

Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Support & Work–family Enrichment: Role of Emotional Regulation

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Can regulating one's emotions help in workplace performance? This study explores the role of emotional regulation in the workplace. In particular, the study seeks to examine the moderating effect of emotional regulation on the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and work–family enrichment (WFE). A linear regression analysis was performed on the data from 542 employees working in Indian firms to test whether emotional regulation moderated the relationship between POS and WFE. The results confirm the relationship and contribute to the literature by providing a theoretical rationale for an empirical analysis of a model wherein emotional regulation moderates the relationship between the POS and WFE of an employee.

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Introduction

For decades, the researchers have studied the relationship between paid employment and family to learn its effects on outcomes in workplace as well as family. However, how researchers define work–family interaction has evolved in line with the socio-economic changes. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) defined work–family enrichment (WFE) as the extent to which resources generated in one role improve the quality of life in the other role. This concept has remained crucial for work–family research. Studies indicate that WFE is significant to ensure positive work–family interaction. Hence, WFE has caused an awareness across numerous Western and Asian economies (Rastogi & Chaudhary, 2018).

There is growing research indicating that engaging in work and family roles generates various resources which improve performance and quality of life in work as well as family life (Kalliath, 2014; Chan et al., 2016). Research has

shown that enrichment affects work and family outcomes (McNall et al., 2010; Chan et al., 2016). Presence of WFE leads to superior job performance (Carlson et al., 2011; Karatepe and Bekteshi, 2008) and job satisfaction (Balmforth & Gardner, 2006; Bhargava & Baral, 2009; Smith et al., 1969; Karatepe & Bekteshi, 2008; Nicklin & McNall, 2011; Wayne et al., 2006). Organizational citizenship behavior is another work performance indicator positively related to WFE (Balmforth & Gardner, 2006; Bhargava & Baral, 2009).

Research on WFE in the Indian context is scant. India is the second most populous country of the world. In addition, India has low operational and labor costs and an abundant skilled workforce. Due to this, it is a global outsourcing hub. Additionally, because of recent developmental changes, such as foreign direct investments, mergers, and acquisitions, India has been catapulted to a change-driven economy (Rastogi & Chaudhary, 2018). Notably, findings from studies conducted in Western or other Asian countries cannot be generalized in the Indian context due to varying cultural perceptions regarding work and family (Chen et al., 2009). India has a collectivist culture and family plays a more significant role than work in an individual's life (Rastogi & Chaudhary, 2018). Moreover, many socio-demographic and economic changes are occurring in India. Factors such as a high literacy rate, increasing awareness about the role of gender equality, rising number of gender-neutral industries, women's career aspirations, and improvement in educational and employment opportunities

have resulted in an increased number of women in the workforce, and hence, an increase in dual-earner families (Baral & Bhargava, 2011).

Studies on work-family interaction are performed at an individual level considering constant variables such as dispositional characteristics and demographic differences (Eby et al., 2005). A definite disadvantage of almost all the approaches that study work and family is the unavailability of any actionable knowledge or guidance for the individuals or managers who want to advance their WFE experience. Actionable advice can enable individuals to make informed choices about practical problems. This can help them further to implement solutions to these problems effectively. Individuals are not robots that react to the challenging situations according to how they are programmed. They, with their emotions, play a crucial role in influencing work-family outcomes (Kreiner et al., 2009). In this study, we addressed this gap by considering emotional regulation in relation to enrichment. Emotional regulation entails prolonging the positive effects, thus reducing the duration of the adverse effects (Gross, 1998).

Research on WFE has focused on organizational-level interventions, including many macro level rather than individual level variables, such as work-life balance policies and job characteristics. These variables are positively related to WFE and facilitate their implementation in organizations (Baral & Bhargava, 2010; 2011; Bhargava & Baral, 2009). However, the results of the effects of such policies are

varying and indicate a only partial influence on employees' work-family experiences (Lambert & Kossek, 2004). Thus, although provisions available at the organizational level attempt to encourage employees' work-family positive spillovers, these are insufficient to ensure WFE for all employees.

Greenhaus and Powell (2006), proposed five different resources that can be generated in one role and can aid in improving quality of life/performance in the other role. They define a resource as an asset that can be drawn on when needed to solve a problem or cope with a challenging situation. They mention that WFE is said to occur with the help of one or most of the five types of resources that can be generated in a role: skills and perspectives, psychological and physical resources, social-capital resources, flexibility, and material resources. The material resources could be financial remuneration; skills resources could be skills acquired while in the role like inter-personal skills, time management skills. The physical and/or psychological resources could be self-esteem, positive affect. The social-capital resources could be networks developed while in the job role which continue to help in the family life as well.

The psychological resource would comprise individual's emotions and the state of mind as a result of these emotions. This could be explained as the positive emotion generated at work place due to praise received from supervisor in the employee carrying that positive emotion to family resulting in improving the quality of family life. Similarly, the stress or

conflict at work would result in the employee carrying that negative emotion to family thus deteriorating the quality of life in the family.

The significance of emotional expression in both work and family life, as well as the influence on health outcomes, is gaining prominence (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). The ability to control, suitably present, and manage one's emotions is related to effective functioning within the family and work spheres. However, this aspect of emotional regulation has not been examined in the literature (Giardini and Frese, 2006). Moreover, the research on the emotional experience of work and family life usually focuses on its negative aspects (Eby et al., 2010; Judge et al., 2006). Experiences in the family domain are the most crucial source of contentment and emotional well-being. Therefore, it is essential to link emotions by using constructive facets of work-family interactions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Emotional expression is a critical constituent in both work and family life as emotions can affect health outcomes and facilitate the understanding of organizational behavior. Surprisingly, studies focusing on this aspect are scant (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). The objective of this study is to address how emotional regulation affects the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and WFE.

Work-family Enrichment

Work-family enrichment is the positive inter-relationship between work and family and we have defined it as the ex-

tent to which experience in one role improves the quality of life namely, performance or affect, in the other role. WFE represents the extent to which the experiences, skills, and opportunities gained at work improve family life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Enrichment in one role can facilitate stress coping mechanisms in another role and identified two paths that promote the WFE process-an instrumental path and an affective path.

Founded on the role accumulation theory, WFE focuses on the positive side of engaging in multiple roles and is in agreement with positive psychology, hence it has been a crucial aspect of work-family research. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed a comprehensive theoretical framework for enrichment. They suggested that enrichment in one role can facilitate stress coping mechanisms in another role and identified two paths that promote the WFE process-an instrumental path and an affective path. The instrumental path consists of five factors, namely skills, psychological and physical resources, social capital resources, flexibility, and material resources. The affective route consists of positive effects that mediate the impact of the instrumental factors.

Research on WFE suggests a positive relation between organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment and WFE (McNall et al., 2010) and a negative relationship

between WFE and turnover intentions (Crain & Hammer, 2013).

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support is defined as employees' perceptions of the value that an organization places on their contributions and the organization's concern for their well-being. This awareness may be induced by various facilities, schemes, and policies offered by the organization, particularly, its compassionate culture (Wadsworth & Owens, 2013). Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), state that POS reflects employee's beliefs that the organization cares about them. Research indicates that many significant work outcomes such as job satisfaction, positive mood, affective commitment, performance, and reduced withdrawal behaviors are related to POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). However, the studies relating to impact of POS on work-family interface are scant (McNall, Masuda, Shanock & Nicklin, 2011).

When employees feel that their organization supports and values them, the resultant positive affect, will help in enhancing their performance at work. In addition, the spill-over of the positive affect to family life will also improve family life. Hence it is proposed that:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived organization support is positively related to WFE.

Emotional Regulation

Thompson (1994) defined emotional regulation as that comprising extrinsic and

intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, particularly their intensive and temporal features, to accomplish one's goal. Extant literature in work-family interplay and emotions in workplace is focused more on the negative impact of emotional experiences at work is the positive impact (Eby et al., 2010; Judge et al., 2006). Due to the increasing awareness about the significance of emotions in understanding organizational behavior, researchers note that emotional expression is an essential factor of both work and family life and that emotion can influence health outcomes (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). Affective emotions theory (AET) explains the motives and outcomes of emotional experiences at work. It states that employees' affective or emotional reactions to events at workplace mainly determine workplace consequences (Grandey et al., 2002). This paper studies the effect of emotional regulation on WFE and to determine whether it moderates the relationship between POS and WFE.

Resource-gain-development Perspective

The resource-gain-development (RGD) perspective uses a combination of concepts from conservation of resources theory with ecology of systems and positive organizational scholarship theories (Wayne et al., 2007). According to the RGD model, individuals have instinctive propensities to advance and attain the maximum level of functioning for themselves and their teams and organizations at professional and personal

levels. This instinctive inclination towards positivity and growth enables individuals to garner various resources from the roles they engage in. Individuals make the best possible use of the resources to help them experience positive improvements in their lives. Using benefits from one domain to reinforce them in another domain improves the functioning of the system. Wayne et al. (2007) explained WFE using the RGD model.

The RGD perspective provides a set of critical enablers in one system, such as personal characteristics; environmental resources (objects, conditions, energies, and support) contributing to the development of new skills and perspectives (developmental gains); positive emotions (affective benefits); economic, social, or health assets (capital gains); and greater efficiency (efficiency gains), which enhance the functioning of the other system. This framework indicates that the more resources an individual has, the higher is the possibility for facilitation. Similarly, the higher the total accumulation of resources, the more is the possibility for enrichment.

This framework is used to explain the simultaneous experience of WFE and work-family conflict by single mothers. They state that the enhanced resources available in one domain assist mothers to seek more resources from the other domain (Robinson et al., 2016).

According to the RGD model, WFE occurs when resources gained in the work domain are applied, sustained, and

WFE occurs when resources gained in the work domain are applied, sustained, and reinforced in the family domain.

reinforced in the family domain. Considering positive emotions as resources, the extent of enrichment experienced is dependent on the level of resources an individual already possesses (Wayne et al., 2007). For example, compared with individuals with less emotional regulation, individuals with high emotional regulation have higher resources in the form of positive emotions, and hence, experience higher WFE. On the basis of this perspective, we propose that the relationship between POS and WFE will be moderated by the emotional regulation of the individual.

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between POS and WFE is moderated by emotional regulation.

Sample & Procedures

For this study, a questionnaire was developed using the following measures. The questionnaire included specific demographic details of the respondents, although certain details such as name were made optional. A cover letter informing the respondents that the data were being collected strictly for academic research preceded the survey questionnaire. In addition, the respondents were informed about the confidentiality of the collected data and an express written consent from the respondents was obtained. This questionnaire

was then approved by the designated ethics committee. This survey was part of the main study that was conducted for the doctoral research. The entire questionnaire required approximately 30 minutes to be filled in, as was discovered during the pilot study. The questionnaire was created using an online tool and shared with various groups known to the researcher through email by a link to fill in the questionnaire. The snowball sampling method was used for data collection, and 542 responses were obtained of which 137 were removed due to incomplete data. For the final analysis, we had 405 completed responses.

Measures

All variables were measured using five-point Likert scales (1: “strongly disagree” to 5: “strongly agree”).

Perceived Organizational Support: POS was measured using an 8-item scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1997). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to each statement (e.g., My organization cares about my opinion) on a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). Cronbach’s alpha (α) for the sample was 0.77, which exceeded a minimally acceptable level of 0.65 (DeVellis, 1991). The total score was calculated as an average using all eight items, with high scores indicating a high POS.

Work-family Enrichment: WFE was measured using 9 items for WFE from

an 18-item WFE scale developed by Carlson et al. (2006). Respondents were asked to indicate their levels of agreement to each statement on a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). For example, “My involvement in work helps me to gain knowledge and this helps me be a better family member.” Cronbach’s α for the sample was 0.94. The total score was calculated as an average using all nine items, with higher scores indicating higher WFE.

Emotional Regulation: Emotional regulation was measured using a 10-item scale developed by Gross (2013). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statements (e.g., I keep my emotions to myself) on a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). Cronbach’s α for the sample was 0.85. The total score was calculated as an average using 10 items, with higher scores indicating higher emotional regulation.

Control Variables

Studies on the work–family interface suggested that both age and gender are related to the work–family interface (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). These variables were controlled, as the main objective of this study was to examine the effect of emotional regulation on the relationship between POS and WFE. Thus, the possibility of alternative explanations for the findings because of these demographic variables was eliminated.

Results

We used IBM SPSS Statistics 21.0 for carrying out the regression analysis. The moderation analysis was conducted using macro PROCESS for SPSS (Hayes, 2013). We tested the significance of the indirect effect using 5,000 bootstrapped samples. Confidence intervals (CI) were calculated for inference on the indirect effects, and the effect was declared as nonsignificant if CI contained zero. Table I presents the correlations among the following variables, mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach’s α . Most zero-order correlations were as predicted. For instance, POS and Emotional Regulation were significantly correlated with WFE ($\beta = .660, p < .01$) and WFE ($\beta = .448, p < .01$), respectively.

POS and Emotional Regulation were significantly correlated with WFE and WFE.

As shown in Table I, none of the control variables were significantly related to the dependent variables. Thus, we followed Becker (2005) and reported our results without the control variables, as including control variables that have no correlation with the dependent variables reduces their power.

We performed regression analyses to test our hypotheses. The coefficient of regression α was used to conclude the relationship. As Table 2 indicates, H1, which proposed a positive relationship

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability & Correlations Among Variables

	Mean	Std Deviation	Cronbach's alpha	Correlations				
				Gender	Age	Mean POS score	Mean WFE score	Mean ER score
Gender	1.314	0.465		1				
Age	2.965	1.141		“0.106*	1			
Mean POS score	3.565	0.635	0.77	0.079	0.032	1		
Mean WFE score	3.994	0.725	0.94	0.064	0.054	0.660**	1	
Mean ER score	3.643	0.648	0.85	“0.084	“0.012	0.500**	0.448**	1

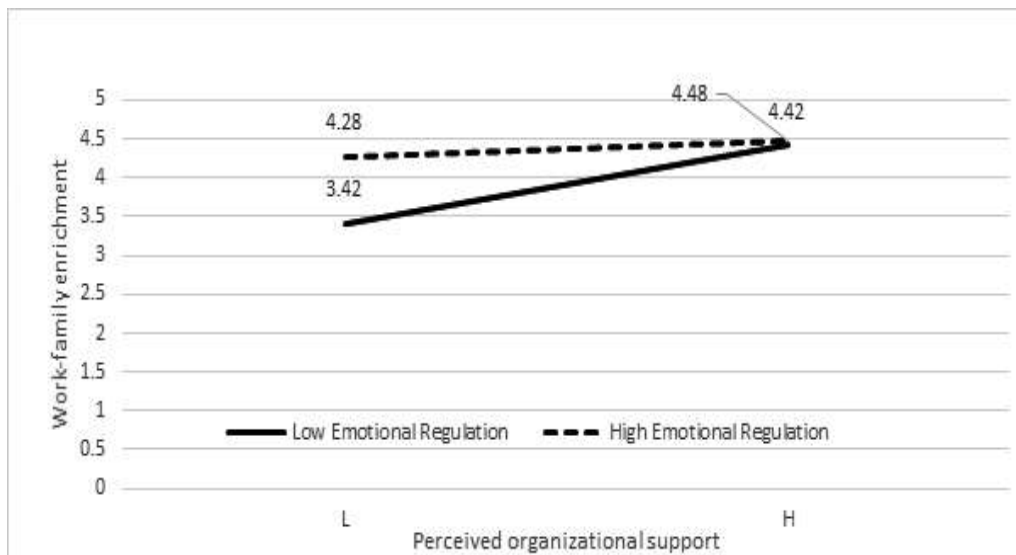
Notes: $n = 405$, $p^* < 0.05$; $p^{**} < 0.01$

Table 2. Tests for the moderation effect of emotional regulation on the relation between POS and WFE

Model Summary: Tests for moderation effect of emotional regulation on the relation between perceived organizational support and work-family enrichment

R	R -sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
0.6969	0.4857	0.2718	126.2243	3.0000	401.0000	0.0000
Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	“1.2887	0.5123	“2.5154	0.1240	“2.2959	“0.2815
Perceived organization support	1.3283	0.1494	8.8899	0.0000	1.0345	1.6220
Emotional Regulation	0.8021	0.1405	5.7080	0.0000	0.5258	1.0783
Interaction	“0.1799	0.0383	“4.6931	0.0000	“0.2552	“0.1045

Fig. 1 Emotional Regulation Moderating the Relationship Between POS and WFE



between POS and WFE, was supported; thus, consistent with H1, the results indicated that POS and WFE had a significant positive relationship (β (1.32), $t = 8.88, \leq 0.01$).

The results indicated that POS and WFE had a significant positive relationship.

H2 proposed that emotional regulation had a moderating effect on the relationship between POS and WFE. This relationship is presented in Fig. 1. We followed the recommendation of Hayes (2013) and tested the significance of the indirect effects. A follow-up analysis indicated that the indirect effect of emotional regulation was significant with ($\beta = 0.179, t = 4.60, \leq 0.01$). Thus, H2 was supported. The results indicated that employees with low emotional regulation experience an increase in WFE with increased POS. However, as seen in Fig. 1, at high emotional regulation level there is insignificant difference in WFE at an increased level in the POS. This is indicated by the moderate slope of the regression line. Thus, the effects of increased organizational support are nullified by a higher level of emotional regulation.

The results indicated that employees with low emotional regulation experience an increase in WFE with increased POS.

Discussion

In the current fast-paced, dynamic, and challenging work environment, the emotions of employees at work are a crucial factor in work-place outcomes. An organization's efforts to enhance its employees' work and personal lives for improving work outcomes can yield desired effects, provided the employee's emotions are accounted for. Using the RGD perspective, this study intended to investigate the effects of an employee's Emotional Regulation on the relationship between POS and WFE. WFE is known to result in improved job satisfaction and well-being and reduced turnover intentions. We observed that employee's Emotional Regulation affects the relationship between POS and WFE.

Theoretical Implications

A direct positive relationship between POS and WFE is consistent with the RGD perspective, which suggests that the key enablers of enrichment are personal characteristics, environmental resources (objects, conditions, energies, and support) that contribute to the development of new skills and perspectives (developmental gains), positive emotions (affective gains), economic, social, or health assets (capital gains), and improved efficiency (efficiency gains) in one system, which enhance the functioning of the other system. Here, the POS facilitates a positive spillover effect to the family domain, thus enhancing their family life. This complements the existing research (McNall et al., 2011). Our study expands the literature

on WFE by considering the role of Emotional Regulation in the context of enrichment experience. This study suggests that Emotional Regulation moderates the relationship between the antecedents of WFE, and POS, in particular. This hypothesis was supported, which is consistent with the RGD perspective that any affective gains in the originating domain are also resources that can spill over to the other domain and improve the performance. The results show that the relationship is moderated negatively ($\beta = -0.179$). Thus, organizational support results in increased WFE at decreased levels of Emotional Regulation. However, at a higher level of Emotional Regulation, WFE starts decreasing despite an increase in POS.

The same can be explained with the help of the theory of emotional labor, which states that managing emotions at work leads to emotional burnout (Grandey, 2000). The authors indicate that emotional labor results in stress and burnout at work. An increased POS and high levels of Emotional Regulation result in stress or burnout due to emotional labor, thus reducing the positive effect of POS and the experience of WFE.

Managerial Implications

Managers should note that an employee's positive affect generally has a positive effect on employee work, family outcomes, and performance. Emotional Regulation can assist employees in prolonging the positive effect. First, managers can use formal and informal strat-

egies to assist employees in effectively managing their emotions. For example, providing the employees an outlet to informally communicate their feelings and helping them respond to the emotions in a more positive and controlled manner. Second, the managers can demonstrate the benefits of Emotional Regulation by themselves following the principles of controlled response to emotional situations.

Limitations & Suggestions

This study has some limitations. Self-report data were used to measure the independent and moderating variables, and hence a possibility for common method bias exists. We separated the responses for outcome and predictor variables, thus minimizing the potential common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Moreover, the interaction effects are less likely to be affected by the common method bias.

This study did not consider other potential individual and organizational factors such as emotional expressivity, emotional intelligence, and affectivity (individual factors) and autonomy, supervisory, and co-worker support (organizational factors). There could be other moderating and mediating variables influencing emotional regulation and WFE (Grandey, 2000).

Future researchers can consider the different strategies employed by individuals for emotional regulation such as deep acting and surface acting, to get insight into its impact on WFE in more detail.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the role of Emotional Regulation at workplace, and particularly, its moderating effect on the relationship between POS and WFE. The current study broadened the literature on work-family enrichment by studying the role of Emotional Regulation. The results indicate that Emotional Regulation negatively affects the relationship between POS and WFE, wherein with higher Emotional Regulation, the effect on higher POS was negated, resulting in a decrease in WFE. This study has many managerial implications, wherein the employee's Emotional Regulation aspect has the capacity to negate the positive effects of efforts taken by the organization for extending support to the employees.

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