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Impact of Smart Gadgetry on Flexibility, Permeability and Job/Life Satisfaction of Professional Women in Telecom Industry

Z. LATIF

Center of Advance Studies in Engineering, Islamabad

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Abstract: The purpose of this research was to check the impact of connectivity on border strengths and resultant effects on job/life satisfaction. Quantitative research methodology was used to conduct this research. World recognized questionnaires were used to cater for reliability and validity issues. A sample size of 325 respondents was collected through self-administered questionnaires. Only 175 questionnaires were found usable. Combination of stratified sampling and random sampling was used to collect data from women in Telecom Industry from major cities of Pakistan. Statistical analysis was performed in SPSS. Questionnaire used Likert scale so ordinal data was computed to get continuous variables. Regressions were performed to determine the direction, magnitude and causal relationship of the variables. Results proved that connectivity of work/home blurs that border strengths. This boundary blurring impacts the job/life satisfaction of the professional female workers. Policies need to be formulated to avoid this blurring and enhance family/job satisfaction of this important work force of these organizations.

Keywords: Work/Home connectivity, Border Blurring, Job/life satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

A lot of research has been conducted on impact of connectivity and boundary blurring in different countries (Gutek *et al.*, 1987; Edwards and Rothbard, 2000; Jeffrey *et al.,* 1985; Greenhaus and Allen, 2011). Organizations of today are worried about well-being of their employ more than ever before. Main reason for this interest is the reason the satisfied workers can perform much better (Kossek and Ozeki, 1999; Rau and Hyland, 2002). Work-family balance had been deliberated upon by Clark (2000). It has also been elaborated that in today's fast changing technologies and fasting pace of professional workforce the boundary blurring occurs (Orlikowski, 2007; Othman *et al.*, 2009; Roy 2016). In developed countries several policies and procedures have been finalized to avoid the burden of work after the work hours but in developing countries non-existence of rules and procedures have aggravated the situation for the professionals.

The growing telecom industry worldwide has witnessed the entrance of women professionals in technical, professional and managerial departmentsat all levels (Yun e*t al.*, 2012; Fleck *et al*., 2015; Skatova *et al*., 2016). The cultural differences do have a strong impact on this boundary blurring which lea to un-satisfied workers. Park *et al.* (2011) relate the long and dedicated connection that professional men had with their work to the partner support at home. Professional women, however, striving for high level, elite careers face a head on collision with the cultural model defining their primary bent as marriage and motherhood, and hence a conflict between tangled nurturing and elite career (Blair-Loy, 2009).

The research was conducted to determine the impact of work/home connectivity on boundary blurring and its' resultant effects on job and family satisfaction of female professionals of Pakistan Telecom industry. Pakistani culture is very different than the western world and till now no prominent policies have earthed which have addressed these issues. This was the basic motivation of this research.

Clark (2000) called both flexibility and permeability as blending while another researcher (Ashforth, 2000) called as integrated. Nippert-Eng (1996) proposed this blurring between work and family to be greater in integration of domains. Contrary to this argument, segmentation of boundaries makes them "thicker", which means separate behaviors, roles schedules and behaviors in both domains and hence crossing over between borders/boundaries becomes difficult. These authors argued that working at the same place as working at home in different forms of work such as telecommuting can lead to the blurring of boundaries between work and family and lead to the reduction of work family conflict in time perspective but equally give a chance to create work family conflict in other aspects.

It is generally perceived by women that in Pakistan men expect a woman to be a good wife and a good

++Corresponding author's e-mail: Z. LATIF l ateef.zahida@gmail.com

mother, reflecting a typical stereotypical culture and expectations. The current global job sector trends demand individuals to work longer hours, being in touch with work place all the time less control over schedules give rise to job stress and conflict (Park *et al*., 2007; Duxbury *et al*., 2011 Butts *et al*., 2015) these trends are also followed in Pakistan with cultural constraints thus adding to further burden for women. In Western countries people generally keep work and family relationships separate but in Asia and in Pakistan specifically people merge the two domains. These factors impact on the professional career advancement for female in managerial and technical forms. In a survey undertaken by PASHA in 2012, women generally feel more strained by work, inadequate benefits and discernment in promotion. The general perception about women to be more involved in family commitments adds to unequal promotion chances for them (Huffman, 2013).

Based on the literature review of this research theoretical framework was finalized for this research. As elaborated with the help of schematic diagram as shown in **(Fig. 1)**. It was hypothesized that connectivity impact work and home border strengths (Flexibility and Permeability).

"Flexibility is the degree to which spatial and temporal boundaries are pliant to the needs of the domains" (Ashforth, 2000). "Permeability is the degree to which a person physically located in one domain (i.e. the home domain) allows psychological and behavioral elements from another domain (i.e. the work domain) to enter" (Gold and Mustafa, 2013).

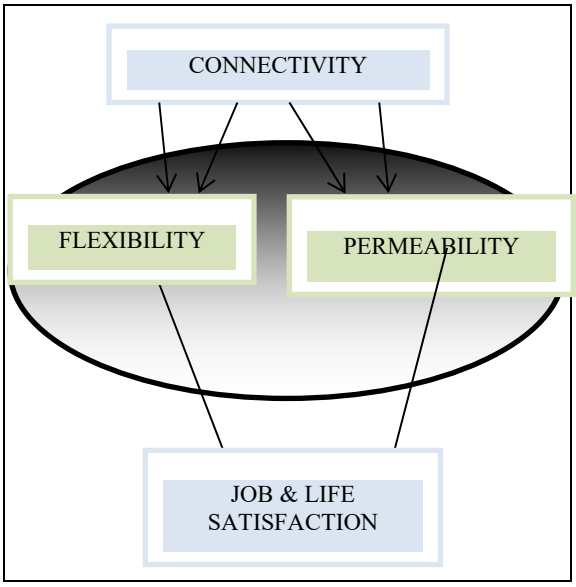


Fig 1 Schematic Diagram of Theoretical Framework

Therefore, following were hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1: Connectivity is positively related with flexibility.

Hypothesis 2: Connectivity is positively related with permeability.

Hypothesis 3: Connectivity is negatively related with work/family border strength.

"Job/family satisfaction is the extent to which employees are satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs/family lives" (Spector, 1985). According to Lawler and Hall "Satisfaction proved to be related to such job characteristics as the amount of control the job allowed the holder and the degree to which it is seen to be relevant to the holder's valued abilities. Satisfaction was not related to either self-rated effort or performance" (Lawler and Hall, 1970). The correlations between high flexibility, low permeability, and low work–family conflict depend upon people choosing the balancing mechanisms between work and life (Rau and Hyland, 2002).Therefore, hypothesis would be that:

Hypothesis 4: Strong work/family boundary is positively related with job and life satisfaction.
Hypothesis 5: Weak work/family boundary is negatively related with job and life satisfaction.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research quantitative research methodology was used. Close ended questions were asked on 5 point Likert scale for all the understudy variables. Questionnaires used to measure the variables are extracted from published work. This explanatory study was conducted to understand and explain the extent of relationship between work-family border strengths and job/life satisfaction. This study also explored relationship of work connectivity on work/family border strength.

In order to ascertain the impacts of work/family boundary on work/family satisfaction world recognize questionnaires were used. Data was collected from the executive level working women of Pakistan Telecom industry. Collected data was filtered for missing values and correctly filled data was then entered in SPSS ver. 22 for further analysis. Descriptive statistics were checked. Reliability and Validity of the data was checked and confirmed. After confirming the normality assumptions correlation and regression tests were run to check the hypotheses proposed. Interpretation of the results gave the finalized results. Data was collected from white collar women workers of Pakistan Telecom industry. Combination of stratified and random sampling was used.

3. RESULTS

Firstly, reliability and validity of the data collected was tested. CFA was also performed. For reliability of the data the Cronbach alpha values of all items of individual factors should be greater than 0.7 (Cronbach, 1951) and Composite reliabilities of all items of individual constructs should be greater than 0.8 (Kline, 2011). To check the validity of the collected data this study followed four step approach of Kline (2011), in which validity of the data is confirmed after assessing following types of validity which include face validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity means whether all items are explaining variance to their relevant factor, to check the convergent validity of the collected data, the values of Composite Reliabilities (CR) should be greater than 0.8, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be greater than 0.5 and factor loadings of the relevant factor's construct should be greater than 0.7 (Fornell&Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity means all indicators are representing their relevant concept and have no engagement with other concepts. To check discriminant validity of the collected data, the square root of AVE of the factors should be greater than correlations of the selected factor with all other variables. CFA was performed on the items of Connectivity Model in Amos by drawing all the unobserved variables with their relevant indicators which were having errors terms as per rule (Kline, 2011). Then all unobserved variables co-varied for the assessment of model's items reliability and validity. After successfully computing results, firstly model fit indices was checked to check the model fit. Model fit indices were found to be in acceptable ranges as shown in **(Fig-2)**. **(Table-1)** shows the number of items and factors loadings of the collected data and **(Table-2)** shows the psychometric properties of the collected data which includes CR, AVE, square root of AVE and correlation among all the factors which were proposed in the Work Connectivity Model. The values as given in the tables proved that there were no issues of reliability and validity in the data. All the calculated results met the minimum criteria of convergent and discriminant validity.

Structural Equational Modeling confirmed the factor loadings as shown in **(Fig-2)**. All values were in range as given above. Confirmation of psychometric properties allowed the further analyses and tests. Correlations were run to see the existence of relationship between the variables which are shown in **(Table-2)**.

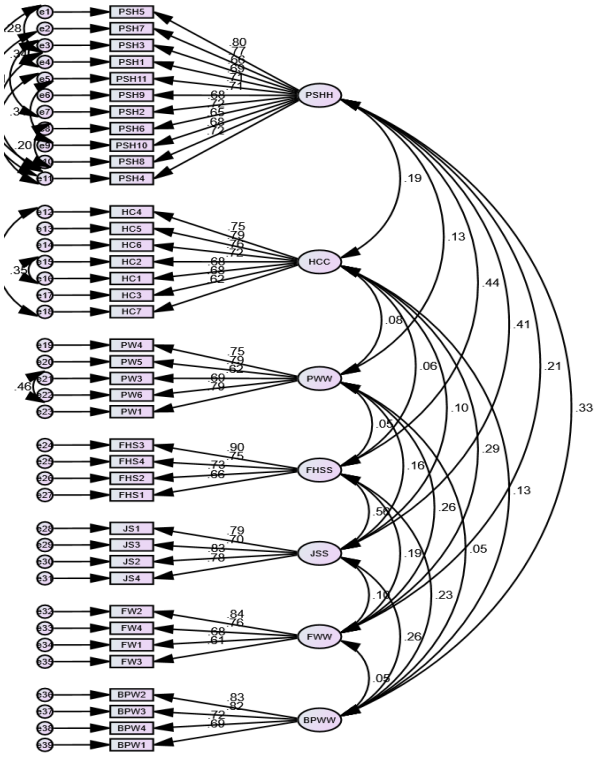


Fig. 2 Structural Equational Model

Table 1: Connectivity Model - Factor Loadings

Variables	No. of Items	Factor Loadings
Connectivity (C)	7	0.753, 0.791, 0.764, 0.725, 0.678, 0.678, 0.616
Permeability – Work (PW)	6	0.752, 0.789, 0.615, 0.695, 0.794, 0.784
Family Home Satisfaction (FHS)	4	0.904, 0.753, 0.729, 0.663
Job Satisfaction (JS)	4	0.794, 0.704, 0.830, 0.782
Flexibility – Work (FW)	4	0.835, 0.761, 0.678, 0.606

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).**

Table 2: Connectivity Model - Psychometric

	CR	AVE	FW	C	PW	FHS	JS	BPW
FW	0.814	0.526	0.725					
C	0.881	0.514	0.258**	0.717				
PW	0.851	0.536	0.288**	0.361**	0.732			
FHS	0.850	0.589	-0.299**	-0.072	-0.245**	0.767		
JS	0.860	0.607	-0.427**	-0.334**	-0.304**	0.482**	0.779	
****. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)**								

4. CONCLUSION

The central impact of connectivity on working women and their job and family life has been acknowledged and retorted to by the amount of studies conducted on the subject, the center of gravity being in western countries. The other parts of world such as Asia, lacks the studies in this regard even though the fact prevails that developing world has more work and family problems. This study deliberates the concepts of connectivity within cultural context of Pakistan and targets to fill in some of gaps in knowledge about connectivity and work family research is a non - western world and cultural context. The main purpose of the study was to inspect the impact of connectivity on the job and family satisfaction of working women in Pakistan. A cross-sectional survey was commenced to test the research hypothesis. The study sample comprised of working women in Pakistan with ages between 20 and 40 years, employed in telecom industry of Pakistan. The study has contributed to literature by testing the theories and research findings resultant from western countries that are developed economically into a completely different scenario and cultural setups. The study institutes that connectivity in both ways from work to family and from family to work directly impacts jobs and family satisfaction of working women. The results recommend that border preferences of integration and positive spoilers might help to increase job and family satisfaction. Permeability and flexibility in both work and family set up show direct and significant effect on job and family satisfaction. Thus, Western stratagem of centering on connectivity in both forms impacts on job and family life satisfaction.

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