

Perception towards Work Non-Work Boundary Management Fit Among Teachers in Selected Secondary School

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Abstract

Due to the challenging working lifestyles, the interest on how to manage and maintain the boundary of work and non-work domain has increased. Teachers often strive to balance between work and non-work management. Lack of balance of in managing work and non-work in teaching profession will lead to low quality of life. This study aims to explore secondary school teachers' perceptions towards Work Non-Work Boundary Management Fit. This study utilized Qualitative Methods using in-depth interviews to collect data from seven informants among secondary school teachers and the data were analysed through content analysis. The aims of the study are to examine the factors of work non-work boundary management fit and identify its implications. Work life conflict resulted from the imbalance between work and non-work demands causes stress and subsequently, affects teachers' work life, health and family functioning. The findings from this study indicated that the factors of Work Non-Work Boundary Management Fit are peer support, self-autonomy, spouse, family and society support, and supportive work environment. Consequently, these factors led to positive implications for individuals, organisation, family or children as well as community. By considering individual's work, it is undeniable that non-work boundary management is important. Therefore, it is necessary to provide work non-work boundary management fit in order to achieve a good balance in work non-work life.

Keywords: Perceptions, Work Non-Work, Boundary Management Fit, Teachers

Introduction

Work non-work boundary management fit refers to an individual's psychological experience caused by the individual's boundary management preference with organisational boundary management supplies. An individual's experiences towards work non-work boundary management fit when choosing either integration or segmentation of their work and non-work domain comes from their needs. Individual that relies on integration or segmentation has high level of work non-work boundary management fit. Past researches have yet to prove whether integrating or segmenting work and non-work roles are beneficial to individual. However, both aspects have implications towards the boundaries management behavior. It depends on the

interaction between the individual boundary management preference and boundary management supplies (Kreiner, 2006). In that regard, it is of utmost importance to meet individual's boundary management need by having a "fitting" boundary management preference and boundary management supplies to achieve a more harmonious work non-work life.

According to Nippert-Eng (1996), work non-work boundary management fit refers to how individuals manage work and non-work boundary and it is a matter of their free choice. The level of managing work non-work boundary can be a predictor of an individual's well-being in life. High level of management or segmented environment will protect individuals from work-life conflict. A study by Kossek, Lautsch, and Eaton (2006) found that individuals with lower boundary management segmentation had high levels of work non-work conflict. Thus, work non-work boundary management fit is a clear indicators of an individual's attitudes, behaviour and well-being (Cable & Edwards, 2004). Individuals who effectively manage work non-work boundary management has the ability to meet their personal needs and resources in order to avoid work and non-work conflicts (Demerouti et al., 2001). Today, due to the challenging and fast-paced working lifestyles, the interest in psychological research on how to manage and maintain the boundary of work and non-work domain has increased. Generally, work boundary management theory aims to explain how individuals demarcate boundaries between work and non-work domains to achieve a quality work life balance. It has been found that individuals use collective construct boundaries (psychological and behavioral) in managing their work and non-work domain (Clark, 2000). One of the main reasons is because boundary management approach focuses on individual level to manage work and non-work domain (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2009).

Every individual has different preference to integrate or segment work and non-work domain (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Work boundary management theory may have an influence to an individual's working experience and family conflict. Individuals can manage work and non-work domain by sharpening boundaries or blurring boundaries which lead to either segmentation or integration (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). Individuals who create, maintain and transit across boundaries try to balance work and non-work (Clark, 2000). Hence, work life balance can be achieved through segmentation or integration. Allen, Cho, and Meier (2014) state that segmentation or integration is both associated with positive and negative outcomes. Rapid role transition will lead to more life flexibility. It also affects mental effort and causes role blurry. Hence, Work Boundary Management Theory reflects on the degree of how strong or weak an individual tries to balance the demands and expectations between the boundary of work and non-work domain.

There are several factors of work non-work boundary management fit to achieve a work-life balance. First, high level organisational support will lead an individual to achieve a good work non-work boundary management fit. Organisational factor has the power to influence one's ability to manage their boundary management (Rothbard, Phillip, & Dumas, 2005). According to Carlson and Perrewé (1999), having a high level of organisational supports will lead an individual to achieve a better work non-work boundary management fit. This is because having high levels of organisational support can reduce work and non-work conflict. Thompson, Beauvais, and Lyness (1999) also add that having a good working environment or workplace that is family-friendly allows individuals to be caring towards people surrounding them and thus minimising the work and non-work conflict. Leaders, supervisors or mentors play a vital role in reducing work non-work conflict by showing good work ethics and giving positive modelling behaviors to individuals (Lapierre & Allen, 2006). To encourage conflict-free working environment and support fellow subordinates, leaders, supervisors or mentors have to be actively involved and engaged in the work non-work management (Hammer et al., 2009).