothesized.

8. Conclusion

To conclude, WFPC fulfillment serves as a potential mechanism through which work-family factors affect employees' organizational commitment. An employee may develop a positive psychological contract on how supportive their organization appears to be, especially when their organization is concerned about their needs in managing work and family responsibilities, which increases employees' organizational commitment. There is therefore a need to study a psychological contract that focuses on work-family issues as its content rather than only traditional contents, such as pay, promotion, and training.

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