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### The Effect of Supervisor' Support, Job Involvement and Stress Makers on the Nurses' Work – Family Conflict

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Nursing plays a vital role in a health care system. The realities of nowadays Iran nurses community, as remarkable presence of women in society have caused getting experience about high levels of work – family conflict. **Objective:** Current study attempts to determine the effects of supervisor' supportive role, job involvement and stress makers on the nurses and nurse axillaries' work – family conflict in the Shiraz private hospitals. **Method:** The data were gathered by a combination questionnaire which was completed by a 210 persons as sample. Sample people were selected from 460 populations by a multi-step sampling method (cluster-stratified and random). The data were analyzed by path analysis statistical method (by LISREL software 8.50) and goodness – of – fit – indexes per values. The results of the path analysis show that support of nurses lead to, reduction role conflict and role ambiguity and reduction of work – family conflict. Job Involvement also had a similar effect on role conflict and role ambiguity but had a direct relation with Work - Family conflict. Role Conflict and role ambiguity, in turn, raise the work-family conflict. **Results:** Results demonstrate that selection appropriate policies support by supervisors cause decrease work – family conflict directly and indirectly (through role conflict and role ambiguity). It should be noted that although job involvement ascends work – family conflict directly, while indirect effect is reverse, but the force of this effect is not strong enough to cause negative the total effect.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Concepts of working and life have a more powerful and greater connection with people and society and the balance between them also have a high value and significance [1]. Today's, changes such as increase rate of women's participation and families with two jobs and change of working value has leading that people experience the kind of conflict that both have a root in contrasting demands and the rules of working and family environments [2]. We can consider the conflict between work and family as follows: when the individual efforts for making the rules of works, have an interference with the required efforts on making the rules of out of working (family) [3]. Therefore, the conflict between the work and family is a form of interrole conflict [4] that has two dimensional structures. The first: the conflicts due to the working rules with family rules that called work – family conflict and Second, the conflicts due to family rules with working rules that known as family – work conflicts [5]. Generally work - family conflict, has been reported more than family- work conflict [6].

In health care systems, Care and treatment services require the cooperation and collaboration of different groups and categories of jobs. In these terms, the conflict developed very easy for all the persons who involve in corporate affairs, including nurses, especially in stressful situations. Work - Family Conflict can be a challenge for nurses and the nursing profession. The results show the high prevalence of this phenomenon among nurses [7].

Protective role of supervisions plays a key role in the effectiveness of programs and working- family policies, because they encourage employees to participate or not to participate in these programs, they also have the ability to integrity the work and family life of their subordinates by strengthen their cultural norms [8]. Supervisors can be very effective in creating a positive work environment and providing less stressed working

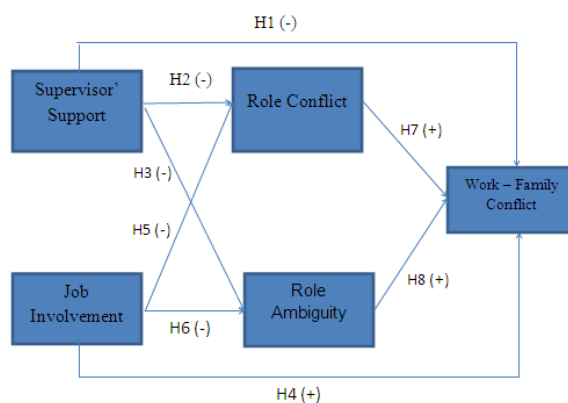
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conditions, by discussion about the employee's life problems, and being flexible in the times of occurring unexpected event for staffs. Several studies have proved the inverse proportion of supervisors with work – family conflict [9].

The role conflict and ambiguity are mentioned in the experimental studies as the main causes of stress [10, 11]. So in this study, these factors were entered into the model. Empirical studies in the extant literature indicate that, the relation between work – family conflict with role conflict, and role ambiguity has reported as strong and positive factors [12]. Also mediating role between job stressors and Work - Family Conflict has been confirmed [13]. Role conflict arises when a person involved in one or more conflicting behaviors, and is forced to behave inconsistently (5). Role ambiguity also occurs when the person realize that, there is sufficient information for an active job (12). On the other hand, few studies have reported the impact of job involvement on work - family conflict [4]. Job involvement refers to a person's emotional response to their current job role or is something that a person psychologically becomes class-matched with his job [14]. Also, appropriate management proceeding such as: supervisor support and work involvement cause reducing of the conflict and role ambiguity [15].

#### Methodology:

In this study for reviewing the direct and indirect effects of variables such as: supervisor support, organizational justice, job involvement, organizational commitment and role conflict on Work - Family Conflict, a model was designed based on previous studies and scientific theories (Figure 1). This study has an application purpose, and from the aspects of data collection is considered cross – correlation. This study was carried out in hospitals in general conditions and from the aspect of time, is a cross-sectional study. The population of this study is 440 nurses; and assistant of five private hospitals in Shiraz. The samples according to the Krejcie and Morgan table, were considered 205 people that according to have some difficulties in getting the completion and analysis of the data, 245 questionnaires were distributed (20% greater than the sample size) by using a multistep sampling, including cluster sampling, appropriate stratified sampling and systematic random sampling, and finally 210 questionnaires were analyzed.



**Fig. 1:** Research model.

Data collection tool is a combination questionnaire, that to ensure its validity, 20 nurses and Nurse Axillaries were tested. The results showed that nurses and Nurse Axillaries have no problem in understanding the questionnaire items. Table No.1, shows the number and sources of used measures for measuring each of the variables along with Cronbach's alpha coefficients that show the stability of questionnaire. Five-item Likert scale ranges were used to respond to the measures of questionnaire. For data analysis and hypothesis testing, the structural equation and path analysis (using the software LISREL 8.50) were used and for determining the Cronbach's alpha coefficients SPSS software were used.

**Table 1:** Number, source and measure Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the variables measuring.

Alpha	Measures	sources	Variables	Row
75.0	10	Netemeyer <i>et al</i> [16].	Work - Family Conflict	1
74.0	6	Anderson <i>et al</i> [17].	supervisor support	2
73.0	10	Kanungo [18].	job involvement	3
73.0	11	Rizzo <i>et al</i> [19].	Role conflict and Role ambiguity	4

#### Results:

According to the demographic information, 49/45% of participants were aged 36-25 years, 89% were women, 80/9% had bachelor's degree and the rest had diploma degree, 46% of participants had 1-7 years work

experience; And 4/5% percent of them had 30-25 years work experience; 64/8% of participants were married; 40% percent of them had 1 or 2 children; And 24/5% also had 3 or 4 children.

In order to evaluate the theoretical model of this study, first using background probability approach we estimate the parameters. Estimated parameters include direct effect coefficients, (based on model hypotheses) that for every one of these parameters the estimated coefficients have standardized, the standard error have been estimated and (T value) related to significant test of these parameters have been represented (Table2). Meanwhile, according to these coefficients, accept or reject the study hypotheses have been evaluated. In addition, according to the research model, there are two indirect ways which represent opposite and significant influences of supervisors support (-0/06 and 1% error level) and working engagement (-0/05 and 5% error level) is at work – family conflict. The results of the study show that the total effect of supervisor support is on the opposite family – work conflict (-0/12 rate) and the total effect of working engagement is on direct family – work conflict (0/03). It is worth noting that according to the results of the path analysis, the research model fits the data well (GFI = 0.92; AGFI = 0.94; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.058)

**Table 2:** Model test results.

hypotheses	Standardized parameter estimates	t-Values	Supported/ not supported
Effect of supervisor support on:			
H(1): Work - Family Conflict	-0.06*	-1.98	Supported
H(2): Role conflict	-0.12**	-3.12	Supported
H(3): Role ambiguity	-0.26**	-4.46	Supported
Effect of job involvement on:			
H(4): Work - Family Conflict	0.08*	2.25	Supported
H(5): Role conflict	-0.16**	-3.25	Supported
H(6): Role ambiguity	-0.19**	-4.12	Supported
Effect of Role conflict on:			
H(7): Work - Family Conflict	0.16**	3.69	Supported
Effect of Role ambiguity on:			
H(8): Work - Family Conflict	0.17**	4.35	Supported
	*P<0.05 **P<0.01		

### Discussion:

The purpose of this study is develop and test of research model to study the relation between supervisor support, job involvement, role ambiguity and role conflict with work - family conflict of nurses and nurse axillaries in private hospitals in Shiraz. Reviewing the subject literature clearly shows that supervision support have a significant effective on stress causing and these factors in turn increase work- family conflict. Study the impact of job involvement on the role conflict, role ambiguity, and work - family conflict, has been neglected in most studies, although there are few studies in this area. For example, Michel and colleagues found a significant relation between job involvement with role ambiguity and role conflict, and also a significant relation between the factors causing stress and work - family conflict have shown [20]. Also Byron has reported weak relation between involvements in role with work - family conflict [21]. This study attempts to fill this research gap and present evidence about the mentioned relation. The results of path analysis show all stated relations in hypothesis have been confirmed. Further more indirect influence of independent variables on the criterion variable (work - family conflict) was verified by the intermediary variables (role conflict and role ambiguity).

The results of the path analysis reveal that supervisor supports is significantly and negatively related to work- family conflict. Many previous studies have confirmed these results [20 and 22]. A Supportive supervisor who does not discriminate, show respect to employees' family matters, and be sympathy with them when employees talk about their family problems that can affect their job. They show respect to the employees' attempt to create a balance between their work and family demands. They create an environment where employees can easily talk about their concerns [22].

The results also show supervisors' support has diverse proportion with role conflict and role ambiguity. Role ambiguity is because of insufficient information or knowledge about a job. This ambiguity may be the result of inadequate training, poor communication and the intentional with holding or falsification of information provided by colleagues and supervisors [23]. So supervisors can through training the employees and also providing sufficient and accurate information to them, reduce the role ambiguity. Role conflict may be due to the conflicting demands of a supervisor or by treatment of employees with conflicting claims of two supervisors or two working group [24]. In such situation, managers must create coordination between each other and carefully issued commands to prevent from creation of conflict.

Furthermore, several strategies such as creating organizational climate protection, rich design for task, defining transparent role for the personnel, career's job path planning, and advising people by managers and supervisions can reduce the causing stress factors (e.g., ambiguity and role conflict) [23].The results of this study, confirms hypothesis model about positive impact of job involvement on work - family conflict. Brown arguments that the high levels of working engagement has led to ignore the family obligations for the benefit of

working commitments [25]. The people with more working engagements, experience the more difficulties at home, when they have blamed for their absence [26]. High involvement in a role, leading to increased conflicts between roles through two ways: First, high involvement in a role can increase the time devoted to doing the role. As a result, being consistent with the second role became more difficult. Second: high involvement in a role causes the preoccupations about the role, even when the person is physically involved to respond to the demands of the second role [11]. So people who have more involvement with work or family roles, their work - families' borders, become permeable against the less involved role. Mental demands of a role become related to another role; and ultimately lead to work-family conflict [27].

Path analysis model also shows that the job involvement has a negative effect on role conflict and role ambiguity. Previous researches also indicate that people who have high job involvement give more negative responses to the factors causing stress [28]. Sever involvement of person with his role, causes getting knowledge about those role problems. This knowledge makes one to attempt more to overcome his problems and therefore faced to more stresses and conflicts in that role [14]. The results of the study, approve the findings of previous studies that show a positive impact of role conflict and role ambiguity on work - family conflict [10, 12, 29]. For example, some factors can increase the working time (e.g., attending to the grievance meetings) and as a result, because of reduction of time, persons working under pressure to meet other obligations [30] and experience higher Work - Family Conflict. As a General conclusion the findings of this study explain a number of predictor variables of Work - Family Conflict. The health sector managers can make appropriate decisions to reduce work- family conflict.

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