

Investigating the simple and moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in teaching hospitals in Ahvaz: 2021

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Abstract

Introduction: Nowadays, conflicts between work and family demands are an inevitable problem in the society. The aim of present study was to investigate the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in teaching hospitals in Ahvaz.

Methods: The present study is a descriptive and correlational study conducted on 110 (55 males and 55 females) working in teaching hospitals of Ahvaz in 2021. A convenience sampling method was used in this study. Mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient and moderator regression analysis were used to describe and analyze the data. SPSS-22 software was used to analyze the obtained data.

Results: The mean age of male and female participants was 32 and 33, respectively. This study showed that there is a significant negative correlation between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction ($p < 0.001$) and a positive correlation between dyadic coping and marital satisfaction at a significant level of $p < 0.001$. The results of moderator regression analysis showed that dyadic coping moderates the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in both males and females.

Conclusion: The results of this study indicate that dyadic coping can reduce the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction. In other words, the relationship between work-family, family-work conflict and marital satisfaction is higher in males and females who have higher dyadic coping than males and females who have lower dyadic coping.

Keywords: Dyadic coping, Work-Family Conflict, Marital Satisfaction.

Introduction

Marriage is known as the most important and fundamental human relationship. It provides the basic structure for family formation and bringing up future generations. Satisfaction with this relationship is extremely important. Marital satisfaction has been described in some texts as

coordination between the current situation and the ideal situation [1]. Marital life, as one of the most important factors affecting family performance, is affected by various factors such as economic status, religion, number of children, age of marriage and employment status [2].

In today's societies, management of work and family responsibilities is facing increasing problems and one of the main factors is the dramatic changes in the nature of the workplace and families, including increasing women's participation in the workplace and the number of households in which man and woman are employed. Although employees are expected to balance their job and family expectations, participation in both areas will lead to work-family and family-work conflict [3]. Work-family conflict is a special type of conflict between roles in which the person is involved simultaneously with different and incompatible demands arising from work and family responsibilities. It means that whenever people are unable to perform their job and family duties simultaneously, they experience a conflict between work and family roles and this type of conflict is known as work-family conflict [4].

Family-work conflict occurs when a family activity interferes with work activities. This type of conflict may be caused by several factors such as lack of spouse support, equality in the division of work at home, care for children or the elderly, or gender [5]. Studies indicate that work-family and family-work conflict have negative consequences such as reduced job and marital satisfaction, absenteeism and leaving the workplace [6]. Hennessey and Kelly (2005) showed that there is a significant negative relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction. Conflict for individuals as a major source of stress is associated with negative consequences such as increased risks to the health of working parents, poor performing of parental duties and spousal duties, mood swings, decreased life satisfaction and low mental health [7].

Nowadays, every person experiences stress in daily life and inevitably tries to respond to those factors by adopting a unique method. Stress is a special force that puts pressure on an object and causes temporary and permanent changes in its structure [8]. Marital relationship can be considered as one of the most important aspects of every person's life. Investigating couples' relationships helps to clarify the structural frameworks in which these relationships are formed. One of the dimensions of these relationships is coping strategies that couples use when faced with marital problems [9]. Based on the Bodenman (2005) theory, couples react in certain ways during marital conflict and dissatisfaction with the situations that occur in marital relationships, and these ways and practices are often seen as a dominant behavioral pattern continuously throughout marital life [10]. A great number of psychological factors affect the quality of communication and relationships between spouses. Studies indicate that dyadic coping is one of the determining and influential factors in the quality of relationships. Effective dyadic coping not only reduces stress and increases marital satisfaction, but also increases the feeling of "we" in spouses [11].

Bradbury and Pasch (1998) argue that the dyadic coping methods seen by the spouse affect the marital satisfaction of the couples. Based on a systemic-exchange model, when a stressful situation arises, each couple communicates with the other partner based on their assessment of that situation and uses one of the types of coping. Thus, in the framework of this theory, the stress of communication between the two partners connects them like a hook. Some researchers have focused on individuals' assessments of the effectiveness of coping styles as a tool for prediction. Thematic studies on the effectiveness of an individual's efforts can be viewed as a vital part of the stress and coping process [13]. Supportive dyadic coping as a moderator factor can play a protective role in the relationship between stressful stimuli and work-family conflict and have an interactive effect on work-related stressful stimuli, and thus indirectly reduce the effect of stressful stimuli on the occurrence of family-work conflict. Also, in both job and family domains, it moderates the effect of experienced stress on the characteristics of health and well-being of individuals such as job satisfaction and family satisfaction [4].

Adams and King also argue that the emotional and instrumental support received from the family is negatively associated with work-family conflict [14]. If spouses have difficulty in balancing their work and family roles, all aspects of their lives will be affected by this imbalance and reduced marital satisfaction is one of the most important consequences of these two types of conflict [15]. Thus, the only way to deal with this stress is to cope with it. The way couples cope with this stress and conflict is one of the determinants of their life satisfaction. Coordination of both couples and their equal and effective coping style is an effective factor in creating harmony in coping with stressful situations [8]. Thus, the present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the simple and moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in Ahvaz teaching hospitals.

Methods

This study is a descriptive and correlational research conducted in 2021. The statistical population of this study included males and females working in teaching hospitals (Golestan, Razi, Abuzar, Sina, Imam Khomeini and Taleghani hospitals) in Ahvaz. The sample consisted of 100 people (50 males and 50 females), who were selected using a convenience and voluntary sampling method. Data collection tools included three questionnaires: Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, Dyadic Coping Inventory and Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire (ENRICH). The mean and standard deviation of the age of the research sample were 31.81 and 33.24 years, respectively.

Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire: This questionnaire includes 13 items with minimum and maximum scores of 13 and 65, respectively. The items on this scale are scored on 5-point Likert scale (1 = disagreement, 2 = low agreement, 3 = moderate agreement, 4 = high agreement, and 5 = very high agreement). The items 3, 4, 6, 8 and 11 are scored in reverse. Rajabi obtained two factors of marital satisfaction and marital dissatisfaction using factor analysis. Mehreban reported its test-retest coefficient and internal consistency at 0.83 and 0.94, respectively. Rajabi reported concurrent validity of this scale on a number of employees at 0.83 and 0.81 for males and females, respectively [16].

Work-Family and Family-Work Conflict Scale: This scale was developed by Net Meyer to assess work-family and family-work conflicts and has 10 questions scored on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, and 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of this tool for work-family conflict and family-work conflict was reported at 0.91 and 0.88, respectively. Concurrent validity of these two subscales was negatively correlated with life satisfaction and job satisfaction scales [16].

Dyadic Coping Inventory (DCI): Dyadic Coping Inventory is a 37-item tool with 9 subscales. This questionnaire gives a general score, which is called the total score of the dyadic coping. Higher scores indicate higher dyadic coping. The respondent measures his / her answers on a 5-Likert scale (never = 1, rarely = 2, sometimes = 3, often = 4, always = 5). The reliability of this questionnaire was obtained at 92% in males and 93% in females by Bodenman during a study on 2399 subjects (males = 1072, females = 1327) using Cronbach's alpha method. For the first time, in Iran, Ozuni Duji used Dyadic Coping Inventory. He calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the whole 37-item scale at 92% for males and 93% for females [17].

Available samples, including employed males and females, were selected for the study. Then, they participated in this test by informing and inviting, and after expressing the principle of confidentiality about the answers and objectives of the research, the questionnaires were provided to them. To analyze the research data, statistical indices and methods including mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient and moderator regression analysis were used. In this study, data were analyzed using SPSS 22 software.

Results

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Table 1: Correlation coefficient between predictor variables and criterion variable (marital satisfaction) in males and females

variable	Criterion Predictor variable	Marital satisfaction in males			Marital satisfaction in females		
conflict	Work-family	.742	10	.001	.743	10	.001
conflict	Family-work	.799	10	.001	.810	10	.001
coping	Dyadic	.937	10	.001	.929	10	.001

As shown in Table 1, there is a negative correlation between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in males and females, there is a negative correlation between family-work and marital satisfaction in males and females and there is a positive correlation between dyadic coping and marital satisfaction in females and males.

Table 2: Results of moderator regression analysis related to the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in males

Statistical indices	R	R ²	F P	Regression coefficients			
				1	2	3	B β t p
Predictor variables							
Family-work	%74	%55	132.27 0.001	-0.88 -0.74 -11.50 0.001	-	-	B β t p
Dyadic coping	%94	%88	389.57 0.001	0.04 0.03 0.64 0.52	-0.06 0.97 17.06 0.001	-	B β t p
dyadic coping×work-family	%94	%88	258.62 0.001	-0.06 -0.05 -0.39	0.25 0.89 7.69	0.001 0.82 7.69	B β t

			0.69	0.001	0.001	p
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As shown in Table 2, the interaction of work-family conflict and dyadic coping has increased the level of variance explained by the criterion variable (marital satisfaction) without the combined effect of previous predictor variables. Regression coefficients related to work-family conflict and dyadic coping ($\beta = 0.89$ and $p < 0.001$) interaction show that this increase is statistically significant and it can be stated that dyadic coping moderates the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in males.

Table 3: Results of moderator regression analysis related to the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in females

Predictor variables	Statistical indices		F P	Regression coefficients			
	R	R ²		1	2	3	-
	Family-work	%74		%55	133.17 0.001	-0.94 -0.74 -11.54 0.001	-
Dyadic coping	%94	%88	368.45 0.001	0.24 0.19 2.89 0.005	0.30 1.09 16.45 0.001	-	B β t p
dyadic coping×work-family	%94	%88	243.79 0.001	0.15 0.12 0.67 0.50	0.28 1.03 6.33 0.001	0.001 0.87 10.40 0.001	B β t p

As shown in Table 3, the interaction of work-family conflict and dyadic coping has increased the value of variance explained by the criterion variable (marital satisfaction) without the combined effect of previous predictor variables. Regression coefficients related to work-family conflict and dyadic coping ($b = 0.87$ and $p < 0.001$) interaction show that this increase is statistically significant and it can be stated that dyadic coping moderates the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in females.

Table 4: Results of moderator regression analysis related to the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in females

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Statistical indices		R	R ²	F P	Regression coefficients			
Predictor variables					1	2	3	
Family-work	%80				%64	190.28 0.001	-0.95	
		-0.79					β	
		-13.79	-	-			t	
		0.001					p	
Dyadic coping	%94	%88	392.50 0.001	-0.07	0.25		B	
				-0.06	0.88		β	
				-1.06	14.69	-	t	
				0.29	0.001		p	
dyadic coping×work-family	%94	%88	267.23 0.001	-0.31	0.20	0.002	B	
				-0.26	0.73	0.94	β	
				-1.99	6.82	11.69	t	
				0.04	0.001	0.092	p	

As Table 4 shows, the family-work conflict and dyadic coping interaction increased the level of variance explained by the criterion variable (marital satisfaction) without the combined effect of the previous predictor variables. Regression coefficients related to work-family conflict interaction and dyadic coping ($b = 0.94$ and $p < 0.001$) show that this increase is statistically significant and it can be stated that dyadic coping modulates the relationship between family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in males.

Table 5: Results of moderator regression analysis related to the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in females

Statistical indices		R	R ²	F P	Regression coefficients			
Predictor variables					1	2	3	

Family-work	%80	%64	190.28 0.001	-0.95 -0.79 -13.79 0.001	-	-	B β t p
Dyadic coping	%94	%88	392.50 0.001	-0.07 -0.06 -1.06 0.29	0.25 0.88 14.69 0.001	-	B β t p
dyadic coping×work-family	%94	%88	267.23 0.001	-0.31 -0.26 -1.99 0.04	0.20 0.73 6.82 0.001	0.002 0.94 11.69 0.092	B β t p

Based on Table 5, it can be seen that the interaction of family-work conflict and dyadic coping has increased the level of variance explained by the criterion variable (marital satisfaction) in females without the combined effect of previous predictor variables. Regression coefficients related to work-family conflict and dyadic coping ($b = 0.92$ and $p < 0.001$) interaction in females show that this increase is statistically significant and it can be stated that dyadic coping moderates the relationship between family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in females.

Discussion

The aim of present study was to investigate the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction. The first hypothesis of the study states that there is a positive correlation between dyadic coping and marital satisfaction in males and females. The results of Pearson correlation coefficients confirm this hypothesis and in line with these results, the results of studies in this area [11-14-14-12] showed that dyadic coping has a positive relationship with marital satisfaction. Based on this result, it can be stated that according to the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model, the methods that couples use in the face of life events are the key factors that affect their perception of the quality of their marriage. Adaptive processes of couples are the result of the interaction between the stable individual vulnerabilities of couples and the type and severity of life events. Thus, marital satisfaction is higher in couples with lower vulnerabilities and more appropriate adaptive processes than in couples with lower stable vulnerabilities and appropriate adaptive processes [12].

The results of Pearson correlation coefficients also showed a negative relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction in males and females. This result is consistent with that of studies conducted in this area [18-17-15-7]. Almost all of the studies conducted on work-family conflict agree that work-family and family-work conflict can have unfavorable effects on individuals, organizations and families [4]. Research on work-family and family-work conflict shows that the first area that is influenced by these two types of conflict is marital satisfaction and job satisfaction, and this conflict is equally important for individuals and organizations. At the organizational level, it is associated with reduced productivity, reduced employee job satisfaction, employee absenteeism, and reduced organizational commitment. At the individual level, it is a major source of stress, negative outcomes such as increasing the risk to the health of the working mother and father, inefficient performing of parental duties, reduced marital satisfaction, reduced mental health, reduced quality of work and family life, and reduced life satisfaction [7].

Pleck (2005) argues that work-family and family-work conflict teach couples that their spouse cannot meet all their social, intellectual, emotional, and recreational needs. This is a lifestyle for hardworking spouses. Spouses have less time to spend time with each other and with their friends.

Sometimes couples even try to meet the need for intimacy with their friends and colleagues, and their spouses enjoy less marital satisfaction [19]. Moderator regression analysis showed that dyadic coping reduces the negative relationship between work-family and family-work conflict and marital satisfaction. These results are consistent with results of studies conducted in this area [11-14-16-20-20-21-22]. Studies indicate that dyadic coping is one of the determining and influential factors in the quality of relationships. Effective dyadic coping not only reduces stress and increases marital satisfaction, but also increases the feeling of “we” in spouses [11].

Supportive dyadic coping as a moderator can play a protective role in the relationship between stressful stimuli and work-family conflict and have an interactive effect on work-induced stressful stimuli, and indirectly reduce the effect of stressful stimuli on work-family conflict. Also, in the two areas of work and family, it can moderate the effect of the experienced pressure on the health and well-being of people such as job satisfaction and family satisfaction [20]. Spouse support plays a moderator role in the additional burden of parental role in work-family and family-work conflict [21]. Social support also affects both work-family and family-work conflicts [22].

Conclusion

The present study showed that high dyadic coping in males and females working in the hospital could reduce the conflict between work-family and family-work with marital satisfaction. Also, there is a positive correlation between the variables of dyadic coping and marital satisfaction and a negative correlation between work-family and family-work conflict. Accordingly, given the moderator role of dyadic coping in the relationship between work-family and family-work conflict, males and females with higher dyadic coping than those with lower dyadic coping can reduce conflict between work-family and family-work conflict with marital satisfaction.

Recommendations

Since the results of studies indicate the high impact of dyadic coping on marital satisfaction and stability, it is recommended to teach dyadic coping techniques effectively to couples.

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