

**Article Critique on Telecommuting's**

**Impact on Work–Family Conflict**

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The article, *Telecommuting's Differential Impact on Work–Family Conflict: Is There No Place Like Home?*, offers a literature review on the impacts of telecommuting in balancing work and family demands. According to the international telework association council, approximately 28 million individuals were telecommuters in the United States in 2001. And therefore, teleworking has become a work mode embraced by many. Many companies are attracted to this work mode because they believe employees working from home can meet their work and family demands. However, this notion may not hold because there is limited and scarce evidence on how telecommuting affects work-family conflict. Besides, there are various interpretations of how telecommuting work affects work and family. For example, some studies claim that due to telecommuting, there is no conflict in families or work because the employee can meet both demands equally. Unfortunately, other studies suggest that telecommuting causes a lot of conflicts because family demands are likely to increase employee accessibility at home, affecting their productivity at work. These numerous interpretations are caused by failure to capture the bidirectional factor of a work-life and family work conflict. And thus, most studies have concentrated on the unidirectional factor of the work-life balance, putting more emphasis on the family. These studies may have numerous interpretations because they fail to specify the conflict direction in their findings.

The article's purpose is to address the limitations that result from the numerous interpretations of work-life balance in telecommuting. The study surveyed 454 telecommuter employees to determine work-family conflict and family work conflict are impacted by telecommuting mode of work. Furthermore, for better analysis, the study involved factors such

as family size, the flexibility of the schedule, and job autonomy because they can affect how an employee contributes to their work and family life.

The study focuses on how telecommuting influences work-family conflict and family-work conflict. To account for organizational differences, the study focused on a high-tech company that was actively involved in a telecommuting program with 12 610 employees engaged in the work mode out of 34 employees. Using random sampling, the company allocated 1261 professional employees to the study and later contacted them through email, requesting them to participate in a survey concerning telecommuting. The study thus received 454 respondents willing to participate in the survey, both women and men, estimated at 35% and 65%, respectively. And therefore, the sample size in the study was 454, with an average age of 37, having been involved in teleworking for an average of four years and working 45 hours every week. After that, the study measured the work-family conflict, family conflict, telecommuter work extent, job autonomy, household size, and flexibility in the schedule. The respondents' answers were confidential and anonymous.

For the work-family conflict, the study utilized six items, three focusing on the psychological strain and three focusing on the time factor. The respondent was offered answers on a 5-point scale and asked to choose the suitable ones. for example, on the psychological strain, the respondent responded that the ability to work under pressure refrains them from doing the things they like. Similarly, the two factors of time and strain were measured on the family work conflict with a maximum of 6 items. An example item relating to the time factor is missing important work activities because they spend much completing family responsibilities. The study also conducted a confirmatory factor analysis for additional evidence by comparing the result of 12 items to the two-factor model. On the measure of telecommuting work extent, the study

focuses on finding out how many hours per week the respondents spend working from home. The study wanted to determine the amount of control the respondents have to complete the tasks assigned to them by the supervisor by focusing on job autonomy. The measure was conducted using four items, and a regression analysis was performed on the hypothesis to ensure its reliability in the study. An example of an item was asking the respondent about the number of written rules and procedures they must follow in their work. Besides, analyzing the scheduling flexibility in the telecommuting program using five items to determine how flexible the respondents are in determining how much they are supposed to do and when to work. And finally, the household size analysis involved the total number of people residing in a home; therefore, the study involved the children, elderly, and extended family members living in the respondent's time. However, the analysis cannot be complete without controlled variables. Therefore, the authors controlled variables such as age, gender, management level, and tenure because they would probably cause invalid results.

Generally, the research question that a study is willing to explore determines the study design. The study used a correlational research design to measure various variables without alterations. Based on the study, the correlational research design is appropriate for the research hypothesis. It is fundamental that before deciding on research methodology, one has to determine the research goal. In this case, the study aims to reconcile the contradicting perspective on how telecommuting impacts the work-family context. And to achieve this, the study measured variables such as telecommuting extent, the flexibility of the schedule, and household size against work-family conflict and family-work conflict using the hierarchical regression method. The correlational research methodology is also suitable for the hypothesis because it focuses on statistical analysis methods. And therefore, the possibility of obtaining data-driven quality study

increases. For example, the study utilizes the mean statistical method to find out how variables such as age, gender, management level, and household sizes are overall distributed in the research. The use of the statistical regression method also gives an analysis of variable that is independent and dependent in the study. Furthermore, the correlational research methodology aligns with the research hypothesis because it uses quantitative data obtained through surveys to achieve the desired outcomes of the study. For example, the study obtains quantitative data that supports or negates the hypothesis by asking about job authority, working hours, and the number of people in every home a telecommuter occupies.

And finally, the correlational research methodology is appropriate for the study hypothesis because it considers an appropriate sample size. The sample size of 454 employees is good because the study used a web-based survey to collect confidential and anonymous data from the respondents. Besides, the survey tool of data collection is suitable for the sample size. There are various statistical methods used in the study. The study used the mean on various data such as age, household size, job atony, management level, gender, telecommuting extent, WFC, and FWC. the calculation of mean is effective in the study because it provides an overall trend of data in the study. Secondly, the study used standard deviation to analyze similar variables as the mean. The standard deviation method is effective because it describes how data relates to the mean. Furthermore, the authors utilized the statistical regression method to determine how independent and dependent variables relate. In this case, the independent variable is WFC and FWC. However, job autonomy, scheduling flexibility, control variables, and telecommuting extent are the dependent variables.

The study established the results by conducting separate hierarchical regression analyses on two models, the WFC and FWC, against control variables. Hypothesis 1 is supported because

the result indicates that individuals who highly indulge in telecommuting have limited work-family conflict hence a negative relationship. The results also support hypothesis 2, which predicted a positive impact between Family work conflict and telecommuting extent. However, the study partially supported hypothesis 3a, predicting that the job autonomy can limit the negative relationship between WFC and telecommuting extent. The study results also indicate that there was no analysis to support hypothesis 3b. And thus, the positive relationship between family work conflict and telecommuting extent cannot be moderated by job autonomy.

Further analysis also indicates that the results support hypothesis s 4a, indicating that the negativity between WFC and telecommuting extent can be moderated through scheduling flexibility. And therefore, with higher scheduling flexibility, the work-family conflict reduces faster. Unfortunately, the study failed to support hypothesis 4b, that scheduling flexibility can moderate the positive impact of telecommuting extent on FWC. And finally, based on the household size variable, the study did not support hypothesis 5a but supported hypothesis 5b.

Therefore, negativity between WFC and telecommuting extent cannot be moderated using household size. However, positivity between FWC can be moderated using the household size.

The study, therefore, reconciles a bidirectional view of the work-family conflict. Can eliminate the contradicting perspective in the literature review. And therefore, through examination of the differential impact of telecommuting on work and family using separate models. Based on the hypothesis, the study finds out that in increased involvement of telecommuting by an individual, their work interference is reduced, lowering WFC when family interference with work FWC rises. The study result also indicates the size of the household, job autonomy, and flexibility of the schedule plays a vital role in establishing the relationship between telecommuting work mode and the work-family context. For example, job autonomy limits the negativity between WFC and

telecommuting extent, but telecommuters with more authority in the job experienced no moderation on the negativity between the two entities. The study finding has the capability of developing future research on the aspect of strain and time. And thus, future research must focus on how time and contains factors contribute to the aspect of WFC, focusing on scale and extent of each item. Future studies can also focus on analyzing the tradeoff of conflict and enrichment in the family and work context.

References:

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