

# Becoming More Burned or Engaged with Job:

## The Role of Work-Family Conflict and Family-Work Conflict among Public Officers

Hafid Aditya Pradesa\*, Lidia Maasir, Ramdani Priatna

Public Business Administrative  
 Polytechnic of STIA LAN Bandung  
 Bandung, Indonesia  
 \*Hafidap85@gmail.com

**Abstract**—The possible role of dual conflict role on job engagement and burnout has been a very important and hotly debated topic among experts in organizational behaviour areas. The aims of this study were to (1) integrating inter-role conflict theory with job-demand resource model, (2) provide a snapshot of how inter-role conflict influencing engagement and burnout among public officers. The data were gathered from 127 individuals employed at public organization located in around Bandung area, West Java. Results of the study has been analysed by using Partial Least Square. Findings show that: (1) The direct effect of work-family conflict (-0.268) and family-work conflict (-0.319) on job engagement was significant ( $p=0.05$ ); (2) The direct effect of family-work conflict (0.246) on job burnout was also significant ( $p=0.05$ ); (3) While the direct effect of work-family conflict (-0.04) on job burnout was not significant ( $p=0.05$ ). The findings obtained indicate that the development of the inter-role conflict theory is relevant and applicable to the creation and maintenance of engaged public officers with their job. Partially, only family-work conflict that could affect whether public officers would be more burned with their job or not. Our findings contribute to the existing body of literature of how the different facets of inter-role conflict could have different effect on individuals' engagement and burnout. Public organization should improvise extra attention over HR practices that contribute positively toward the decrease of inter-role conflict perceived by officers eventually accentuating employees' level of engagement and burnout toward their job.

**Keywords**—*work-family conflict, family-work conflict, job engagement, job burnout, public officers*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, in anticipation of the rapid development and spread of the Corona Virus (COVID-19), many countries implemented a policy to reduce the global spread of the virus by allowing public officers to work from home (WFH). The purpose of this study is to identify the extent to which work-family and family-work conflicts can affect employees, whether they will become increasingly tired at work and to what extent they feel attached to work. Balancing the demands of work and family is a constant struggle for employees around the world that can lead to dangerous emotional, cognitive, and physical sacrifices. In the context of flexible working such as

work from home in current pandemic era, it is important for organizations to know that employees who work remotely remain engaged and engaged in their work while simultaneously avoiding fatigue in work that is felt to have the potential to increase.

In a pandemic situation like now, individuals' attitude and behaviour are very important to be maintained and managed by organization properly. Many organizations are in a difficult situation with having to manage many aspects that have changed drastically, including to manage people in organization. One form of human resource management practices commonly arise in pandemic situation is about people allowed to work from home. This policy also applied to various public organizations.

Public organizations in Indonesia also have adopted a work from home (WFH) policy since the pandemic broke out and changed the order and structure of running the organization. This policy cannot be separated from the consequences for employees, one of which is about balancing work life with family life. In the process of balancing these two domains, individuals could face various possible things that do not always match their expectations. This would increase pressure for them, and as a trigger factor that has a negative or positive impact. In work, this pressure factor arises when there is a demand for individuals to allocate their personal resources (energy, time, and enthusiasm) in completing a job. Demands for the use of personal resources to complete the job could be good or bad. If someone can use personal resources well, this will encourage their attachment to work. Meanwhile, if personal resources are insufficient, this will bring more exhaustion for individuals in their work.

Job-demand resources theory that has been widely reviewed and used in behavioural studies, such as the theory of job burnout and engagement. In retrospect, the two are like the antithesis of each other. Job engagement can be considered as the opposite of job burnout [1]. Many previous studies [2,3] have explored and tested the relationship and difference among those two constructs. Job engagement occurs during the work process and can fluctuate from task to task, and thus during the workday. In contrast, burnout is understood as a chronic state

that develops over a longer period, is less flexible and more pervasive, and is work-related rather than task specific [1].

The abundance of research on work-family conflict (the extent to which two domain that are work and family roles interfere in each other) not only reveals a topic of considerable interest to researchers, but also highlights the significance of combining family and work commitments for both employees and their employers. Basically, employees in many organizations faces challenges in managing family or work matters in a variety of ways [4], and according to their preferred preferences by separating or integrating work and life roles [5,6]. Recognition that the boundary between work and non-work roles (such as in the family or family) can be broken [7,8] and that employee health and performance can be affected by family or family demands has resulted many studies over the last decade [9-11]. The negative impact is the dual role in life that is not balanced on attendance and performance as the result, which is often caused by attitudes at work (for example job burnout - see Piszczek [12]).

Some of these important descriptions show that conflicts that occur in household-household work are not simple things and can be underestimated. Organizational dynamics that occur both in the internal and external environment encourage urgency in the management of human resources in the organization. Most of the studies on work-family conflict and family-work conflict are cross-sectional studies that focus more on the level of general conflict perceived by employees [13]. Some previous researchers have recommended moving away from such a stable-level approach (i.e., using global assessments of work-family conflict) to a dynamic episode approach (e.g., using daily appraisals) because employee conflict experiences are likely to vary on a daily basis as a result of role behaviour fluctuates daily [4,8,14].

The purpose of this study is to identify the extent to which work-family and family-work conflict affect public officers, whether they will become increasingly tired at work and to what extent they feel attached to work. In the context of working from home in the current pandemic era, it is important for organizations to know that employees who work remotely remain engaged and engaged in their work while simultaneously avoiding burnout in work that tend to have occurred and increased.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### A. *Relationship between work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict and Job Engagement*

Two theories that provide a theoretical framework for examining how working adults manage boundaries between work-families have emerged: boundary theory [15] and frontier theory - border theory [16]. Both theories argue that the boundary management between work and family must be understood to understand the complexity of work and its relationship to the family domain [17].

Employee attachment to their work is a form of positive employee attitude accompanied by both cognitive and appreciation motivation, confidence in their abilities and feeling happy while working. When the individual really cares about what he is doing and is committed to doing it the best possible, then the individual will feel compelled to do something rather than just choosing to be silent. Job engagement is basically an investment of resources - it is for the benefit of the individual but does not have to be rewarded individually. This pattern can improve employment relations between individuals and organizations and in return build new resources for individuals (respect and recognition, professional advancement, and social skills).

Work-family conflict and family-work conflict are basically the same form in two different domains (work - family). Based on the job-demand resources theory, the work performed by an employee demands an allocation of individual resources to complete the job. Employees who experience conflict between domains (work - family) will allegedly reduce their sense of attachment to work. Empirically, the higher the work-family conflict (WFC), the lower the job engagement and or vice versa [18]. This shows the assumption that work-family conflict has an important negative effect or is inversely proportional to job engagement.

Based on arguments above, the first hypothesis proposed in this study is:

Hypotheses 1: Work-family conflict and family-work conflict have negative effect on job engagement.

### B. *Relationship between Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict and Job Burnout*

As a form of conflict between different domains, both work-family conflict and family-work conflict affect a person's psychological condition related to their work. One of these psychological conditions is job burnout. Job burnout is the degree to which a person feels emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Work-family conflict or family-work conflict occurred when there is an overlap between work and household matters. It can also be defined as a form of role conflict caused by job and family demands that cannot be aligned in several ways. The inability of individuals to manage and deal with this conflict will have negative consequences, one of which is increased self-pressure. In the context of work, one of the recognized forms of stress is burnout.

While job burnout is a form of individual feelings for the work done. It can be assumed that job burnout is a form of negative consequences of work-family or family-work conflict that is felt by individuals. The pattern of the relationship between the two is linear positive, which means that the increasing the conflict felt by officers will increase their tendency to feel emotionally exhausted.

Based on previous arguments, the second hypothesis is proposed in this study is:

Hypotheses 2: Work-family conflict and family-work conflict have positive effect on job burnout (figure 1).

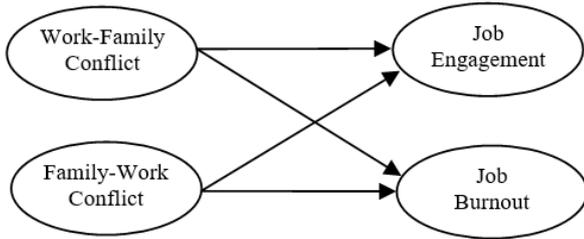


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at Public Organizations in the City of Bandung to further identify whether work-conflict that can cause employees to feel more attached to their work when in remote situations or working from home (WFH) in terms of their limit theory of roles as employees and as part of a family have affairs in the household. The city of Bandung is considered to be the locus of this research considering that there is many public officer s who live in the city of Bandung and work in government agencies or public organizations and are tasked with providing public services to the community.

This study uses a quantitative paradigm, with a convenience sampling technique. This study seeks to find answers by analysing the effect of work-home conflict, home-work conflict, job burnout, and job engagement of employees within the scope of public organizations in Bandung, West Java. Meanwhile, based on the time dimension, this study is categorized as a cross-sectional study. This research was conducted by collecting data through an online survey of public officer s who worked in public organizations in Bandung City, from June to November 2020. The number of respondents who participated was 127 people who filled out questionnaires online.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The means, standard deviations, and internal consistency reliability estimates calculated for the scales in the study are reported in Table 1. The results demonstrated that they were lower than the average variance extracted by each latent construct. All measures proved to be reliable where the composite reliability scores were greater than 0.60. The internal consistency reliabilities are considerably accepted. Table 1 also represents descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations for all study variables of selected observations.

TABLE I. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTIC, INTERCORRELATIONS, AND PLS QUALITY CRITERIA

	1	2	3	4
1. Work-Family Conflict	<i>(.642)</i>			
2. Family-Work Conflict	.637**	<i>(.664)</i>		
3. Job Engagement	-.471*	-.489**	<i>(.810)</i>	
4. Job Burnout	-.201*	-.274*	.263*	<i>(.924)</i>
Mean	2.452	2.115	3.880	3.389
Standard Deviation	3.153	3.425	3.079	3.318
AVE	.585	.523	.519	.710
Composite Reliability	.786	.523	.809	.929

Notes : \*\*p, 0.01; \*p, 0.05; Cronbach's alphas for each scale are italicized and shown in the diagonal.

Based on table 1, work-to-family conflict and family-work conflict are associated with decreased job engagement. But in line with that findings, work-to-family conflict and family-work conflict are associated with decreased job burnout. Another interesting finding is job engagement and job burnout are positively correlated (figure 2).

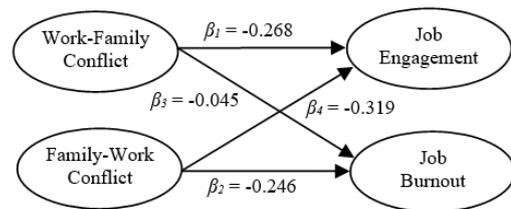


Fig. 2. Path coefficient.

It was revealed that the work-family conflict influenced the job engagement ( $\beta_1 = -0.268, p < 0.05$ ) in the study and thus, relationship between two aspects was statistically significant. It was also revealed that the family-work conflict significantly influenced the job engagement at the level ( $\beta_4 = -0.319, p < 0.05$ ). From the point of these findings which were obtained in the research, hypothesis H1 was accepted as both work-family conflict and family-work conflict affects negatively on the job engagement. It was revealed that work-family conflict could not influenced the job burnout significantly ( $\beta_3 = -0.045, p > 0.05$ ) in the study and thus, relationship between two aspects was statistically not significant. While family-work conflict significantly influenced the job engagement at the level ( $\beta_2 = -0.246, p < 0.05$ ). Hypothesis H2 was rejected as both work-family conflict and family-work conflict affects negatively on the job burnout, but only work-family conflict that has significant effect on job burnout.

Family-work conflicts that are more reflected in family problems that take up working time in the office tend to reduce the feeling of an individual's attachment to their work, which is more indicated by individual enthusiasm in carrying out work-related activities. Consistent with previous research, this study found that the higher the level of family-work conflict felt by public officer s who work in the Bandung City area, the more probability they will feel less attached to their work.

Although a public officer may feel confident in his overall abilities, their belief in specific capacity to deal with family-work conflicts may be presumed to be less pervasive. While

this study looks at the general beliefs of individuals in possessing self-efficacy, it is possible that the self-efficacy of certain family-work conflicts considers a person's beliefs in his capacity to resolve conflicts between these roles. It is possible that the individuals in this study felt very confident in their ability to overcome obstacles in general, but less secure in their ability to deal with work-family conflicts. Therefore, the impact is that this cannot be directly related to the level of one's attachment to work. In the end, there is no significant effect of work-family conflict on the job attachment among public officers who work in Bandung. The findings of this study contradict previous research hypotheses and empirical findings (for example Kesumaningsari and Simarmata, 2014; Karatepe and Karadas, 2016; and Purwayoga et al., 2019) which indicate that the higher the perceived work-family conflict will reduce the individual's attachment to work.

Contrary to the hypothesis that has been put forward, the research findings are not consistent with the perspective of alignment between inter-role conflicts and job demand resources. That the conflict that comes from family to work that is felt by public officers does not make them feel more tired at work, especially in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduction in personal achievement. What happens to these public officers is that job burnout decreases when employees feel that family-work conflicts have increased. Like work-family conflicts, the more employees feel family-work conflicts, this will increase their self-existence during the difficulties faced, especially in this pandemic condition. Next is the potential for job burnout which has decreased with an increase in conflict between these roles (family and work) which shows the increasing demands of each role that is carried out by an employee who works in the public sector.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study shows that work-family conflict and family-work conflict affect job burnout and job engagement in different ways. Both forms of inter-role conflict can affect job engagement, but what is surprising is that only family-work conflict has an important effect on the level of job burnout felt by public sector employees. It is even more interesting that the more family-work conflict feels, employees tend to judge that the job burnout they feel has decreased. To avoid or reduce these unfavourable outcomes, public officers have turned to different ways of reducing perceptions and or experiences with family work conflicts.

This study reviews and analyses the relationship between work-family conflict and family-work conflict associated with job burnout and job engagement, and reveals interesting findings about how and why these relationships occur. By affirming the idea that individuals perceive a person's role conflict events as a threat, the results of this study add to the knowledge of why work-family and family-work conflicts cause a decrease in job burnout. In addition, the results of this study underline the importance of work-family conflict as a characteristic of inter-role conflict that can lead to decreased experience in job

burnout. In addition, this study suggests that while individuals may view work and family issues differently, even the most selfish individuals will experience stress or stress on roles when work life interferes with work and family life. Finally, this study enhances our understanding of the conflict between roles (work and family) and confirms its role as a multidimensional phenomenon that requires further research and investigation.

Because the research is cross-sectional, further research is expected to use a longitudinal research model. When there is an adjustment, development, or improvement of policies in the field of human resource management in public sector organizations, it will be very interesting and give better practical implications when looking at the comparison between conditions at one particular time and the next, especially after interventions in the form of human resource policy.

Future research should be more careful about modelling and examining the interrelationships among the various sources and forms of conflict between roles. Particular attention should be paid to identifying antecedents, moderators, and interrelationships between variables. The use of structural equation modelling is still recommended because it allows more complex relationships to be identified in research.

Further investigation is suggested to review the correlation of work-based attitudes and / or behaviours with work-family conflict among public officials is very important. Furthermore, this area of research should also explore whether the frequency or intensity of officials or public managers can moderate the relationship between work-family conflict and how it relates to the forms of attitudes and behaviours observed. For example, public officials who provide public services to the public on a routine basis on a weekly basis may have a different experience from those providing occasional care, because special needs arise (i.e., workplace flexibility may have a stronger effect on work-family conflicts among intermittent employees, compared to those who provide regular weekly care). In the end, reducing the experience of role conflict is essential to building employee welfare, as well as ensuring they can provide the best quality public services.

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