

Family Work Conflict in the Pandemic Period for Indonesian Medical Representatives: The Meaningful Role of Work and Psychological Capital

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Abstract

Work-family conflict is a pressure that is experienced simultaneously by working adults which come from work and family domains. Previous research predicts work-family conflict from the role of meaningfulness of work or the role of psychological capital separately or in combination with other variables. Previous studies used non-pharmaceutical subjects with regular working hours in normal situations. This study examines the role of meaningfulness of work and psychological capital on work-family conflict in workers with high work pressure, long working hours and tend to be irregular. The research subjects are medical representatives (medrep) who work during a pandemic. All data were collected online and analyzed using multiple linear regression technique. The results showed that the meaning of work and psychological capital was able to reduce work-family conflict, although the contribution was small. The implication of this research is that it can help MEDREP to explore that there are other internal and external variables that can contribute greatly to reducing work-family conflict.

Keywords

work-family conflict; meaningfulness of work; psychological capital; medical representative; pandemic period



I. Introduction

The roles of individuals working in the work and family domains are always interrelated and inseparable. The demands of roles from the work and family domains can disrupt work and family balance in working individuals. Especially for working partners. Puspitawati et al., (2012) stated that the main problem of working partners is balancing work and family. Statistical data for the last one year, 2020-2021 shows an increase in working partners between 7.7% - 9.2% (Indonesia-Canada Statistics, 2021; American Statistics, 2021). In Indonesia, statistical data for 2018-2019 shows an increase in the work force of 2.24 million (Bisnis.com, 2019). An increase in work partners means an increase in the fulfillment of needs in the work and family domains. Increased work-family needs in working partners if not managed properly can lead to increased work-family conflict. It takes internal and external protection from working individuals, especially working partners in order to reduce work-family conflict.

Work-family conflict is the presence of role pressures from the work or family domain, and both influence each other (Frone et al., 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). There are two constructs in it, the first is role pressure based on time. Role pressure is based on time, meaning that the time given is longer in one domain so that it affects the other domains. The second construct, is role pressure based on tension, meaning that tension brought from the work domain affects the family domain and vice versa. Work-family conflict if not managed properly can cause serious problems. Research by Cooklin et al., (2016) shows that work-family conflict plays a role in reducing mental health in

working couples who have children. This is also supported by the results of research by Greenhaus et al., (2015) which emphasizes the consequences of work-family conflict on physical, mental health and individual happiness at work. The consequences of work-family conflict are quite serious because they can affect the physical, mental health and happiness of individuals at work. Management of work-family conflict requires internal factors that are able to play a role in protecting individuals so that more serious consequences do not occur in the future. This study focuses on individual internal factors, namely the meaning of work and psychological capital as an individual's internal protection factor against work-family conflict.

This research uses medical representative (*medrepsubject*) as the. Medrep is an ambassador for pharmaceutical companies in charge of promoting the company's products to doctors. Medrep always works under pressure. High work pressure and erratic time can trigger work-family conflicts. Especially during the pandemic, working hours are MEDREP's increasingly erratic considering doctors' working hours are also increasingly congested and require MEDREP as partners in helping people who are under a lot of stress. Work pressures such as frequent changes in company policies, increasing targets every year, number of work roles, long and erratic working hours, unsupportive work climate, lack of support from superiors and co-workers can make *Medrep* feel pressured so that it can increase role conflict at work family (Dewi et al., 2021). The work pressure in the highest *Medrep* is the pressure on work-family which reaches 78% (Patil & Meena, 2013). Many studies on work stress on *medrep*. Work stress that is not managed properly will result in excessive work roles and conflict roles in the *medrep* (Kalyanasundaram, 2017). A strong internal protection factor is needed in order to make *Medrep* able to manage work-family conflicts such as the meaning of work and psychological capital.

The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum et al., 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020).

Research in India on working individuals has shown that psychological capital can be a protective factor in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic (Alat et al., 2021). The results of other studies show that small hotel owners/managers who have psychological capital can instill hope and optimism in employees and also help them to accept reality and prepare for future goals (Pathak & Joshi, 2020). Another study in the UK used students working with psychological capital to study online student learning experiences to understand their persistence. Psychological capital has proven to be an effective model for understanding the intrinsic characteristics that motivate working adults to persist in workplace excellence during the Covid pandemic (Black et al., 2020).

Several studies on the meaning of work and psychological capital above show that individuals working during a pandemic really need work meaning and positive psychological conditions from the individual's internal side for self-development and achievement of work goals and reducing work-family conflict. research MEDREP in the current pandemic also shows the results that the meaning of work and psychological capital owned by MEDREP can motivate and developability MEDREP's to work to achieve company goals. The meaning of work carried out by individuals also increases the positive psychological condition of individuals which can reduce the stress that occurs in work. Individuals with a lot of work meaning and high psychological capital will be able to reduce work-family conflict. *Medrep* with high pressure at work, long and irregular working hours and uncertain situations during the current pandemic can trigger work-family conflicts so that internal protection is needed to protect individuals from these

conflicts such as the meaning of work and psychological capital so that individuals can reduce work-family conflict. This study wants to examine the role of meaningful work and psychological capital on work-family conflict in *MEDREP* in Indonesia during the pandemic.

II. Research Method

2.1 Research Subject

Work-family conflict research was conducted on the subject *medical representatives*. Samples were taken by *purposive sampling* as many as 105 *medrep*. The criteria are already married and both are working partners during the pandemic.

2.2 Research Instruments

Work-family conflict is the role pressure experienced by working individuals that originates from the work and family domains simultaneously. *Medrep* has a high work role pressure so that strong internal factors are needed to be able to overcome work-family conflicts. Previous research has shown separately that the role of work meaningfulness and psychological modality has a significant correlation with work-family conflict. This study combines these two internal factors in predicting work-family conflict in *MEDREP* during the pandemic. The following is the research instrument used:

The Work Family Conflict (WFC) Scale from Carlson et al., (2000) which was adapted in Indonesian by Artiawati, (2012), consists of 12 items. There are 4 constructs in it, namely work-family conflict based on stress, work-family conflict based on time. Work-family conflict based on stress, work-family conflict based on time. The scale scores between strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), somewhat agree (4), agree (5) and strongly agree (6). The higher the score obtained, the higher the level of work-family conflict and vice versa. Research scale reliability ($\alpha=0.935$).

Psychological Capital, consisting of 4 dimensions, namely self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism from Luthans et al., (2007), consists of 24 items. The scale scores between strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), somewhat agree (4), agree (5) and strongly agree (6). The higher the score obtained, the higher the psychological capital and vice versa. Research scale reliability ($\alpha=0.946$).

The meaning of work, consisting of 3 factors, namely positive meaning, making meaning to work and having a good motivation is greater using The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) scale from Steger et al., (2012) adopted from Rosso (2010), consisting of 10 items. The scale scores between strongly disagree (1), slightly disagree (2), agree (3), somewhat agree (4), strongly agree (5). The higher the score obtained, the more meaningful the work made and vice versa. Research scale reliability ($\alpha=0.916$).

2.3 Procedure

Participants are given an online questionnaire while waiting for a doctor either at the hospital, practice or at home. Survey participants were instructed to complete the questionnaire independently and send the questionnaire back to the researcher. Participants in the study volunteered by giving a statement or "informed consent" that they were willing to fill out an online questionnaire and provide real data. The identity of the participants is also kept confidential or anonymous.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

This study uses multiple linear regression analysis with SPSS21 program. Where this statistical technique is able to predict the relationship between the independent variable (x) to the dependent variable (y).

Table 1. Regression Analysis

Variable	F	Sig
work-family conflict (DV)	5.786	0.004
Significance of Work (IV)		
Psychological Capital (IV)		

The results in table 1. F value = 5.786 p <0.004 indicates there is a simultaneous influence between the meaning of work and psychological capital on work-family conflict.

Table 2. Demographic data *Medrep*

No	Data		Total	Percentage
1	Age	<30 years	59	56.19%
		31-40 years	33	31.43%
		41-50 years	10	9.52%
		>50 years old	3	2.86%
2	Gender	Female	54	51.43%
		Male	51	48.57%
3	education	High school	39	37.14%
		D3	21	20%
		Bachelor Degree	45	42.86%
4	Position of	PMA	16	15.24%
		PMDN	83	79.05%
		BUMN	6	5.71%
Total			105	100%

Table 2 shows that most of the Medrep are <30 years old. Age <30 years is the age of transition from late adolescence to adulthood. Medrep at this stage of development strives to fulfill its role in the social environment. This is a conflict-prone situation for the medrep. The comparison of sex, male and female in medrep is almost balanced so that it can represent the sex balance of medrep in this study. Education is mostly undergraduate. This shows that the education level of MEDREP is high enough so that it can assist MEDREP in managing their thoughts in a well-organized manner in order to obtain the best solution in reducing their work-family conflict. Most of the company's positions are domestically-owned or locally-owned, some are foreign-owned and also state-owned. This can reflect the work culture of *MEDREP* in Indonesia in managing work-family conflicts.

Table 3. Mean, SD and Intercorrelation

Variables	Mean	SD	1
1. Work-family conflict	33.24	12.76	-
2. Meaning of Work	36.46	8.05	-0.228**
3. Psychological Capital	100.23	20.34	-0.084**

*p<0.05 **p<0.01

The value of the intercorrelation in table 3. It shows the meaningfulness of work has a significant negative correlation to work-family conflict by -22.8% p<0.01, as well as capital psychological has a significant negative correlation with work-family conflict of -8.4% p<0.01. Meaning that the greater the meaning of work and psychological capital in individuals can be a protective factor for individuals working in reducing work-family conflict. The meaning of work and psychological capital contributed 22.8% and 8.4% in reducing work-family conflict in *MEDREP* in Indonesia during the pandemic, so that there were still 77.2% and 91.6% of other variables that were able to contribute to the decline work-family conflict in *medrep* in Indonesia.

Table 4. Stepwise Regression Analysis of Work Significance

Variable	β	T	Sig.
Positive Meaning	-0.761	-6.023	0.000**
Having good motivation that extends	-0.603	-4.770	0.000**
Making Meaning of Work	0.060	0.263	0.169

Dependent Variable: Work-Family Conflict

Sig. * p <0.05 ** p <0.01

Table 4. In this study partially get the results that purport variable working with the positive aspects and aspects of the meaning of the motivation that extends at most affect the family work conflict at the individual work with the value of $\beta = -0.761$ and $= -0.603$ $p < 0.01$. The meaning made by the individual means that the positive meaning made by the individual working and the widespread possession of good motivation can be used by the individual as a protective factor against work-family conflict that is being experienced in living life during a pandemic.

Table 5. Stepwise Regression Analysis of Psychological Capital

Variable	β	T	Sig.
Self-Efficacy	-0.406	-3.660	0.001**
Optimism	-0.381	-3,433	0.001**
Hope	-0.262	-1.347	0.181
Resilience	0.220	2.183	0.890

Dependent Variable: Work-Family Conflict

Sig. * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

In table 5. partially on the psychological capital variable, the results show that the role of self-efficacy and optimism has the greatest influence on family work conflict with values $= -0.406$ and $= -0.381$ $p < 0.01$. The development of positive psychological conditions possessed by individuals on self-efficacy and optimism is able to make individuals reduce work-family conflicts during the pandemic.

The results of the study as a whole explain that the variables of work meaningfulness and psychological capital have a significant negative correlation to work-family conflict in *medrep*. In addition, the results of the study *stepwise* found that the variables of work meaningfulness, namely aspects of positive meaning and having good motivation that extended had a significant correlation to work-family conflict. Furthermore, the psychological capital variable, namely self-efficacy and optimism, has a significant negative correlation in reducing work-family conflict. Together, these two variables are able to reduce work-family conflict in MEDREP in Indonesia during the pandemic.

3.2 Discussion

The results of this study found that medrep which has a lot of work meaning and is able to develop positive psychological conditions in itself can reduce work-family conflict during the current pandemic. This study found that medrep with positive meaning and broadly good motivation were able to manage work-family conflict. The existence of a positive meaning in Medrep makes it easier to work with high work pressure, long and irregular working hours. Medrep also has good motivation that can be transmitted to the environment so that the work environment gets a positive overflow. The positive spillover from work can be transmitted to the family so that it can increase the positive emotions that

exist within the medrep. These positive emotions can be used to reduce work-family conflicts during the pandemic.

The results of this study are supported by Tummers & Bronkhorst (2014) who conducted research on 1278 midwives in the Netherlands, finding that good relationships with superiors have a high quality so that they are negatively related to work-family conflict, and this is mediated by work pressure. In addition, a good relationship with superiors has a positive correlation with the meaning of work, which in turn can affect work-family life. Another supportive study, conducted by Fairlie (2011) on 574 North American workers found that meaningful job value in human resource development (HRD) practices involved employee involvement. Significant work characteristics compared to other work characteristics as mediators and predictors of employee engagement, fatigue, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and thoughts to change jobs. Significant work characteristics have the strongest relative correlation with several employees' work results. The meaning of individual work can develop individual lives such as self-actualization and its impact on society. The meaning of work is an opportunity for human resource development (HRD) practitioners to increase the level of employee involvement in providing strategic benefits to the organization. Furthermore, research by Bailey & Madden (2016) interviewed 135 people in 10 very different jobs and asked individuals when they found meaningful or meaningless work. The occupational groups are: retail assistants, ministers of various denominations, artists (including musicians, writers and actors), lawyers, academics from various disciplines, entrepreneurs who have started their own businesses, nurses in hospitals, soldiers, conservation masons who work on the preservation of ancient cathedrals, and scavengers. Overall, research on the meaning of work can affect the work-family life of working individuals, especially for the MEDREP in Indonesia.

The results of the study on MEDREP in Indonesia during the pandemic also showed that internally the variables of working meaning and psychological capital together were able to reduce work-family conflict. The many positive meanings made in the workplace and the many good motivations that are widespread make *medrep* feel comfortable at work so as to reduce work-family conflict. This study found that in terms of the meaning of medrep work in Indonesia, most (almost 85%) interpreted it religiously. The meaning that work must be done sincerely (*legowo*), work is a gift from God, being grateful for current work makes *Medrep* able to reduce work-family conflicts. Individual internal factors that play a role in reducing work-family conflict is the meaning of work. Each individual interprets work differently, there are separate things that make individuals find the meaning of work such as the type and amount of meaning in the workplace that is able to shape individual feelings, thoughts and behavior. The results of this study indicate that individual positive meaning and good and widespread ownership of motivation have a high correlation with work-family conflict. The many work roles performed by *MEDREP* can create many positive meanings in carrying out work and also have greater motivation in carrying out their duties so as to reduce work-family conflict.

In line with previous research on the meaning of work with work-family conflict, there are two countries, namely Turkey with the context of nurses and New Zealand with the context of women who have positions in both private and public companies (Unal, 2017; Miller, 2020). Although in different contexts, research on the meaning of work and work-family conflict both provides a significant correlation to work-family conflict, although this is the first time this has been conducted in the context of *MEDREP* in Indonesia.

The findings of this study suggest that a meaningful job definition emerges "when an individual perceives a fundamental connection between their work and a broader transcendent life purpose outside of the self". This is interesting because in reality the meaning of work is associated with work experience in a broader framework (individual religious life).

Furthermore, the results of this study also saw a correlation between psychological capital and work-family conflict. Psychological capital is a positive psychological condition possessed by individuals. The goal is to deal with all life problems experienced by individuals, including in the work and family domains. The results of the stepwise research show that from the four aspects of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience) only self-efficacy and optimism are able to work to reduce work-family conflict in MEDREP. Medrep who have high self-confidence can carry out their work tasks with confidence. Medrep also feels confident in the work goals he has achieved so that he finds it easy to achieve his work goals during the current pandemic.

In line with the research of Hennessy & Lent (2008) in their *work-family conflict self-efficacy* research shows that *self-efficacy* plays an important role in the relationship between work-family conflict and its consequences such as overcoming stress and job satisfaction in working individuals. Research (Sabokro et al., 2018) on psychological capital in 354 nurses of Shohadaye Kargar Hospital Iran found that psychological capital is an effective factor in reducing work-family conflict and family-work conflict. In addition, the results of the sub-hypothesis indicate that expectancy, as one of the dimensions of psychological capital, has the highest effect on work-family conflict in nurses. The results of a survey research by Durrah et al., (2016) which collected 110 instructors from eight faculties at Philadelphia University. The results showed that high levels of positive psychological capital, performance and job satisfaction among instructors could mediate the relationship between positive psychological capital and job performance. Research (Avey et al., 2010) on 280 employees showed that employee psychological capital was associated with two time measures of well-being, and importantly that psychological capital could explain the presence of additional variance in individual measures of well-being over time.

Some of the results of these studies support that psychological capital can reduce work-family conflict in working individuals. There are also studies that support and specifically conduct research on psychological capital for field workers, as was done in this study.

Friend et al., (2016)'s research on salespeople specifically found that psychological capital was able to improve employee attitudes, behavior, and performance. Raising psychological capital in sales research is important because it is necessary because of the need for a comprehensive positive approach to drive sales performance, offset high costs of in and out of salespeople, increase cross-functional sales, and enrich customer relationships. Furthermore, research (Bande et al., 2015) on 209 salespeople from 105 organizations found that resilience can directly reduce an individual's intention to change jobs. Resilience also indirectly reduces the emotional exhaustion of salespeople and also reduces individual job turnover intentions.

Research on sales people shows that psychological capital has the ability to reduce conflict in working individuals, but not many have examined its effect on work-family conflict. Even though in the current pandemic, all situations and conditions have become uncertain. Field workers are given workloads and work targets in the midst of an uncertain situation, so that stronger motivation is needed from internal individuals in dealing with work-family conflicts. This study combines two individual internal variables, namely the

meaningfulness of work and psychological capital in reducing work-family conflict. Especially on the *MEDREP* in Indonesia during the current pandemic.

Demographic data on *medrep* with working partners show that most of them are under 30 years old. According to Erikson's developmental theory, the age under 30 is a period of conflict-prone. At this age stage, individuals are faced with a transition period from late adolescence to early adulthood where there are many changes in roles such as the role of being a father, mother, employee, child of their parents, social role as a citizen in their place of residence and other roles (Newman & Newman). , 2010). *Medrep* in this role change phase if not handled properly it can lead to conflict. The role of positive meaning of work, widespread good motivation possessed by individuals and positive psychological conditions are needed to protect *medrep* from work-family conflicts.

This study can also be represented by gender, where the number of male and female *MEDREP* is almost equal in taking *MEDREP* subjects on the island of Java. This means that both men and women can experience work-family conflict. This study also found that most of the *Medrep* had a bachelor's level of education, so that cognitively they already had a better level of problem solving in managing their work-family conflict. Most of the *MEDREP* work for domestically-owned companies (79.05%), a small proportion at foreign-owned companies and the government. This means that all pharmaceutical companies in Indonesia have been represented in terms of sampling from company positions at any level in Indonesia.

Medrep who works in pharmaceutical companies have high work pressure so it is natural that the work demands on pharmaceutical companies are increasing (Farid, 2015). This high work pressure also occurs in the *MEDREP* in Indonesia, especially during the pandemic (Dewi et al., 2021). High work pressure in pharmaceutical companies can cause work overload so that it is a conflict-prone phase in *MEDREP*, especially during the current pandemic. *Medrep* if not able to manage the conflict they have can further result in more serious consequences of work-family conflict. The consequences of work-family conflict are quite serious because they can affect physical, mental health as well as individual happiness (Achour & Bin Boerhannoeddin, 2011; Glavin & Peters, 2015; Jaegers et al., 2021; Mache et al., 2015).

The meaningful role of work and psychological capital if jointly owned by *MEDREP* during this pandemic will be able to make *MEDREP* have many positive meanings and good motivation that is widespread in carrying out their duties as well as having high self-confidence and optimism in work so that they can become protectors. for *medrep* to reduce work-family conflict.

On the other hand, the results of this study also show that the correlation of psychological capital with work-family conflict in *MEDREP* during the current pandemic, although significant, makes a small contribution in reducing work-family conflict. This means that in the context of *MEDREP* in Indonesia, there may be other internal variables that can contribute greatly to reducing work-family conflict or even external variables that are more capable of reducing work-family conflict in *MEDREP*. These things also take into account the Indonesian culture, which is mostly *collectivism* where support and assistance from the nuclear family, extended family and the surrounding environment is very much needed to be able to help *MEDREP* in reducing work-family conflicts.

IV. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that internal factors *medrep* such as labor and capital psychological meaningfulness able to reduce work-family conflict on *medrep*. However, the correlation on psychological capital is still small, meaning that there are other variables, both internal and external to the individual that can have a greater influence on the context of *MEDREP*. Especially in the context of Indonesian culture *collectivism*, still holds fast to kinship and extended family so that the influence of family climate still plays a very important role here. Or from an organizational where the work *perspective MEDREP's* roles are so numerous that it puts a lot of pressure on the *MEDREP* to experience a work overload. It is possible that these variables are able to make a greater contribution in reducing work-family conflict in *MEDREP* in Indonesia.

Further research can develop individual internal and external factors (antecedent variables that are *protecting* factors) in reducing work-family conflict in working individuals such as work-family climate, work-family attachment, or *well-being*. It can also be added for working couples who already have children, both toddlers, teenagers and adults so that they can increase knowledge about various kinds of population demographic data in Indonesia in reducing work-family conflicts.

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