

無後顧之憂：支持工作的家庭環境

Without trouble back at home: Work-supportive family environment

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ABSTRACT

Based on the reviews of previous literatures, organisational research pay more and more attention on work and family issues and become one of the popular primary topics in contemporary management field. Dissimilar to the prior dominant conflict view, the major objective of the study is to understand the supportive family resources and their relationship with work-family facilitation specifically in the Taiwanese banking industry through qualitative investigation. We draw upon empirical evidences from employed and married couples by means of qualitative semi-structured interviews to understand the effects of work-supportive family environment on family-to-work facilitation and further bring implications to enhance individual employees' dedication and positive performance in the workplace.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the increasing participation of women in paid employment, the rise of dual-income families, and aging labour force, these changes bring different pictures of work and family domains and continually have impacts upon work and family life and the relationship with other domain members (e.g. Allis & O'Driscoll, 2008; Carlson, Witt, Zivnuska, Kacmar, & Grzywacz, 2008; Voydanoff, 2005). Though encouragement from family members emphasising commitment to work continues, the contrasting views gradually result in complicated situations between work and family and affect increasing groups of Taiwanese employees being caught between the demands of work and family (Lu, Gilmour, Kao, & Huang, 2006).

According to relevant former literatures, theoretical and practical research of work-family facilitation is much more limited than that for work-family conflict (Voydanoff, 2005). The primary issue of the study is to investigate family context affecting bank employees and their impacts on their job performance through the family-to-work interaction (i.e. family-to-work facilitation). By examining resource characteristics specifically from home domain, we applied qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus on three source, including bank employees, their spouses and managers currently employed in the banking industry. Data from multiple sources are supposed to help engender significant and unique perspectives on these issues (Cleveland, O'Neill, Himelright, Harrison, & Crouter, 2007).

This study adopted employed and married couples as samples combining additive family resources to further delve into the effects of work-supportive family environment on family-to-work facilitation and further bring implications to enhance individual employees' dedication and positive performance in the workplace.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Work-Supportive Family Environment

Resources and Demands Framework

Resources and demands framework describes that the consequences of work-family interaction depends on individual's cognitive evaluations of the resource distribution available to meet the role demands from different domains (Bhargava & Baral, 2009; Voydanoff, 2004). Demands are structural or psychological claims related to role expectations and requirements to which people have to make physical or mental efforts. Resources, on the other hand, represent structural or psychological assets that can be applied to improve performance, foster flexibility and bring up extra resources (Bhargava & Baral, 2009; Schieman et al., 2009; Voydanoff, 2008).

Extending the discussions from prior literatures, theoretical and practical work-family facilitation research receiving less attention than work-family conflict focuses on resources that derive from differential salience approach (Voydanoff, 2004; 2005). There are two kinds of resources, including enabling resources and psychological rewards. The former creating from one domain will generate resources in another that help improve performance in the later domain. Enabling resources are mainly derived from structure or content of activities that may result in work-family facilitation through enhancing individuals' capabilities and competence across domains. The later resources, namely, psychological rewards are in relation to motivation, self-esteem and respect transferred through positive psychological spillover process that may improve the function and well-being in another role (Greenhaus & Powell,

2006; Wayne, Grzywacz, Carlson, & Kacmar, 2007).

Work-supportive Resources

Basically, in order to maintain and develop workforce well-being, organisations have to recognise that nonwork environment is also important for all employees. Nevertheless, research along with the positive psychology perspectives in relation to family-to-work facilitation is rather sparse (Innstrand, Langballe, Espnes, Aasland, & Falkum, 2010; Wayne, Randel & Stevens, 2006). Grzywacz and Marks (2000) examined the relationship among spouse and kin demands and supports and family-to-work facilitation. Nevertheless, they didn't take spouse demands, household or parenting demands and resources into consideration.

Family resources as one of the environmental or contextual factors are characterised as the essential determinant of work-family facilitation coming from family members, such as family communication, spouse support, information, suggestions and encouragement that may have a substantial effect on their attitudes and behaviours at work (Bhargava & Baral, 2009; Lazarova, Westman & Shaffer, 2010; Poelmans, Stepanova & Masuda, 2008; Srivastava, Srivastava, & Srivastava, 2009).

Engaging in role-related activities (i.e. nonwork roles) may provide opportunities for employees to obtain role-specific resources or privileges that can be associated with enhanced functioning (Voydanoff, 2005). According to family resilience theory, family support acting as a kind of resource may help individuals thrive when confronting significant risks (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003). Some studies demonstrated that positive mood, behaviour, and family support from family life positively impact on employees' work life (Srivastava et al., 2009). Spouse and kin support, parenting and household rewards as enabling resources and psychological rewards to improve their interpersonal skills, such as listening and negotiation, for example, may help increase understandings between the resources and family-to-work facilitation (Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer, & King, 2002; Voydanoff, 2005). Consistent results show that these resources, such as household rewards provide a sense of pride and recognition which may then, generate positive psychological spillover into other domains, namely, to family-to-work facilitation (Voydanoff, 2005). Regardless of different gender, empirical evidence also illustrates that men and women were similar to the extent that they recognised nonwork participation as supporting and improved work (Kirchmeyer, 1993).

Accordingly, the availability of various nonwork resources may lead to the facilitation between work and family roles. This study, hence, emphasising on employed and married couples, combines additive family resources to further delve into the influences of work-supportive family environments on family-to-work facilitation and job performance in the workplace. In this study, we apply spouse support as enabling resources as well as parenting and household rewards as psychological rewards to understand the positive psychological spillover into other domains.

2.2 Work-Family Facilitation

Role theorists suggest that the rewards and benefits of certain domain participation may induce positive impact to other domains with the increasing levels of domain involvement (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). Most prior studies concern that the view of work-family facilitation received less attention compared to work-family conflict (e.g. Boyar & Mosley, 2007). Work-family facilitation acts as the linking mechanisms in the processes through which work and family features are connected to individual, work and family outcomes (Voydanoff, 2005). Work-family facilitation represents the cognitive appraisal process that helps individuals judge whether the experiences happening in one domain are positive,

negative or not related to general well-being on the other domains (Voydanoff, 2005).

Facilitation stresses participation in one role may enhance role performance in another as well as bring benefits to both work and family since different constituents and groups may generate the synergetic effects from increased available resources (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Boyar & Mosley, 2007; Voydanoff, 2004). This view considers that work and family are mutually interdependent and is bi-directional in nature, including work-to-family facilitation and family-to-work facilitation (Bhargava & Baral, 2009; Boyar & Mosley, 2007).

In this study, family-to-work facilitation (FWF) acting as the primary role occurs when individual involving in family activities lead to support, positive mood, and a sense of achievement that positively influence one's role at work (Boyar & Mosley, 2007; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). At home, support may come from spouse, parents, children, friends, relatives and community that can help manage pressures in the workplace and improve the job performance through the positive transmission process, such as self-confidence, respect and financial support (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005; Boyar & Mosley, 2007; Karatepe & Bekteshi, 2008; Voydanoff, 2005). For instance, employees may share with their family members about the difficulties when confronting daily work as well as looking for help while dealing with daily chores (Karatepe & Bekteshi, 2008). As a result, employees with work-supportive family environment may receive more emotional support, feedback and help to better cope with work issues and further engender the perceptions of family-to-work facilitation (Aryee et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

2.3 The Cultural Context

Though work-family issues have become one of the primary focuses in the developed western countries, it starts to receive a certain amount of attention in Taiwan and the Republic of China (Lu, Gilmour, Kao, & Huang, 2006). Taiwan experiences structural transformations from labour-intensive to high-tech and service orientation and has confronted with a stressful working context because of the rapid development and the globalisation of world economy. In the Chinese societies, sacrificing family time for work, such as working extra hours is often seen for the benefit of the family or to earn long-term benefits (Yang et al., 2000). Comparing to other occupations, professionals in Taiwan working across different industries facing longer working hours, and are expected to put job before family to present their loyalty and commitment (Lu et al., 2006). On the basis of this work ethic, Chinese people may bring wealth, position and fame to their families through their diligent working attitudes and behaviours. Consequently, with rapid social modernisation in work as well as life styles, more and more Taiwanese people are caught between the work-family interface, especially family life is traditionally taken as highly valued in a Chinese Society (Lu et al., 2006).

Though previous research mainly conducted under the western context (e.g. Crouter, 1984; Ruderman et al., 2002), this study assumes different social contexts will have influence on the role expectations and performance across countries (Yang et al., 2000). Through the research design based on semi-structured interviews, it may not only provide a integrated picture of daily working conditions and life schedules but also an exploration of the multiple life roles dynamics for employees working in the banking industry. In addition, it is important to consider marital and parental statuses that may result in constraints for individuals in complete role arrangements (Schieman, Milkie, & Glavin, 2009).

2.4 The Consequences of Family-to-Work Facilitation

Unlike the negative focus of work-family conflict, work-family facilitation lays emphasis on the benefits of work-family interaction. Though advantages generated from such relationship may bring about higher degree of satisfaction, there had only been a limited

research investigating the outcomes of work-family consequences (e.g. Boyar & Mosley, 2007; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004).

The related research results showed that the experiences receiving at family provide resources that support individuals to response to related demands from other areas (e.g. Ruderman et al., 2002). From their research (Ruderman et al., 2002), the more involvement these female managers in their family roles, the better interpersonal skills they present in the workplace. Also, psychological benefits (23%), emotional support (19%) and managing multiple tasks (9.7%) are mentioned when describing the work-supportive nature of family relationships and performance (Crouter, 1984; Ruderman et al., 2002). In addition, employees experiencing family-to-work facilitation may reveal improved functioning in the other domain, such as feeling more satisfied at their work, prone to help their colleagues, work beyond their required assignments as well as reveal behaviours to commit to their organisations (Bhargava & Baral, 2009; Poelmans et al., 2008; Ruderman et al., 2002). Due to the consistence with evidence on the positive work-family interface, subsequently, individuals who perceive higher levels of family-to-work facilitation may experience more positive consequences. In order to capture the main idea, this study managed the data on the basis of the following research question:

Research question What family factors do employees identify as positive in shaping the family environment as work-supportive?

3. METHOD

In order to gain a comprehensive view of the core construct, this study applied qualitative semi-structural interviews capturing practical respondents' experiences may help develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between family and work interfaces and consequences for banking employees in Taiwan.

To examine the predictions, we conduct a small-scale qualitative pilot study to examine how the work-supportive family environment looks like and the relevant outcomes that employees perceive the familial impacts on work as part of daily life. The primary focus is to delve into the scope and components of work-supportive family environment that role accumulation theory suggests can be expanded across individual and professional domains. The semi structured face-to-face interviews were conducted by starting with an explanation of different roles that employee currently perform in his or her daily life. These participants were limited to married employees with or without children in Taiwanese banks since a spouse and/or children in the household will lead to family and social responsibilities to their daily life (Cleveland et. al, 2007; Schieman et al., 2009). Married employees' responsibilities usually affect their decisions and performance while managing different roles (Cleveland et al., 2007). Though previous studies are unclear about the interference across marital and parental roles, analyses are encouraged to include these factors to understand their potential impacts on the other focal associations (Cleveland et al., 2007; Schieman et al., 2009). According to the general profile of Taiwanese banking environment, the data were collected from full-time employees since they are professionals working under highly-demanding context to meet requirements and expectations (Lu et al., 2006).

This study basically is an exploratory and inductive investigation that consistent with prior qualitative studies (e.g. Crouter, 1984) to extend the research of the work-family domain. Consequently, the semi-structured interview process may com up with a combination of role

accumulation perspective (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974) with work-family interface and the role facilitation process within Taiwanese banking industry.

3.1 Sample

The sample will be selected to contain variation both in the employees' family and work situations (Crouter, 1984). Because individuals may differ in their thoughts of the work-family interface, including gender, marital status, occupations; hence, it is important that the sample can represent the adequate variation along these different dimensions. The current sample included 5 men and 5 women who age range from 28 to 60 in Taiwanese banking industry. These respondents had worked at the current banks for about 5 years and most of them had worked in this industry for 15 years. Of the sample, 80% had one child currently living in their home, while 22% did not.

3.2 Procedures

To begin with, interviewer contacted with the respondents, explained in details the nature of the study, and made a proper time and place for recorded interviews. The participants' consents were obtained prior to the interviews. The semi-structured, open-ended interview starts with demographic questions about the employee's personal background, occupation, work experiences, and current family conditions (See Appendix 1). The information help categorise the respondents based on the characteristics of work and family life that follow the development in the previous literature (Cleveland et al., 2007). Next, to obtain the overviews of work-supportive family environment, family life categories were derived according to marital status and parental roles; the relationship between the respondents' family and life were enquired as well.

Moreover, interviewer then asked questions about different roles these employees' activities to fit in with multiple roles when engaged in and the challenges they face. During the process, when participants describe a specific role, interviewer asked what they learn from the role and how they do it. For instance, questions such as 'are there any situations in which you experience that your engagement in your family makes it easier to perform roles in the workplace?' Because of the nature of the exploratory study, most questions are general so that the employees may freely develop their own mindset of the work-family interface without suggestions or hints from the interviewer. Notes will be taken and transcribed directly after each interview. The duration of interviews will range approximately from 30 minutes to one hour. These interviews were recorded offering the respondent had no disagreements.

To organising and re-arranging the data, we quantified some of the qualitative data to supplement descriptions from interview protocols and came up with certain themes. These indices were generated on the basis of the frequency with certain themes appeared in each respondent's interview process. The basic variable that is especially relevant to the research are 'positive resources from family to work' that demonstrate how family life facilitate or enhance work life.

4. RESULTS

The semi-structured interviews started with demographic questions about employees' personal background, occupation, work condition and family information. This information help categorise the respondents regarding feature of work and family life and can further understand patterns and factors of contexts and related antecedents to form the environment. Data were obtained with the support of a short interview schedule that included 4

semi-structured questions in relation to the following main theme: what ways your family life positively impact on your work life?

The analysed results included organising data, developing major themes, coding the data and interpreting the data (Srivastava et al., 2009). By using open coding in relevant interview responses, this research tried to find out as many as related categories and potential factors as possible. The coding process demonstrates that participants recognised the family more or less positively influence work life to some extent. To describe the findings in details, the study next sorted the coding data by various aspects of family life that identified the most as facilitators to work life (Table 1).

4.1 Themes

Interpersonal resources. Interpersonal resources demonstrates that obtained a variety of role experiences from family domain help generate opportunities to enhance interpersonal relationship in the workplace. For instance, information gained from spouse and children may be practically applied to his or her work performance as well as career development (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Ruderman et al., 2002).

Skills, values and perspectives. Family-based skills, values and perspectives are suggested to be beneficial to work life. Skills include relevant personal skills, coping strategies, knowledge from dynamic role-playing in the family domain while values and perspectives delineate ways of individual perceptions and way of thinking concerning respecting and valuing differences regarding others. Implementing multiple tasks at home illustrates a good opportunity for individuals to manage time and responsibilities under dynamic circumstances at work (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Ruderman et al., 2002). In addition, understanding and appreciating individual differences in the workplace can be enhanced through listening to their children at different life stage, such as teenage and early adulthood (e.g. Ruderman et al., 2002).

Psychological support. Individual's personal life brings psychological benefits, self-esteem, a sense of accomplishment, and confidence to improve feelings of positive affection at work. Once individual feels a sense of achievement as well as success in personal domain may result in improved work effectiveness and lessening frustration and problems at work (Ruderman, et al., 2002; Voydanoff, 2005). Spousal support, motivation and encouragement can not only enable individuals to perform better while working but also influence focal employee's career development (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Psychological support is recognised as one of the significant factor that positively impact on individuals' work performance (Srivastava et al., 2009).

Physical and material resources. Physical health offers the fundamental component to support the development of personal career and daily work life. With poor health and irregular life styles, it may cause lower role performance as well as high work absenteeism (e.g. Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). On the other hand, financial and material resources derived from family role can be used to expand workplace interpersonal network as well as investment in career-related learning opportunities, for example (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

As a result, findings from current study indicate that family acting as one of the influential factors to positively affect employee's work life. The consequences are in response to a number of previous empirical research that again emphasise the necessity to further look into the interaction between family and work life, especially on the direct from family to work (Grzywacz. & Marks, 2000; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Srivastava et al., 2009; Wayne et al., 2006).

Table 1. *Family aspects that positively influence work life*

Main themes	Theme definitions	Relevant references
Interpersonal resources	Interpersonal resources delineate that participation in different relationships help one obtain information and influence in performing work and family role to reach goals.	Greenhaus & Powell (2006); Ruderman, et al. (2002); Srivastava et al.(2009); Voydanoff (2005)
Skills, values and perspectives	Individuals learn skills, attitudes, and values from role experiences that may help understand such as time management, schedule planning, and respecting individual differences valuable in the workplace.	Crouter (1984); Greenhaus & Powell (2006); Ruderman, et al. (2002); Srivastava et al. (2009)
Psychological support	Psychological support includes psychological benefits, such as self-esteem, positive affection, and feeling valued generating from family contexts that help individual develop positive perspective on work situations.	Crouter (1984); Ruderman, et al. (2002); Srivastava et al. (2009);Voydanoff (2005)
Physical and material resources	This category is composed of explicit materials, such as money and gifts as well as implicit physical health acquiring from non-work domain.	Crouter (1984); Greenhaus & Powell (2006); Srivastava et al. (2009)

5. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSIONS

The current study applied qualitative research methods to investigate employees' perceptions of how family life positively influence on work life. The findings reflected that family life facilitate various parts of daily work life.

Though the study has demonstrated different aspects of work and family life that may facilitate on another, future research is encouraged to complement the gaps. Firstly, future study can further delve into measuring various outcomes of family-work facilitation, such as performance in this study. Furthermore, by means of including different data sources, such as family members as well as co-workers, researchers may understand more from different perspectives when examining the influences on focal employees (e.g. Cleveland, et al., 2007). Co-workers and supervisors may be invited to assess employees' efficiency and productivity at work to move beyond self-report results (Crouter, 1984).

In addition, though we already included various resources engendered from family, this study was still deficient in the processes describing how the influences happened. Moreover, future studies can put emphasis on the impact of demographic variables on the work-family interface since previous studies ever mentioned the significance of these variables, such as gender and age that may more or less result in differences concerning the extent of facilitation, for instance (e.g. Srivastava et al., 2009).

In conclusion, the interface between work and family shows dynamic as well as bi-direction in nature. By extending the scope to include impact from family on work than the reverse, this study demonstrates evidence that family are significant factor that affect the workplace and the interactions among one another are encouraged to go deep into the diverse sub-categories in terms of work-family interface.

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Appendix 1. *Interview outline for family resources, family-to-work facilitation and job performance*

研究目的

本研究希望能透過訪談過程，了解銀行業行員在工作與家庭中扮演不同角色時，各角色間的互動情形、挑戰、應變方案及結果(例：在扮演家庭配偶、父母親時角色獲得的知識、技能或相關的情緒表現，是否影響員工的工作狀況與同事間的關係？)

訪談對象

- 銀行業
- 行員包括管理職及一般行員
- 已婚 (離婚者除外)
- 各年齡層皆可
- 生育狀況不限 (有無子女皆可)

訪談注意事項

- 訪談時間約一小時
- 訪談內容保密且僅供個人研究用途
- 取得受訪者同意後錄音以便整理紀錄

訪談問題

1. 請簡述以下個人基本資料：工作職稱、工作年資、工作內容
2. 請簡述您的工作概況（內容、工作負荷、工作時間、壓力等）
3. 請概略說明您的家庭概況(例：子女數及其餘家庭成員、成員互動、家務分工等)
4. 請問家庭狀況對您執行現階段工作角色造成什麼影響(例：溝通技巧的磨練、耐性的培養、配偶的工作性質、家庭生活分工情況、穩定的經濟來源、自信心、成就感等)？