

© 2020, Emerald Publishing Limited. This AAM is provided for your own personal use only. It may not be used for resale, reprinting, systematic distribution, emailing, or for any other commercial purpose without the permission of the publisher

Kengatharan, N. and Edwards, C. (2020), "The development and application of a scale to measure the extent and forms of work-family conflict in collectivist cultures", *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-04-2019-0199>

The development and application of a scale to measure the extent and forms of work-family conflict in collectivist cultures

Abstract

Purpose

The aim is to advance the conceptualisation and of work-family conflict (WFC) by developing and validating a scale that is relevant in a collectivist culture setting.

Design/methodology/approach

First, qualitative interviews with 15 bank employees were conducted to establish whether WFC was an issue, its meaning and form, and the relevance of the Carlson, Kacmar and Williams' (2000) scale. Second, drawing on role theory and work-family border theory an additional psychological dimension was developed, and the new scale tested with data from a self-report survey of bank employees ($n=569$). Third, the validity, reliability and measurement invariance of the scale were confirmed with data from a sample of secondary-school teachers ($n=223$).

Findings

The characteristics of collective societies pertinent to WFC were relevant to these middle-class employees, and they experience high levels of WFC. A model with a six-factor structure (time-based, strain-based and psychological-based work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict) represents the most theoretically and statistically sound measure of WFC for these samples.

Practical implications

WFC has many negative social and economic consequences. However, there is inadequate evidence on which to base human resource policies to address the issue in collective societies. This study developed and applied a more reliable measure to assess its extent and form to assist in the design of appropriate WFC management practice. It will be of interest to scholars researching and teaching international management, management consultants, policy makers and managers seeking to understand the problem of WFC in collective societies.

Originality/value

This is the first study to establish the validity of a psychological dimension of WFC in a collectivist culture. It confirms the relevance of the strain and time dimensions of the most commonly used multi-dimensional measure but found no evidence of behavioural WFC.

Keywords Psychological-based work-family conflict, Behaviour-based work-family conflict, Role theory, Work/family border theory, Work-family conflict, Cultural context

Introduction

Work-family conflict (WFC) is 'a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respects' (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985, p.77) and focuses on the problem employees have in balancing work and family life. WFC has many negative consequences for organisations: lower performance, recruitment and retention difficulties, and absenteeism, and for individuals: stress, poor wellbeing, and lower job and family satisfaction (Amstad *et al.*, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2010). Concern about these economic and social costs in advanced economies has stimulated