

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF WORK-FAMILY BALANCE THEORIES

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Abstract

This study offers a thorough analysis of work-family balance theories. Secondary data from books and published articles were used in the investigation. There is no widely acknowledged central paradigm for work-family balance, according to the paper's conclusion. The breadth of the study's framework, variables, or perspectives affects the theories utilized by academics in the subject of work-family balance, which can lead to omissions or overlap in frameworks or constructions. The segmentation, resources, spillover, resource drain, integration, border, and enrichment theories, among others with acceptable descriptions, are the key conceptual frameworks relevant to the work and family domains that are included in this research.

Keywords: Work-family balance, theories, work-family conflict

Introduction

The importance of work-family balance is rising for both businesses and employees. Employees benefit because it improves their health and wellbeing, and employers who promote and uphold work-family balance will see fewer employee conflicts, less wastage, cost savings, and higher productivity. Work-family is a crucial component of human resources management that is getting more attention from policymakers, employers, workers, and their representatives around the world (McCarthy, Darcy & Grady, 2010). Work-family balance, according to Osoian, Lazar, and Ratiu (2009), develops in response to socio-cultural, economic, and demographic changes. These adjustments caused organizations to become more

involved in issues relating to the workplace, family, and personal life. According to Guest, 2002, referenced in Bello and Tanko (2020), theories serve as the foundation for the many discipline-specific study frameworks. Certain study variables are developed from and supported by theories that have given validity to the results of many investigations. Work-family balance is a component of human resource management that concerns the wellbeing of employees, who are the main assets of any organization. This is because achieving organizational goals and objectives depends greatly on the general quality of an employee's life in connection to their working life.

The understanding of work-family balance has over the years assisted organizations in identifying their needs for human capital and ways to create supportive environments that enhance productivity and work relationships, which in turn leads to the accomplishment of predetermined goals and objectives. As a result, this has inspired researchers to carry out in-depth studies over the years on many facets of work-family balance. Numerous models that seek to explain the dynamics of this component of human resource management have developed as a result of this. According to Kumer and Janakiran (2017), the analysis of work-family balance structures has gone through many stages over time, from the early stage to the transformation stage to the advancement stage. Balance theories have emerged as a result of this. There is no clear, broadly acknowledged fundamental concept or framework for work-family balance, despite the abundance of theories and models for various elements of it. Since there is no single theory that accounts for work-family balance, researchers have turned to a variety of theories and constructs, including those developed by Zedeck and Mosier (1990); Morris and Madsen (2007); Bakker and Demerouti (2009) and (Rincy & Panachanatham, 2014). Therefore, a thorough analysis of work-family balance theories is required, as well as an analysis of how these theories have been applied over time. In light of the foregoing, this paper offers a thorough analysis of the work-family balance theories that have been published in a variety of publications and journals.

Review of Related Literature on Theories of Work-Family Balance

Numerous theories have been put out over the discipline's history to help comprehend

the issue of work-life balance. These theories comprise, among others:

Spillover Theory

The spillover hypothesis put forth by Guest (2002) proposed the conditions under which spillover between the home (macro system) and the workplace (micro system) can happen. The spillover theory, according to Akinyele et al. (2016), advanced the most widely accepted viewpoint on relationships in the center of work and life. The feelings, attitude, skills, and behaviors that employees acquire at work are carried over into their personal lives. Similar to this, Crouter (1984), cited in Anyim et al. (2020:91), claimed that employees consistently carried the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, stress, and emotions they displayed at their various workplaces into their home lives and carried the same attributes from their home to their various workplace. According to Guest (2002), the idea might theoretically have a beneficial or negative impact on an employee's work-life.

This corroborates Abioro et al. (2018) claim that negative spillover in terms of energy, behavior, and time will occur if work-family links are carefully designed in location and time. Additionally, when an employee has the option to participate in family activities while still carrying out their professional obligations; this will have a beneficial knock-on effect that will help them achieve a fit and healthy work-life balance. Therefore, spillover happens when events at work have an impact on events at home and vice versa.

Compensation Theory

According to Piotrkowski's (1979) compensation theory, employees view their homes as both a haven and the source of the enjoyment they feel is absent from

their work lives (Anyim et al., 2020). Workplace and home life are intertwined and one may typically compensate for deficiencies in one setting by virtue of another. If one feels dissatisfied at work, a more fulfilling experience at home may make up for this unpleasant experience. Khateeb (2021) made a similar argument, claiming that remuneration has been characterized as a bad fit between job and family. Negative experiences in one domain are what give it its name. The literature has identified two types of compensation (Edward & Rothbard, 2000). First, a person can enhance participation in a potentially satisfying domain while decreasing participation in an unsatisfactory sector. Second, a person might pursue benefits in a different area in response to discontent in one area.

Additional classifications of compensation include supplemental and reactive (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). They contend that supplemental compensation happens when benefits in one domain are insufficient and are sought in another. While reactive compensation happens when positive experiences in another domain balance out negative experiences. However, the most updated compensation theory put out by Lambert (1990) maintained that employees will seek out the fulfillments that are lacking in their current jobs and in their personal lives by pursuing alternative employment. His hypothesis includes both the negative and positive impacts of relationships at home and at work.

Border Theory

The Border Theory, proposed by Clark (2000), takes a fresh look at how employees balance their professional and personal lives. The underlying premise of the theory is that humans only play a part

inside the boundaries of specific life domains that are divided by boundaries, also known as borders, which can be physical, emotional, or temporal. She further asserted that the degree of synthesis and ease of conversion between the two domains can be influenced by the ease and limit at which people switch between their personal and professional lives. This is because it can improve performance and functioning both at work and at home with the least amount of role conflict (Clark, 2000). Bellavia and Frone (2005), who asserted that common conversion becomes easier when domains are sufficiently integrated, but that work-family conflict may develop, supported her claim. The extent of influence people have over matters pertaining to work-life balance can be determined by doing an analysis of work-life balance borders. The theory specifically addresses the problem of bridging boundaries between the worlds of work and home. The degree of integration, the simplicity of transitions, and the level of friction across different domains will depend on how fluid and permeable the lines are between people's personal and professional life.

Clark (2000) asserts that boundaries can be either physical (such as walls, which specify the areas where domain-related activity is appropriate), temporal (such as work hours, which specify when work is finished and when family duties can be pursued), or psychological (rules created by individuals that dictate when thinking patterns, behaviour patterns and emotions are appropriate for one domain but not the other). Permeability (the extent to which elements from other domains can enter a domain), flexibility (the extent to which a border can shrink or expand depending on the needs of one domain or another), and blending (the extent to which a border can blend into its surroundings) are three

additional border characteristics (occurs when high degree of permeability and flexibility is present near the border; means mixing of the domains borders). Thus, border theory offers a framework for achieving equilibrium and aids employees in anticipating when conflict will arise. This is due to the fact that balance is generally associated with work-life parity (Bellow & Tanko, 2020).

Integration Theory

According to Googins (1991) integration theory, solutions developed in isolation will deliver less in both domains than an approach to work and family that incorporates all partners and shared responsibility. According to Clark (2000), a healthy system of permeable boundaries that are flexible and open to change can better support and promote the spheres of family, work, and community life. This supports Morris and Madsen's (2007) assertion that the theory aims for a contemporary understanding that reshapes conventional work-life norms and transforms all interested parties into dynamic collaborators with the same voice in the creation of an all-encompassing work-life balance model. However, Rincy and Panchanatham (2014) countered that the integrative theory asserts that work and non-work are inextricably linked and that doing so would be impossible.

Structural Functionalism Theory

Bello and Tanko (2020) assert that the early separation of family and work was a result of the 19th century's technological advancements. This hypothesis was developed during the Industrial Revolution, a time when work and personal life were increasingly separated. It implies that a person's existence has two distinct parts that are of concern.

Emotional life and productive life are these. While the productive life is concerned with the time spent with family and oneself, the emotional life refers to the portion of the work life that helps one to produce services or things. As a result, this approach recognizes the genuine significance of the separation between job and family.

Boundary Theory

The boundary theory, which can be credited to Nippert-Eng (1996), describes how employees try to give their professional and personal lives value and make the transition easier. Boundary theory is a common cognitive theory of social grouping, according to Zerubavel (1996), and it focuses on outcomes like the meanings employees assign to work and family as well as the ease and rate of conversion between the two domains. According to Allen, Cho, and Meier (2014), there are boundaries that delineate the differences and distinctions between the work and non-work components of an individual's life on the psychological, bodily, and behavioral levels. To the contrary, work and non-work are symbiotic spheres or parts with permeable boundaries (Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein, 2001).

Ladder Theory

According to this view put forth by Bird (2006:23), the work-life balance has two components: first, the individual, and second, the organization. Their positions can be compared to two ladder legs, with the left leg (for example) representing the organization's obligations to the employee and the right leg (for example) representing the employee's obligations to the organization. The steps namely, profit, revenue, commitment, retention, and recruitment join the two legs. Both legs

must be working well to maintain a balance between work and non-work or living. Ladder theory is the most operationally focused approach to work-life balance.

Inter-role Conflict Theory

Based on the premise that the two domains (job and family) are fundamentally incompatible with one another and have different requirements and standards, Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) theory proposed that fulfillment and achievement in one area of life lead to sacrifice in another (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985:78). Therefore, inter-role conflict arises when balancing the demands of two roles becomes challenging due to the demands of one position (job or non-work).

Resources Conservation theory

The theory of resource conservation, which can be credited to Grandey and Cropanzano (1999), serves as a framework for fusing inter-role conflict and spillover theories. According to Gragnano, Simbula, and Miglioritti (2020), when applied to the work-life context, engaging in both work and non-work activities requires time and effort. This is due to the fact that work has the potential to drain an employee's resources, impairing one's capacity to function in other spheres of life. Their claim was supported by Bello and Tanko (2020), who hypothesized that work, can have an impact on the resources utilized to carry out non-work activities. Employees become more sensitive to resource loss as a result of this work disturbance. Therefore, coping with and responding to job interference that depletes resources can have a negative impact on an employee's well-being (Grandey & Cropanzano 1999).

Resource Drain Theory

Congruence theory which could be attributed to Zedeck (1992) suggests how additional variables (personality traits, genetic forces, socio-cultural forces and behavioural styles) that are not directly related to work or family influence the balance of multiple roles. For example, based on congruence theory, a third variable such intelligence or level of education could positively influence both work and family domain.

Congruence Theory

According to the congruence theory, which can be traced back to Zedeck (1992), other factors (personality traits, genetic forces, socio-cultural forces, and behavioral styles) that are not directly related to work or family can affect how various responsibilities are balanced. According to congruence theory, a third component like IQ or education level, for instance, could have a favorable impact on both the job and family domains.

Instrumental theory

According to the instrumental theory put forth by Evans and Bartolome in 1984, job and career are basically two ways to acquire the resources to create and sustain a successful and fulfilling family and social life (Evans & Bartolome, 1984). Here, the fundamental premise is that actions taken in one realm or sphere enable actions taken in another. For instance, a person who tries to maximize income even at the expense of time or puts in long hours will have resources available for personal usage (Bello & Tanko, 2020).

Facilitation Theory

Marks created this notion (1977). The thesis clarifies the amount to which

people's involvement in one area of life (like job) can contribute resources, enjoyable experiences, and enriching experiences to another function (Marks, 1977). Because it incorporates the facilitation of work to family and vice versa, this theory is bidirectional in character. Family provides emotional supports that reduce job-related stress, while work provides financial and other resources that enable people to assist and be more effective in dealing with family concerns. According to Gryzwacz, 2002, cited in Rincy and Panchanatham (2014), facilitation happens because social systems naturally make use of existing resources to better circumstances without taking into account domain limitations. According to this view, facilitation happens when involvement in one domain strengthens and encourages involvement in another.

Enrichment Theory

According to Seiber's (1974) role accumulation theory, having many life roles can be psychologically fulfilling if they are ones that the person has a strong sense of identity with, perceives as being of high quality, and in which they can receive benefits and advantages in everyday life. The amount to which experiences from talents, skills, values (instrumental), or satisfaction and mood (affective sources) improve the quality of the other domain, such as performance, commitment, and effectiveness, is described by Morris and Madson (2007). As a result, the enrichment theory contends that there is a beneficial relationship between employees' commitment and work-life balance.

Segmentation Theory

Detachment from home and work is a natural process for those who work in

unfulfilling or uninteresting employment, according to segmentation pioneers Blood and Wolfe, 1960 Akinyele et al. (2016). According to the theory, work and non-work operate as distinct entities; there is no interaction between the work-life and the family-life. According to Gragnano et al. (2020), life and work have been inherently separated by space, function, and time since the industrial revolution. This segmentation forces employees to restrain their thoughts, deeds, and emotions in relation to work when they are at home and at work, allowing them to maintain time-lines in relation to work and family.

Conclusion

In order to comprehend the significance of implementing work-family balance rules in the workplace and their beneficial effects on organizations, many scholars have focused on the societal issue of work-family balance and conflict and have proposed some theories in this regard. It should be emphasized that lengthy working hours, rigid schedules, and a lack of free time to take care of personal and family demands cause employees' stress levels to rise, lowering their temperament, impairing their creativity at work, and making it difficult for them to focus. Policies promoting work-family balance are consequently effective in reducing employee stress, absenteeism, raising performance, and increasing productivity. Researchers in the field of work-family balance rely on and employ a variety of theoretical frameworks to explore work and family issues in the workplace in the current work environment, which presents a fundamental challenge to the relationship between work and family inquiries.

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