

A Model of School, Work and Family Facilitation in a Chinese Context



◆ Student Author: Siqi Wang

◆ Management and Marketing Department

◆ University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Introduction:

• Background information

In the new millennium, social trends such as increasing participation of women in the work force (Lerner, 1994), greater numbers of dual earner families (Bumpass, 1990) and an increasing number employed college students (Fox, Connolly, & Snyder, 2005) are creating new responsibilities and new challenges to individuals who play the roles of employees, students and family members (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Thus, the importance of studying the interdependence of the work, school and family domains is merited. Few studies have included the domain of school. Most studies on this topic have been conducted in Western countries from a Western perspective (Luk & Shaffer, 2005). In this research, we examine school, work and family facilitation within the context of China, from an Eastern perspective.

The Chinese tradition views work as contributing to family instead of competing with it. It is often viewed as more important than leisure (Redding & Wong, 1986). For Chinese, the most important responsibility as an individual is the maintenance and preservation of the household, so there is a lower importance to have sufficient time for personal and family life. (Redding, 1993). The Chinese society is deeply influenced by philosophical traditions of Confucianism which includes principles of interpersonal harmony (Luk & Shaffer, 2005). These culture characteristics suggest that the facilitation in an Eastern cultures may be important. Thus, although conflict between roles is often studied in Western societies, facilitation may be more important in Eastern cultures. As such, we introduce a model of work, school and family facilitation. The concept of role facilitation is defined as "the extent to which participation at work (home or school) is made easier by virtue of the experiences, skills and opportunities gained or developed at home (school or work)" (Frone, 2003, p 145). To date, there is still very little research regarding work-family facilitation or work-school facilitation (Butler, 2007). Further, no study to our knowledge has included work-family and school facilitation.

Our research samples are from Jinan University, located in Guangzhou, China. Guangzhou is a modern Chinese city with a workforce of about 6 million (Bureau of Statistics-Guangzhou). The number of married women in the workforce has been increasing since the 1980s as well as the number of dual earner families. During this time, China experienced a reformation, with Guangzhou being one of the front lines in the change. The high cost of living creates enormous pressure for the people as well as strong competition in the job markets (Happiness report of Guangdong Province, 2012). Jinan University is a famous university in China. Many of the graduate students work and have families. Thus, we felt it was an appropriate location for our study.

Objective:

The goal of this study is to conduct a longitudinal study and develop a model of work-school-life facilitation. We suggest that social support resources from employers, schools and families have a positive influence on work attitudes and performance. Further, we suggest that dual-role facilitation mediates the relationship between social support and work outcomes. Specifically, we examine facilitation between school and work, school and family as well as work and family.

Theories:

• Role Theory

According to role theory, human behavior is guided by expectations held both by the individual and by other people in society. Individuals generally have and manage many roles in their daily lives. Roles work to specify what goals an individual works towards, which tasks must be accomplished, and what type of performance is required. Role theory implies that if we have information about the expectations for a specified position, a significant portion of the behavior of the persons occupying that position can be predicted (Biddle, 1986). Most work-family studies apply role theory to suggest that dual-role constructs (i.e., facilitation in this study) mediate the relationships between resources and work outcomes (Frone, 1992).

• Conservation of Resources Theory

According to the conservation of resource theory, individuals accommodate, with stand or overcome threats by applying accumulate resources. The resources that an individual might accommodate are personal resources, items such as self esteem additionally condition resources will be accommodated such as status and social support. Stressful events consume these resources, thereby augmenting their sensitivity to subsequent stressors (Hobfoll, 1989).

• How theories related to our research project

Role theory and conservation theory suggest that participation in multiple roles provides a greater number of opportunities and resources. Individual can use social support resources to promote growth better functioning in other life domains (Barnett, 1996). Scholars have concluded that having a supportive partner/classmates/boss/teachers and the opportunity to talk about difficulties at work/school and home with them may help individuals recover from stressful days (Weiss, 1990) and better handle the pressures associated with their jobs, schoolwork, and family. Consequently, this allows individuals to perform better (Barnett,1996).

Hypothesis:

H1: Work-family facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and job satisfaction.

H2: Work-family facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and family satisfaction.

H3: Work-school facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and job satisfaction.

H4: Work-school facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and school satisfaction.

H5: School-work facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and school satisfaction.

H6: School-work facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and job satisfaction.

H7: School-family facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and school satisfaction.

H8: School-family facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and family satisfaction.

H9: family-work facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and family satisfaction.

H10: family-work facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and job satisfaction.

H11: family-school facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and family satisfaction.

H12: family-school facilitation will mediate the relationship between social support and school satisfaction.

Methods/Participants:

• Design and development of the surveys:

The four surveys will be distributed longitudinally over the course of four months. The research consists of three student surveys and one employer survey. Each survey will be distributed approximately 4 weeks apart. The first survey was distributed in late March. Four individuals back-translated the surveys for Chinese participants. Specifically, two Chinese individuals who are fluent in English translated the surveys independently from English to Chinese. After that, two different individuals fluent in both English and Chinese translated the Chinese version back to English.

• Measures:

➤ Independent variable:

Social supports were assessed with scales developed by Caplan, R.D., Cobb, S., French, J.R.P., Jr., Harrison, R.V., & Pinneau, S.R. Jr., 1975 in survey 1 and survey 2. The response scale for all variables was a 5-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to very much (5).

➤ Dependent variable:

Job satisfaction was assessed with scales developed by Cammann, C., Fichman, J., Jenkins, D., & Klesh, J. (1979). The response scale for all variables was a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) strongly agree (5).

School satisfaction was assessed with scales developed by Butler, A.B., (2007). The response scale for all variables was a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) strongly agree (5).

Family satisfaction was adapted from job satisfaction scale.

➤ Mediation variables:

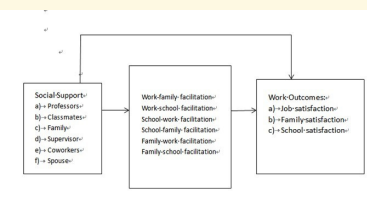
Work-School facilitation was assessed with scales developed by Butler, A.B., (2007). The response scale for all variables was 5-point scale ranging from never (1) all the time (5). Measures were adapted to include **School-Work facilitation, School-Home facilitation, Home-School facilitation, Home-Work facilitation, and Work-Home facilitation.**

• Surveys distribution and collection:

Surveys were distributed to the graduate students in Jinan University. For convenience, all of the four surveys will be distributed on-line. The majority of participations are MBA students. All of the participants are required to be employed. The first survey was distributed in late March. The second and third surveys are planned to be distributed four weeks apart. The employer survey will also be distributed once we have received responses back from the third survey.

• Multiple Regression model and the Sobel test will be used to test the mediation hypotheses

Expected results-research model:



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