\WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT, JOB SATISFACTION, DEPRESSION AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS: A CROSS-NATIONAL STUDY

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OVERVIEW

The present paper outlines a cross-national study that has completed data collection. In total four countries have been surveyed (New Zealand, China, Tanzania and Malaysia) while five distinct peoples have been surveyed (white New Zealand, Chinese, Tanzanian's, Malay, and New Zealand Maori – the indigenous peoples of New Zealand). The breakdown of methodology and respondents etc. is shown in Table 1. The present study addressed a cross-national study to test the similarities and differences amongst these different groups of employees. Importantly, the study includes two distinct groups never surveyed before in the work-family literature: (1) Tanzanian employees and (2) Maori employees. It is hoped that these employee groups will provide some unique understandings regarding how employees from various countries meet the challenge of managing the work-family interface, or at least, extend the level of understanding towards other peoples and cultures.

STUDY ISSUES

This study tests the links between work-family conflict dimensions and (1) job satisfaction, (2) mental health (depression) and (3) turnover intentions. The final structural model is shown in Figure 1 which represents analysis of the entire (combined) sample. The findings show that work-family time-based conflict is positively related to depression, while work-family strain-based conflict is positively related to depression and negatively to job satisfaction. Furthermore, family-work strain-based conflict is negatively to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction and depression were negatively related to each other. Finally, job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intentions, and this supports a mediation model towards turnover intentions, with work-family conflict dimensions influencing turnover intentions only through job satisfaction. From a **context position,** while these effects are influenced by country background, the direct effects shown still hold irrespective of employee's country of

origin. Finally, country differences were tested by ANOVA on all study variables (Table 2). Universally, Chinese employees reported higher levels of conflict dimensions, depression and hours worked, and lower job satisfaction. However, other collectivistic countries (e.g. Malaysia and Tanzania) had some differences, while Maori were not different from white New Zealand employees on conflict dimensions. From a **context position,** we might expect the collectivistic cultures to be distinct (Hofstede) but these effects are not universal and furthermore, they don't change the direct effects of the structural model.

QUESTIONS

- **Context theorizing - how best to manage the different country contexts?**
  Combining all the countries together to test the structural model as per Lapierre et al. (2008)? However, these five countries were all western but I am unsure regarding the mix of countries I have!

- I have controlled for country effects and these do not change the direct effects. Can I leave these out then?

- Should I combine the collectivistic cultures? Asian? My own issue with this is that the ANOVA analysis shows that the differences are not uniform anyway…

- Should I follow standard international practice where the country differences are tested as moderators…but again, if for each country (four) or peoples (five), then this makes for rather complex moderation analysis…

- Issues with methodology e.g. 100% public sector employees – an issue?

- How best to present the paper!?

**Table 1. Cross National Study Methodology**

Country	Sample Surveyed	Responses	Sector Breakdown
New Zealand	500 from 200 firms	399 (79.8%)	Private: 56%, Public: 41%, Not-for-profit: 3%
China	200 from 50 firms	101 (50.5%)	Private: 45%, Public: 39%, Not-for-profit: 16%
Tanzania	289 from 9 departments	204 (70.6%)	Public: 100%
Malaysia	300 from 8 departments	110 (36.7%)	Public: 100%
New Zealand Maori	700 from 100 firms	345 (49.3%)	Private: 22%, Public: 70%, Not-for-profit: 8%

Table 2. ANOVA for Differences in Study Variables between Countries

VARIABLE	COUNTRY					
	New Zealand	**China**	**Tanzania**	**Malaysia**	**Maori**	**ANOVA Test**
	Mean Differences with white New Zealand employees as baseline					
WFC Time **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=2.75	M=3.11 -.32887*	M=3.18 -.39418***	M=3.10 -.29377†	M=2.78 .03371	F=8.624***
WFC Strain **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=2.57	M=3.06 -.49654***	M=2.95 -.38043***	M=2.83 -.26037	M=2.62 -.05707	F=9.603***
FWC Time **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=2.15	M=2.62 -.47266***	M=2.26 -.11084	M=2.47 -.32213**	M=2.29 -.14474	F=8.601***
FWC Strain **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=2.07	M=2.75 -.68196***	M=2.02 .04424	M=2.22 -.15985	M=2.16 -.09560	F=15.713***
Job Satisfaction **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=3.47	M=3.21 .25101*	M=3.70 -.23783*	M=3.37 .09825	M=3.68 -.21474**	F=9.581***
Depression **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=1.80	M=2.43 -.63023***	M=2.58 -.77527***	M=2.09 -.28300*	M=1.47 .33352***	F=49.333***
Turnover Intentions **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=2.58	M=2.80 -.22714	M=2.69 -.11504	M=2.81 -.23125	M=2.92 -.32469**	F=3.834***
Total Hours Worked **Mean Score** **Mean Score Diff**	M=41.7	M=50.8 -9.1225***	M=47.6 -5.9597***	M=47.9 -6.2139***	M=40.0 1.6875	F=27.217***

†p< .1, *p< .05, ***p< .001

Figure 1: Structural Model – Mediation Model (All Countries Combined, n=1163).
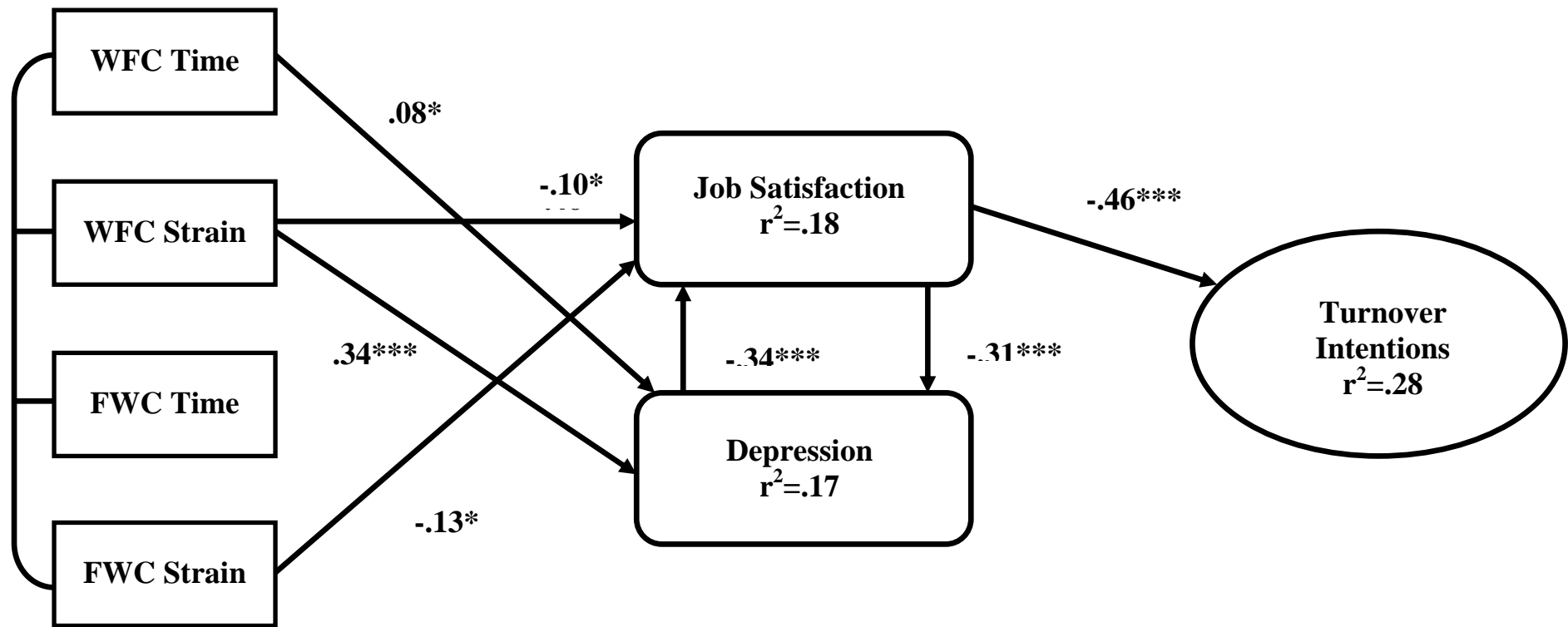
Model Fit Indices: CFI= .976, RMSEA= .0.39, SMRM= .030