Evaluating the Social Support and Self-Esteem towards Work-Family Enrichment in achieving Life Satisfaction.

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Abstract. Most of the past researchers have focused on the negative consequences in managing work and family roles. Yet, little attention has been given to the potential psychological outcomes of participating in multiple roles such as enrichment. Thus, this study was to validate the hypothesized interrelationships among the predictors of work-family enrichment and life satisfaction among nurses of public hospitals in Malaysia. In addition, it was also examined the likely mediation effect of work-family enrichment on support and self-esteem-life satisfaction relationship. Data relating to the constructs were collected from 689 female married nurses from public hospitals in Malaysia and were subjected to a structural equation modeling analysis using AMOS 18 data-fitting program. The results established statistically substantial and significant path coefficients. Finally, the implications and recommendations of these finding were discussed.

Keywords: social support, self-esteem, work-family enrichment and satisfaction

1. Introduction

The work and the family have emerged as two important domains impinging on the life of a person. They are divisible into distinctive spheres and it cannot be separated [1]. Even in the past work and family roles are expected belong to different entities, now it needs to assume that they are interdependent. This is due to the reason that the changes occur in the lives of men and women in such a way. Firstly, both men and women are juggling work and family roles simultaneously. Secondly, the existence of dual-income families, single parents and a growing number of women in the workforce. Thirdly, the attitudes and values of men and women towards other aspects of life such as religion, leisure and the general quality of life [2]. With regards to this phenomenon, if a person has difficulty in striking this balance, he or she may potentially face several detrimental outcomes. Conversely, if a person successfully manages his or her multiple roles, these roles may enrich his or her life. For many organizations, helping employees to achieve a certain level of work-life balance could go far in increasing employee work satisfaction and hence the value of services delivered to customers. Furthermore, it will be a useful strategy for attracting and retaining capable employees. Therefore, the focus of this study was to validate the hypothesized interrelationships among the constructs of social support, self-esteem, work-family enrichment and life satisfaction among nurses of public hospitals in Malaysia. Besides, the study also examined the likely mediation effect of work-family enrichment on self-esteem and support - satisfaction relationship.

1.1. Literature Review
- Social Support

In this study, social support is divided into two categories, work domain (supervisors) and non-work domain (spouse, family members and friends). Social support has been identified as an important resource that can produce effective coping in the event of work and family conflict, and is regarded as a core factor in enhancing the physical and mental health of employees [3-7]. Therefore, the phenomenon of social support is

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paramount for nurses and patients. If nurses have adequate support, they may experience less stressed, have better morale and able to provide better quality of service to patients. Noraini [2] highlighted that social support can directly enhance well-being, lessen the impact of stress on well-being and prevent psychological distress following a stressful experience. Besides, Gelsema et al. [8] found that the strongest predictors of job satisfaction in hospital nurses were support from a supervisor, positive rewards, and perceived control over workload. In the other study by Chen and Lin [9] found that support from the family can increase women sense of satisfaction towards their family. It means that, if the nurses receive support from non-work domain, it can help to increase family satisfaction.

- Self-Esteem

In research concerning work and family matters, the inclusion of self-esteem is very important. Previous research has indicated that self-esteem is a crucial personal resource that is central to individuals' sense of well-being [10]. Maslow [11] described a person with high self-esteem as psychologically happy and healthy. A person with high self-esteem is capable to deal with anxiety, enhance coping, and promote physical health [12-14] On the otherhand, if a person has a low self-esteem, he or she will have a pychological frigility [11], which means, he or she may be experiencing depression, anxiety and maladjustment [12-15]. In line with this, several researchers reported that people with low self-esteem will experience negative emotion more commonly in contrast to those with high self-esteem [14-17,13,18]. As Grandey and Cropanzano [19] reported in their study, self-esteem has a direct relationship to all work and life satisfactions. However, they found no relationship between self-esteem with family satisfactions. In terms of role conflict, previous research on nurses suggested that role conflict is more likely to occur when the nurses have low self-esteem [20]. Critically, according to these researchers, the existence of role conflict will normally result in a lower performance outcome. From the above explanation, it is possible that those who have a high self-esteem are capable to overcome conflicts arising from combining work and family. Moreover, the higher self-esteem is, the more the person is likely to see himself/herself as being successful in managing work life balance [8].

- Work-Family Enrichment

Theory of work-family enrichment provides a clear picture of the positive outcomes of combining work and family roles. While there may be other possible explanations for work-family enrichment, this study focuses on the impact of self-esteem (psychological and physical resources) and social support (social capital resources). According to Greenhaus & Powell [21], self-esteem and social support generated from one role (work) can improve the quality of life in the other role (family) or vice versa. Several studies in the past have examined the positive side of managing work and family roles; thus, they suggest that personality traits such as self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-confidence may enhance performance in another role because they can stimulate motivation, goal-setting, effort and persistence [22-24]. However, with regard to social support, a recent study involving 161 employed women has revealed that support has a significant relationship with work-family enrichment [25].

- Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction outcomes are divided into three parts; job satisfaction, family satisfaction and well-being satisfaction. Based on a work-family enrichment theory, if a person's work role is enhancing his family role, it seems logical to hypothesize that this may be related to an increase in satisfaction in one's family role. Similarly, if a person's family role is enhancing his work role, an increase in work satisfaction could be possible. Henessey [25] provided support to this claim, indicating that work-family enrichment has a positive relationship with both work and family satisfaction. Specifically, the author reported that women with higher levels of work-family enrichment are more likely to experience higher levels of work and family satisfaction. Grzywacz [26] proposed that work and family enrichment may help to strengthen social relationships, thereby providing a buffer against negative events which will lead to improved health outcomes. However, no empirical evidence exists with regards to the relationship between work-family enrichment and well-being satisfaction.

2. Methodology

A total of 710 questionnaires were distributed to married female nurses in public health care service in Malaysia. Although, the response rate was 100%, 21 questionnaires were later discarded because of missing

data, Therefore, the effective response rate was approximately 97%. The sample size was deemed adequate for the application of structural equation modeling (SEM) to address the research objectives. The majority of the respondents were Malays, diploma holders who are above 40 years of age. The majority has worked as nurses between 4 to 10 years.

This study adapted the measures used in the previous studies. The social support measurement was divided into two sections, (1) support from supervisor and (2) support from family. Support from supervisor was adapted from Shinn, Wong, Simko and Ortiz-Torres [27]. However, the measure of support from family was taken from Holahan and Gilbert [28] and Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison and Pinneau [29]. Self-esteem was assessed using Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) [30], an instrument designed to provide a measure of global self-esteem. The Work-to-Family Enrichment and Family-to-Work Enrichment were assessed using two scales by Carlson et al. [31]. Next, the measurement of life satisfaction was divided into three sections, (1) family satisfaction, (2) job satisfaction and (3) well-being satisfaction. The measure of Family Satisfaction was adapted using a modified 5-item version of Brayfied and Rothe's [32] Job Satisfaction Scale. In this modified version, the word "work" has been replaced with the term "family life". Items for job satisfaction were assessed using the 3-item General Job Satisfaction subscale, which is part of the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman & Oldham [33]. The Well Being Satisfaction was adapted from the Overall Life Satisfaction scale developed by Quinn and Staines [34]. All items were measured using a six-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 6= strongly agree). All items were measured using a six-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 6= strongly agree).

Later, the questionnaire was rigorously pilot tested on 180 respondents before the main data collection was performed. This pilot study was very important in ensuring more reliable data collection during the major survey with establishment of content validity. The respondents were invited to comment on the questionnaires and thus, their constructive comments provided a basis for refinement to the construct measures. Using AMOS (version 17) the maximum likelihood estimation, the study tested the adequacy of the hypothesized models using structural equation modeling (SEM) approach.

3. Result

The results of the full fledge SEM which used AMOS data-fitting program, supported the hypothesized relationships. Specifically, the maximum likelihood estimation of the model yielded the several noteworthy results, which collectively supports the adequacy of the model. The chi-square test of overall model fit resulted with a statistically significant discrepancy between the model and the data (χ^2 = 1736.513, p = .000; CMIN/df =2.61), however, the other overall fit statistics (RMSEA = .051; NFI= .934; CFI = .939) satisfied their respective thresholds deemed important in a good fitting model. The analysis also produced statistically significant path coefficients, implying the following causal links: i) social support and self-esteem positively related to life satisfaction of employee, ii) social support and self-esteem positively related to work-family enrichment, iii) Work-family enrichment partially mediated the relationship between social support and life satisfaction, iv) social support and self-esteem however, exerted substantial direct effect on life satisfaction of employees. In addition the model was free from offending estimates and the directions of the estimates were theoretically justifiable. Finally, the parameter estimates were statistically significant at .05 level, and were of practical importance, since each standardized structural coefficient was larger than 0.2.

4. Discussions and Conclusions

The findings of the present study have expanded the existing body of knowledge on work-family enrichment in several ways. First, the data indicated that social support is directly influenced and has significant effect on life satisfaction outcomes such as on well-being, family and job. The result is congruent with the earlier studies on social support [3-9], which found that social support has a strong relationship with satisfaction outcomes in enhancing the physical and mental health of a person, as well as increasing family and job satisfaction. Second, the data indicated that self-esteem is also directly influenced and has significant effect on life satisfaction such as well-being, family satisfaction and job satisfaction. The result is similar to Grandey and Cropanzano [19]. Third, the current study found that there is a positive relationship between support and work-family enrichment. As Greenhause and Powell [21] suggested, resources derived from

either work or family role help in promoting work-family enrichment. The result is also similar to Hennessey's finding [25] that a person with a higher level of work-family enrichment will probably experience higher levels of support from their friends, family and co-workers. In correspond to the next predictor, the result provides empirical support for a positive relationship between self-esteem and work-family enrichment. However, there is no evidence existed in the past to support this finding. Another important result was that an individual with higher levels of work-family enrichment are more likely to experience higher level of satisfaction towards wellbeing, job and family. This result is in an agreement with the findings of previous studies [25] and assumptions [26] which suggest that increased levels of work and family enrichment may be related to greater satisfaction particularly on job and family matters.

The findings of the study have some useful and practical implications on the organization. It is very imperative for the organization to understand the changing roles and responsibilities of the married employees in achieving work-life balance. Thus, implementing support-based intervention and developing a model for multiple role management are deemed as an appropriate program to offer. However, this study has several limitations and requires further examination and additional research. First, this study has focused on married nurses with experience in public health care service. Further research is needed to compare married nurses from the public and the private healthcare organizations for a more rigorous result. Second, since this study only considered married nurses, it is unclear whether the analytical results can be generalized to unmarried nurses, male nurses and other profit-oriented sectors. Finally, the sample of this study was collected in Malaysia thus; generalizability to other countries might be limited due to cultural differences in managing work-family issues which are related to the social support, self-esteem, work-family enrichment and satisfaction.

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