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Work-home interface in a cross-cultural context: a framework for future research and practice

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ABSTRACT

With dual-income families on the increase, combining work and family obligations is a daily reality for many individuals. Unsatisfactory combinations of work and home duties can result in various unfavourable individual and organisational outcomes. Therefore, its proper understanding is essential in order to create adequate recommendations for interventions and prevention. There is a need for the development of theoretical frameworks that take cultural context into account in relation to work-home interface (WHI). In this paper a new framework is proposed; 'the pyramid of intersecting domains of WHI' that incorporates cultural context and other important work-life interface aspects. It builds on empirical findings of the intersectionality and work/family border theories. The pyramid consists of the following domains: the domain of work and home characteristics, the roles domain and the cultural domain, which intersect to determine the fourth side of the pyramid, that is, the observed WHI. Based on the pyramid several research propositions can be formulated. Implications for researchers and HR professionals are provided.

KEYWORDS

Work-home research framework; work-home interface; cross-cultural; intersectionality; work/family border theory

Introduction

Over the last few decades, the number of dual earner families has increased globally, and this has been accompanied by a greater speed of life. Consequently, the challenge of combining work and home duties has become an important issue. Especially for women, a poor work-home interface (WHI) appears to be a significant obstacle to labour participation (World Economic Forum, 2016). WHI is a multifaceted concept that has been extensively studied (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Byron, 2005; Gelfand & Knight, 2005). It includes positive

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and negative interactions between work and home spheres of life (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). A poor WHI is related to undesirable organizational outcomes such as higher turnover rates and poor job satisfaction (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005) and poor health outcomes such as depression, cardiovascular complaints or burnout (Allen et al., 2000; Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011).

An important challenge associated with studying WHI is that it is influenced by context, such as gender norms and values, temporal aspects (e.g. generational differences), and organisational and national culture (Poelmans, 2005). However, theoretical frameworks that incorporate these individual, organisational and socio-cultural aspects relevant for cross-cultural research are lacking (Poelmans, 2005) and more research is needed that would examine interactions between these elements (Ollier-Malaterre, 2017). This paper strives to advance the field of cross-cultural research by building on existing theories and knowledge to propose a framework of WHI that takes context into account.

In trying to explain the WHI, research so far has mostly focused on individual-level factors of the person, such as work and home characteristics and only rarely were they joined with other factors, such as roles and cultural context (Allen, French, Dumani, & Shockley, 2015; Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, & Lambert, 2007; Eby et al., 2005). In order to enable a better understanding and measurement of the role of the cultural context in the WHI, a plea has been made for new theoretical models that take the role of cultural context and other domains into account (Gelfand & Knight, 2005). Some models have been developed that take cultural aspects into account. These models examine, for example, specific aspects of culture such as individualism/collectivism and humane orientation (Powell, Francesco, & Ling, 2009), national gender equality (Lyness & Kropf, 2005) or they include culture as a general concept that shapes the experience of WHI (Shaffer, Joplin, & Hsu, 2011). The cultural sensitive model of work-home conflict (WHC) by Powell and colleagues (2009) builds on the propositions that work and home stressors and the degree of involvement with work and family roles are antecedents of WHC. They acknowledge the importance of gender and gender egalitarianism, as well as cultural values of individualism/collectivism and humane orientation in relation to WHC. Lyness and Kropf (2005) have added an important contextual factor of national gender equality, which is postulated to have a direct relation with organisational work-family support and in turn to be related to WHI. The universal model of WHI proposed by Shaffer and colleagues (2011), postulates that different demands and resources may be more important in some cultural contexts than others, and that what may be a resource in one context may be a demand in another. The model acknowledges the strong impact of culture on WHI and treats personal attributes as important elements that influence WHI.

The strong point of these models is the incorporation of aspects of cultural context when measuring WHI and in explaining how other variables, such as work demands and resources and personal characteristics relate to cultural context in

shaping WHI. Powell and colleagues (2009) and Lyness and Kropf (2005) however do not explain how other cultural aspects besides the two they mention could be accounted for, and the model of Shaffer and colleagues does not specify how the role of culture could be tested, and in relation to which variables it plays a role. Furthermore, most relationships in the model are linear, and only some relationships are postulated to be interacting with each other. In this way, complex, existing intersecting relationships may be missed.

Taken together, there is a need for a model that addresses this theoretical gap by taking context into account and overcomes the current theoretical drawbacks by: (i) including more specific aspects of culture than Shaffer and colleagues (2011) and more aspects of culture than the models of Powell and colleagues (2009) and Lyness and Kropf (2005); (ii) allowing for new factors which have been identified as important in relation to individual, organisational, or cultural aspects to be incorporated and (iii) examining intersecting relationships between constructs in the model.

Theoretical basis of a new framework of WHI

There are numerous theories in the field dealing with the WHI, such as role conflict theories, role enhancement theories and demands-resources approaches (for examples see Bakker & Geurts, 2004; Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Voydanoff, 2005). We chose the intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) and work/family border theories (Clark, 2000) as the building foundations for our framework. In short, intersectionality posits that (i) different social categories, such as gender, culture or ethnicity are not independent and additive, but intersecting; (ii) there is no primacy of one category over another, rather, the primacy of the categories is context- and case-dependent; (iii) temporal and historic aspects shape the lived experience and (iv) the social categories intersect with structural forces to shape or determine outcomes, such as health (Bowleg, 2012; Crenshaw, 1989; Hankivsky, 2012). Work/family border theory (Clark, 2000) describes work and home as two separate domains with different cultures and border strengths for different people. It states that people are border crossers: they cross the borders from work to home and vice versa on a daily basis. Their experience of WHI is influenced by the degree to which they are central or peripheral participants in each domain. We chose these two theories, since they go beyond simple relationships and expose the complexity of domains and their interactions, while taking into account the wider context and acknowledging interpersonal aspects related to WHI. Moreover, these two theories, build on each other's strengths and compensate each other's weaknesses.

Work/family border theory focuses on the individual and interpersonal level of analysis, while intersectionality examines the relations between social categories, including culture, and social structures. Combining the two theories provides insight into the interactions between the individual, meso and macro levels concerning the WHI. Both theories base their approach on the importance of

interaction: work/family border theory focuses on interaction between domains and intersectionality focuses on interaction between social categories and macro level aspects.

One of the critiques of intersectionality is the ambiguity, given that it does not consist of predetermined elements, but rather allows researchers to choose among the most relevant social categories, depending on the context (Davis, 2008). We consider this open-endedness to be one of the strengths of the theory, as it allows for the theory's concepts to be expanded upon (e.g. social categories studied can vary from gender, class or race and can expand to include socio-economic position, sexual orientation and so on). The theory can also be applied to different outcomes, varying from health outcomes to WHI in our case. By giving the intersectionality the concrete application, the strengths of the theory are retained and critiques concerning generality and ambiguity are overcome. By joining the two theories, we build a framework that is geared towards WHI, while also taking wider contextual aspects into account.

New framework: the pyramid of intersecting domains of WHI

The pyramid of intersecting domains of WHI is a triangular-based pyramid consisting of four equally sized triangles: three sides and the base (Figure 1). The base of the pyramid represents the observed WHI (4), which is influenced and defined by the three other intersecting triangles of the pyramid, called domains: the domain of individual work and home characteristics (1), the roles domain (2) and the cultural domain (3). Elements in the framework are chosen on the basis of their conceptual relevance for WHI. Drawing on intersectionality theory,

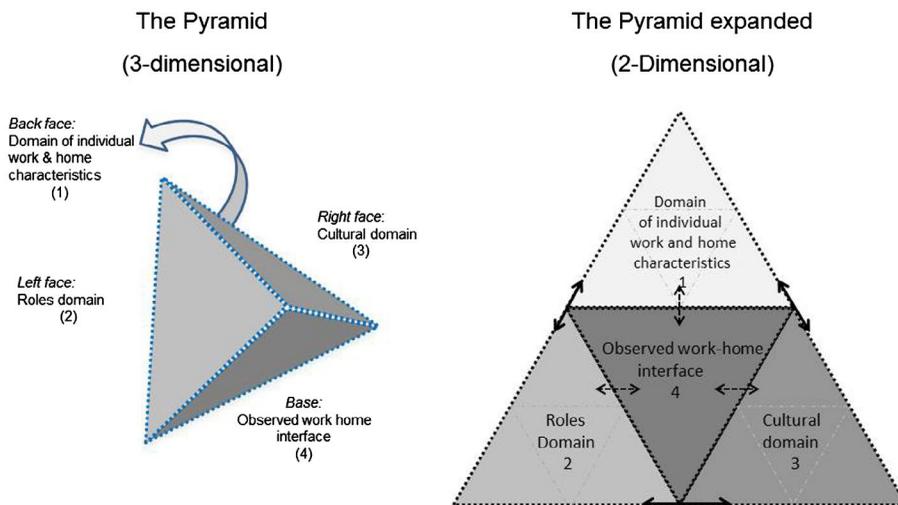


Figure 1. The pyramid of intersecting domains of WHI.

Note: Dotted lines indicate the permeability of the borders, visually representing the places where domains of the pyramid intersect with each other.

we postulate that the three domains of work and home characteristics, roles and cultural domains intersect with each other. This intersection and permeability between the domains is visually represented by dotted lines between the sides of the pyramid. As a three dimensional object, a pyramid allows for intersection of every domain and its subdomains with other elements of the pyramid (because all sides of the pyramid – including the domains and to some degree subdomains – are connected with each other), while with a two-dimensional representation this would not have been possible. Furthermore, there is no hierarchy or primacy of one domain over another. No one characteristic of the domain or social category is per se more favourable than the other, it is in interaction with other domains that its effect (favourable or unfavourable) is determined. This is a strength of the framework, since it allows for seeing the complex relationships without giving predetermined preference or ‘weight’ to some issues more than others. It is in interactions that the relevance of the variable and its effect are determined. Furthermore, each of the three domains consists of intersecting subdomains and each subdomain could be further divided into other subdomains. Intersections may also occur between subdomains. In line with intersectionality theory, we postulate that the findings based on the pyramid are time-dependent: wider sociocultural context, as well as values and norms can change over time and thus need to be re-evaluated after a period of time.

The pyramid of intersecting domains of WHI explained

Domain of individual work and home characteristics (domain 1)

This domain represents variables measured on an individual, or micro, level, such as work and home demands and resources. This individual level domain is the most commonly studied aspect of WHI (Casper et al., 2007; Eby et al., 2005). Work and home characteristics are important, but not sufficient to explain WHI as a whole. We define this domain (Figure 2) by the work characteristics subdomain which includes demands at work (e.g. working hours, psychological and physical demands) and work resources (e.g. supervisor support, job control); the home characteristics subdomain which includes home demands (e.g. number and age of children) and home resources (e.g. partner, family and friends support); individual characteristics subdomain (e.g. age, sex, personality, coping style); and characteristics of border crossers/border keepers/domain members subdomain. These factors are deemed relevant based on border theory as well as the empirical literature reviews concerning the relationship between determinants and WHI (Byron, 2005; Eby et al., 2005). Characteristics of border crossers, border keepers and domain members play a role in shaping experiences with WHI. For example, if a border crosser spends long hours at work at the expense of family time, while the spouse (border keeper) expects him or her to invest more time in the family life, this is likely to create friction and put pressure on the border crosser’s WHI.

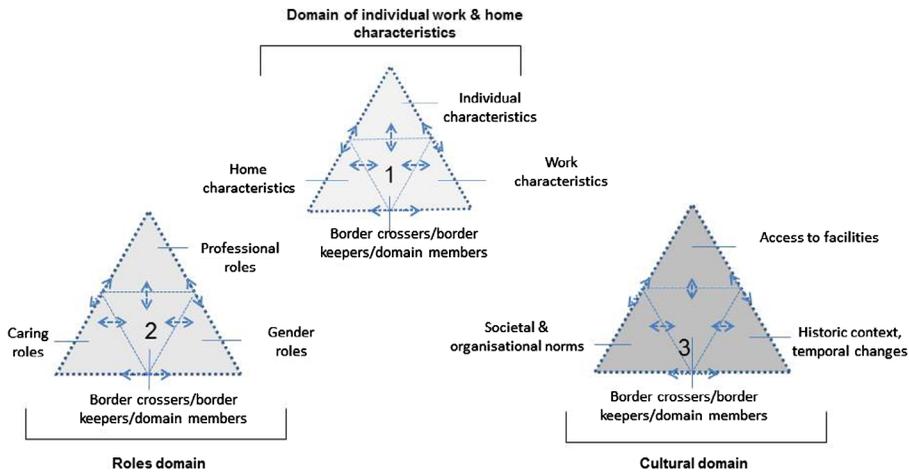


Figure 2. The subdomains of the pyramid of intersecting domains of WHI.

However, if the spouse is supportive and understanding of the long working hours, this is less likely to put pressure on a border crosser's WHI.

Roles domain (domain 2)

The roles domain (Figure 2) refers to the different roles that an individual takes in life and also encompasses the values, norms and expectations for each of these roles. It also includes interactions with border crossers and domain members and their values, norms and expectations. Thus, the roles domain represents factors related to the interpersonal level. The different roles affect the perception of work and home characteristics and interact with expectations of others about the domain of work and home characteristics.

We define this domain as consisting of the following subdomains: gender, professional roles, caring roles and interaction between border crossers/border keepers/domain members based on these roles. These subdomains are included in the roles domain because it is believed that they shape the expectations and preferences of domain members and border keepers, as well as of individuals themselves. Work/family border theory postulates that when preferences of border keepers are in line with those individuals, i.e. their view and expectations concerning what is appropriate for given gender, professional and caring roles, it is favourable for the WHI.

Gender and gender roles have been identified as shaping the way in which the 'objective' and more tangible circumstances are perceived and experienced (Galovan et al., 2010; Greenstein, 1995; Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006). For example, demanding work has a stronger effect on poor WHI for women than for men (Ollo-López and Goñi-Legaz (2017). Another study conducted in Europe found that differences in work-home conflict between Sweden and Hungary or the Czech Republic, could not be explained by differences in working conditions (Strandh

& Nordenmark, 2006). Authors indicate that this may be due to differences in gender ideology between these countries: Sweden had the most gender liberal attitudes, while Hungary and the Czech Republic had more traditional gender role attitudes. Considering that in all countries women do more housework than men, Swedish women may perceive this division more unfairly than Hungarian and Czech women, which expresses itself in higher work-home conflict. This finding is further supported by a study that found higher work-home conflict among the progressive gender cultures of Sweden, United Kingdom and the Netherlands than the more traditional gender cultures of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria (Van der Lippe, Jager, & Kops, 2006).

Professional roles are also linked to the perception and experience of the WHI. Certain professions, such as those whose main aim is to help and support others (e.g. medical and teaching staff) may be particularly under pressure to show strength and deny any expression of distress, which may in the long run affect their family life and health (Miller & McGowen, 2000).

Caring roles, such as being a parent or caring for frail elderly family members, brings about different WHI than when one is single and has no caring obligations. For example, a positive relationship between workload and poor WHI was found to be particularly strong for employees who have children and the 'sandwich generation' - those who have children, and also take care of the elderly family member (Tement & Korunka, 2015). The effect of parenting in relation to WHI differs for men and women. Being a parent is linked to poor WHI for women, while for men WHI is poorer when they do not have children (Byron, 2005). These are examples of how caring and gender roles may intersect with each other concerning the WHI. Regarding the relation between the WHI, childcare and gender roles, we see that in the Dutch context, women are more likely than men to adjust their working time arrangements, e.g. in order to take care of the children (Verdonk, 2006; Visser, 2002), and/or as a consequence of conflict between work and family (Jansen, Mohren, van Amelsvoort, Janssen, & Kant, 2010). Thus, adjusting working time arrangements may be a coping strategy for women with children to balance work and home domains better.

Drawing on the work/family border theory, we postulate that the border crossers/border keepers/domain members subdomain represents the interaction between the border crossers and border keepers/domain members based on each other's expectations of appropriate work and home characteristics. These expectations are influenced by their own gender, professional and caring roles and interact with the other person's roles.

Cultural domain (domain 3)

The cultural domain (Figure 2) incorporates the wider socio-cultural and organisational factors that have their impact on WHI through values, norms and expectations. More specifically, the cultural domain includes: societal and organisational values and norms; (facilitators and obstacles) in access to facilities; historic context

and border keepers/domain members' expectations on individuals' experiences of WHI. There has been lack of awareness of importance of cultural context for WHI (Allen et al., 2015).

Societal and organisational values and norms can for instance be captured via different dimensions of Hofstede's cultural work values (Hofstede, 2009). He postulates that countries' (work) cultures can be different on certain dimensions, such as masculinity-femininity, power distance, individualism-collectivism or uncertainty avoidance. These differences shape the importance of work and home characteristics, and influence overall levels of WHI. For example, persons living in individualistic cultures where independence and intimacy in close relationships are valued, may be particularly sensitive to time pressure, in contrast to persons living in more collectivist cultures, where work dedication is perceived as an expression of care for the family members, thus overtime and long working hours may not be evaluated as negatively (Wong & Goodwin, 2009). Similarly, in individualistic countries workload and organizational constraints are more strongly related to job dissatisfaction and turnover intention than in collectivist countries (Yang et al., 2012).

Facilitators and obstacles in access to facilities affect the degree of choice one has over WHI. In other words, the norms and values (i.e. facilitators and barriers) towards accessing various facilities differ between cultural contexts. For example, access to child care, or being able to hire cleaning staff are good examples of obstacles/facilitators of access to facilities. In some cultural contexts there is a financial possibility to hire a cleaner, but values and norms do not approve of it, while in others it is the actual lack of resources that prevents access to facilities. So in the former example we see how culture restricts the use of certain institutional provisions, while in the latter case we see the facilitating role of culture, but the constraining impact of the structure that prevents its use despite the cultural norms and values that are facilitative of the process.

The historical background and the time in which work and home spheres of life are combined affect the preferred way of organising WHI. The societal expectations of WHI can change over time, when the wider societal and economic circumstances change. For example, increased costs of childcare may lead to decreased labour participation (of women), and thus create different preferences for the optimal WHI than during the times when childcare is more affordable. When macro level changes are in the opposite direction of the cultural values, they may lead to work-home conflict (Joplin, Shaffer, Francesco, & Lau, 2003).

The relation between border crossers and border keepers/domain members is influenced by the societal expectations concerning work and home spheres of life. The degree to which work and home spheres of life are expected to be integrated or separated is influenced by cultural context (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000), both organisational and societal. Ashforth and colleagues make a link between Hofstede's work values and degree of integration and segmentation: persons living in collectivist, feminine, low uncertainty avoidance and low power distance

countries are expected to favour integration between work and home spheres of life, while those living in individualistic, masculine, high uncertainty avoidance and large power distance countries are expected to favour segmentation between work and home spheres of life. Allen (2013) and Allen and colleagues (2014) go a step further and suggest that integration/segmentation of work and family domains may be considered a cultural value in itself, and that it may account for more explained variance in WHI than more generic cultural values.

Furthermore, the point at which a particular WHI is experienced negatively may vary between cultural contexts. There is some indication that in different cultural contexts, thresholds for reporting problems are higher than in other cultural contexts (Madan, Reading, Palmer, & Coggon, 2008). It may also be that participants with the same level of WHI respond to items differently, due to their cultural background differences (differential item functioning).

Observed WHI (side 4)

The base of the pyramid, observed WHI side refers to the prevalence or incidence of WHI (both positive, work-home enhancement as well as negative, work-home conflict aspects of WHI). WHI can be measured by current questionnaires, such as those developed by Netemeyer and colleagues, Carlson and colleagues and Geurts and colleagues (Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000; Geurts et al., 2005; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996). This observed WHI is traditionally explained by the first domain of work and home characteristics, leaving the influence of roles and cultural aspects unaccounted for (Poelmans, 2005). As an exception, a recent meta-analysis has been carried out on mean differences in WHI between national contexts and it has found no significant differences between countries (Allen et al., 2015). Although examining simultaneously two domains of the pyramid (base of the pyramid and domain 3), they did not account for differences in variables in individual domains (domain 1) and role domains (domain 2). As the pyramid indicates, all three domains together need to be empirically incorporated in the studies to explain observed WHI.

Intersections among pyramid domains

In the pyramid, the proposed intersections between the domains are visually represented by the dotted edges of the domains, as each pyramid side connects with every other element of the pyramid. It is at the edges of the sides that intersections take place (including the depth, as it is a 3-D object). The dotted lines and arrows in the Figures 1 and 2, emphasize this interaction between the different domains.

An illustration of the way in which individual work and home characteristics (domain 1) intersect with the roles (domain 2) can be seen if we look at the time spent on household tasks (domain 1) and then also examine gender, gender roles or gender role ideologies (domain 2). Cohabiting women have more household tasks than men across Europe, and this difference is much larger than when men and women are single. Thus, cohabitation decreases household tasks for men, yet

increases them for women (Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006). Furthermore, in countries with more traditional gender role ideologies, working women are expected to carry out more work at home than in more egalitarian countries (Korabik, Lero, & Ayman, 2003). And here comes also the intersection with the WHI (base of the pyramid). Namely, women in countries with more traditional gender role ideology perceive their work at home in less negative light than women in more gender egalitarian countries (domain 2), leading to more friction between work and home domains (base of the pyramid) for women in more progressive cultures (Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006; Van der Lippe et al., 2006).

The pyramid also indicates that roles (domain 2) and cultural context (domain 3) intersect and affect the WHI (base of the pyramid). An illustration of how such an intersection takes place is the finding that policies that provide availability of childcare centers are differently related to work-home conflict for male and female parents: for women such availability of childcare is related to lower work-home conflict, while for men no such association is found (Stier, Lewin-Epstein, & Braun, 2012). Thus, policies intersect with social categories to shape the outcome, work-home conflict, in this case.

Another premise of the pyramid is that different individual subdomains not only intersect with each other but can to some degree also intersect with other domains, to affect the outcome of work home interface (the base of the pyramid). Based on an earlier study, we will highlight how societal and organisational values (domain 3) can intersect with individual work and home characteristics (domain 1) to affect WHI (base of the pyramid). A study on Taiwanese and British samples has shown that certain work characteristics (domain 1) are differently associated with work-home conflict (base of the pyramid), depending on the cultural context (domain 3): in Taiwan, a country with large power distance, supervisor support is more important in relation to WHC than in the United Kingdom, a country with small power distance (Lu et al., 2009).

The pyramid also proposes that there are intersections between culture (domain 3) and borders of domain 1 (their strength, permeability and flexibility). This proposition has also been seen in some research findings. For example, Dutch and Swedish cultures favour border flexibility and integration of the work and home domains (domain 1 of the pyramid) in the form of teleworking, while Southern and Eastern European countries do not (Peters & den Dulk, 2003). The study by Peters and den Dulk (2003) found that teleworking preferences are correlated with national cultures of power distance and uncertainty avoidance (domain 3): countries that score low on power distance and uncertainty avoidance tend to implement teleworking, while those high on power distance and uncertainty avoidance do not.

Thus, the pyramid represents a framework for WHI that takes the micro, individual level (work and home characteristics -domain 1), the interpersonal, meso level (roles -domain 2) and the macro level into account (cultural -domain 3). Based on this framework, a number of pointers for researchers and HR professionals

can be postulated, which may be of aid for setting up future research studies and carrying out HR work in diverse organisations.

Research propositions based on the pyramid

The pyramid provides new ways of looking at the topic of WHI. Firstly, it defines the WHI concept as being multidimensional and including individual, role, cultural and observed WHI domains. Secondly, the pyramid also illustrates that every dimension is multifaceted, as represented via subdomains. Finally, we posit that the list of subdomains mentioned in the framework is not exhaustive, and that other subdomains can be identified and added. This provides the possibility to the framework to adjust, adapt and grow over time, based on research insights in the field. We provide below some initial propositions based on the pyramid. Since this framework is envisaged as a meta-theory (Walker & Avant, 1995), propositions below do not represent an exhaustive list. We call for future research to further build on and expand the framework.

Establishing measurement equivalence/invariance of the instrument used is recommended

Prior to conducting data analysis and comparing the scores on a particular instrument across countries, it is recommended to examine whether the instrument is actually measuring the same construct across countries (Spector, Liu, & Sanchez, 2015). This can for instance be examined by tests of measurement equivalence/invariance (ME/I). ME/I considers whether under different conditions of observing and studying phenomena, instruments yield measures of the same attributes (Horn & Mcardle, 1992). These different conditions amongst others include stability of measurement across different populations (e.g. cultures), and stability of measurement over time, the latter to be examined by means of longitudinal data analysis. For examples of research that tested measurement equivalence with respect to work–family conflict, see Ollo-López and Goñi-Legaz (2017) and Billing et al. (2014) and for more detailed insight into cross-cultural research concerning design, sampling and analysis see Spector et al. (2015).

When examining WHI, it is advised to control for variables located in different domains of the pyramid

If one is interested in studying the difference in WHI between different countries, an important step would be to examine the prevalence of WHI (base of the pyramid). However, it is important to include other domains of the pyramid, in order to understand what this prevalence means. To illustrate, a study conducted in five countries in Europe found the highest level of work-home conflict (the base of the pyramid) among the Swedish sample (Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006). However, when the authors accounted for working hours and job qualifications (which would be domain 1 of the pyramid), it turned out they had the same

level of work-home conflict as participants from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands (Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006). Thus, the Swedish sample reported higher work-home conflict *due* to longer working hours and difference in qualification, and not because they inherently experience more work-home conflict than the British or Dutch sample. To continue using this study as an example, the authors saw lower work-home conflict among the Hungarian and Czech sample, even when controlling for variables in domain 1, and indicate a possible role of gender roles (which would be domain 2 of the pyramid). The role of gender roles could be checked by controlling for it in the statistical model, the same as what was done for working hours and qualification (domain 1). The authors examined the country effect (domain 3) by putting the country of the origin in their model. The suggestion for future research is to use multi variable models (such as regressions), or multi-level analyses in order to examine the effect of different domains (and their subdomains) on WHI. In this way, similarities and differences in prevalence of WHI can be better understood.

Operationalisation of differences in countries with respect to cultural values and multi-level analyses are recommended

In empirical research, the cultural domain (domain 3) is rarely included (Ollo-López & Goñi-Legaz, 2017). This is the reason why we explicitly highlight its importance here. Using the study of Strandh and Nordenmark (2006) as an example again, we see that the authors make a move forward, by explicitly using the country variable in their model. We recommend to explicitly pay attention to variables in domain 3, by indeed, including the country as a variable, and when possible, operationalising the role of culture further. One such way would be to measure cultural value differences, such as for example dimensions of power distance, individualism/collectivism, femininity/masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term/short-term orientation or indulgence/restraint put forward by Hofstede (2009). An example of testing cultural values can be found in a study of Mortazavi and colleagues, who examined cultural values of horizontal individualism and collectivism in an Iranian, American and Ukrainian sample when assessing work-family conflict (Mortazavi, Pedhiwala, Shafiro, & Hammer, 2009). Besides using regression models, if sufficient amount of data is collected per country, multi-level analysis would be a good way to examine the way culture impacts WHI (as is done in research by Ollo-López & Goñi-Legaz, 2017). Multi-level analysis is superior to regression, as it was specifically designed to take the possible hierarchical or nested nature of data into account. Regression analysis assumes that measurement units (people) are completely independent from each other. Meaning that the answers or observations of one person are not related to the answers of another person. In the case of for instance people living in the same country, this assumption is not met. Cultural influences can lead to higher correlations among the answers of people living in the same country. Multi-level analysis takes this hierarchy of data (also known as levels or nested data) into account (Goldstein, 2011).

Examining intersections between domains and subdomains by means of moderation analyses in relation to WHI (base of the pyramid) is recommended

An important step in the analyses would be to examine the intersections between the variables in different domains of the pyramid. To use the same research as above (Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006), it would be advisable to check the interaction terms, between gender role ideology (domain 2) and amount of hours worked (domain 1) to see what effect that would have on WHI (base of the pyramid). If working hours would be controlled for (domain 1), would women who score high on traditional gender role ideology item experience lower work-home conflict, than women who score lower on traditional gender role ideology? If we created interaction terms between working hours (domain 1) and gender role ideology (domain 2) variables, we would be able to examine the moderating effect of gender role ideology on WHI. The same could be done for any other variables in the model, given that the sample size of the study allows it.

Following the changes over time: longitudinal studies are invaluable

Domains in the pyramid and their contents are not static, but they change over time. An example of this is how gender roles and values change over time, varying between generations. Different (sub)domains may also change at different speeds. For instance, norms and values may take years to change, while certain work characteristics such as job demands may change within months. Thus, to examine their impact on the WHI, longitudinal studies with carefully considered time windows would be recommended, especially if they would be based on representative samples from different countries (Allen, 2013). They would help see the impact of- these changes over time, and can be used to disentangle cause and effect relations.

Moving beyond the traditional quantitative vs. qualitative divide: mixed method research

The majority of the research examples so far have been given to explain the use of pyramid for quantitative research studies. However, the pyramid can also be used to guide the construction of topic list for interviews. Qualitative studies give us insight into the meaning that WHI has for people living in different cultural contexts, how they negotiate work and home spheres and also the degree of choice they have in determining both home and work areas of life. The findings from the quantitative and qualitative studies would be complementary to each other, building on each other's strengths. Thus, we recommend the use of the mixed method approach in better understanding the WHI.

Added value of the pyramid for practice

The framework is also very valuable for the practitioners in the field. We focus on some practical pointers for HRs professionals in using the pyramid in their work:

Be culturally sensitive

One of the practical pointers of the framework is to raise awareness among HR professionals regarding the multidimensionality of WHI. This means that, depending on the cultural context and societal and organisational roles and norms, different preventive measures and intervention strategies may be effective for employees' health and well-being (Billing et al., 2014). For example, as already mentioned, research conducted in Taiwan and Britain has shown that supervisor support was negatively associated with work-home conflict in both countries, but that the relationship was stronger in Taiwan than Britain (Lu et al., 2009). Thus, focusing on supervisor support may be a more effective HR strategy for improving WHI in high power distance countries such as Taiwan than in smaller power distance countries such as the United Kingdom. Furthermore, besides the impact that these variables have, their meaning, may differ as well. What may be a facilitating variable, or a resource, in one country (such as teleworking) may be a constraining, demanding factor in another (Shaffer et al., 2011). It is good to have a plethora of organisational policies that an HR professional can choose from to facilitate WHI (for example, flexible working hours or opportunity for part-time work may vary in importance depending on the cultural aspects and norms about these issues). Given the globalization of the workforce, it is good to keep in mind that various cultures are likely to be present in a single organisation and that policies should reflect the needs of such a diverse workforce.

Taking informed decisions for developing WHI policy

In order for HR to offer organisational policies that are fitting the needs of the workforce, they could conduct an organisational 'scan' analysis to see which factors play an important role for health and well-being of their employees (Foucreault, Ollier-Malaterre, & Ménard, 2016). In the analyses of WHI all three domains of the pyramid should be included. For example, HR professionals could use yearly working conditions reports as a basis for their decisions surrounding potential adjustments needed to policies and interventions surrounding issues relevant for WHI. Qualitative input for the decisions could be based on conversations with line managers and individual employees surrounding the needs and preferences for optimal balancing of work and home duties. HRs professionals could create policies that are taking into consideration various intersections of the work and home, roles and cultural domain concerning WHI. This implies that policies covering broad groups of persons (based solely on their work subdomain, gender or culture) are likely to be ineffective, since it is in the intersections of these categories that different experiences are created, requiring different approaches.

Time aspects

WHI is highly dependent on wider societal and economic changes, as well as values and norms, that often differ between generations. For HR professionals this implies that available policies and their effectiveness, should be evaluated periodically. Some policies on WHI may need to be adjusted more frequently than others.

Prevention and intervention

HR professionals could use the pyramid to signal and identify culture and organisation-specific determinants relevant for WHI of their employees. The (potentially) unfavourable aspects of these determinants could then be tackled in the organisation's prevention and intervention guidelines. Creating a supportive WHI culture in the organisation would lead to attraction, and retention, of valued employees. (Sok, Blomme, & Tromp, 2014).

We hope that the pyramid can serve as a source of inspiration and a guide to both researchers and practitioners when dealing with the topic of WHI. With this work we aspired to move closer to understanding the multifaceted nature of WHI and drawing attention to the need for integrating underexplored areas of roles and culture in WHI.

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