

JOB INVOLVEMENT AND ROLE CONFLICT AMONG GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES

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Abstract *The aim of the study was to (i) find out the difference in the level of job involvement and role conflict among government and private employees; and (ii) find out the difference in the level of Job Involvement and Role conflict among male and female employees. (2) find out the difference in the level of Job Involvement and Role conflict among male and female employees. Design: The study was done on 120 employees out of which 60 are government employees and 60 are private employees. The scale of role conflict developed by Kopelman, Greenhaus and Connolly (1983) (Work Conflict, Family Conflict and Inter Role Conflict) and Job Involvement Scale developed by Ashok Pratap Singh (1997) were used for assessment. The result indicates that there is no significant difference between the government and private employees with regard to role conflict and job involvement. Whereas there is a significant difference in the Work Conflict, Family Conflict and Inter role Conflict between them. The result also indicates that there is no gender difference with regard to Job involvement and Role Conflict except the Work Conflict. Further there is significant difference in the level of Work Conflict of Male and Female Employees. Female employees were experiencing less Work Conflict than male employees.*

Keywords *Job Involvement, Role Conflict, Work Conflict, Family Conflict, Inter role Conflict.*

INTRODUCTION

A person's job often shapes his or her identity (Lambert, Hogan, Paoline, & Baker, 2005). A Role or a Social Role is a set of connected behavior, rights and obligations as conceptualized by actors in a social situation. It is an expected behavior in a given individual's social status and social position. Each of these roles has recognized expectations that are acted out like a role play. Besides progressing through a succession of roles, the adult in the modern society fills numerous other roles at the same time. Job involvement is defined as "psychological identification with a job" (Kanungo, 1982). This definition implies that a job-involved person sees her or his job "as an important part of his self-concept" (Lawler & Hall, 1970), and that jobs "define one's self-concept in a major way" (Kanungo, 1982). It is the degree to which one is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned with one's present job. Individuals may become involved in their jobs in response to specific attributes of the work situation (Mudrack, 2004).

Job involvement is positively correlated with Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, Diefendorff et al. (2002), Bolger and Somech (2004), Chu., Lee., Hsu and Chen (2005) & Rotenberry and Moberg (2007), uncovered a positive relationship between job involvement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour in their respective studies.

Role conflict occurs when simultaneous pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some

respect, such that meeting the demands of one role makes it difficult to meet the demands of the other role. Role conflict was defined as the extent to which a person experienced pressures within one role that were incompatible with pressures within another role (Kopelman, et al., 1983).

Role conflict creates Psychological problems like stress, frustration which in turn result in poor job performance, lower self esteem, inability to concentrate, and make decision and job dissatisfaction. These outcomes of stress have a direct effect on the organization. For example, Court Cases have brought stress-related problems stemming from employment under the employers' workers' compensation insurance. Experts are predicting that if the number of stress related compensation claims continues to grow at current rates, these claims will lead all other claims, in an era when health care benefits for psychological problems have plummeted. In order to reduce the stress of the workers it is necessary to find out the conflict they face which is the major reason for stress. By that we can increase the work involvement and decrease the stress.

Researchers have always been interested in studying the effect of multiple roles and interrole conflict. Much has been written on role conflict in the work/family literature (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006; Barnett and Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1986).

Role conflict is experienced at middle management levels some what more frequently than the lower of original hierarchy. Supervisors manifested relatively higher role

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conflict than managers, where as both managers and supervisors have manifested significantly higher role conflict score than the workers (Nahta 1980). Inter-role conflict has been related to lower sales income, work overloaded, stress, increased cognitive difficulties, impaired marital functioning and family conflict. It will result in lower satisfaction with the job, with the family (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984). The women in dual – career marriage are experiencing higher role conflict than their spouse since they are now actively involved in adding a role of earner which may require attitude and behavior that are inconsistent with those of their more traditional roles (Holahan and Gilbert 1979). It has been found a negative relationship between role conflict, ambiguity and job involvement and performance. Positive relationship between role conflict and role ambiguity and positive relationship between job involvement and performance (Greenhaus, and Beutell, 1985). There is a significant correlations of interrole conflict with family affect, family worries, family conflict, age and number of children, and both job and work involvement, among insurance agents. There were negative correlations between interrole conflict and family social support, sales, and job tenure but not age (Mednick., Reznick., Hocevar and Baker 1987).

In a study, Higgins and Duxbury (1992) have identified that there is no gender difference in the relationship between work involvement and work conflict as between family involvement and family conflict. The relationship between work involvement and work family conflict was stronger among women and family involvement and work family conflict was stronger in men. The present study also focused on the Difference in the level of Job Involvement and Role Conflict among Government and Private Employees. Lee and Lee (2007) analyze the effects of the expectancy for intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and Public Service Motivation (PSM) on the performance level. Results of analysis support the need for intrinsic rewards in order to improve the performance of public employees. Nutt and Backoff (1987) said that there are critical difference between public and private sectors. Public organization's goals are more vague, ambiguous, and complex and often change and information on achieving goals is weak or unavailable. And the private-sector variables of market volatility and competition should be replaced by the need for action and responsiveness in public settings. Perry and Rainey (1988) focus on the differences and similarities of organizations in these two sectors. The government tends to be more bureaucratic than private organization. They define bureaucratic organizations as having more elaborate hierarchies and greater centralization, standardization, and formalization. So they tend to be more resistant to changes. Role conflict creates Psychological problems like stress, frustration which in turn result in poor job performance, lower self esteem, inability to concentrate, and make decision and job dissatisfaction. These outcomes

of stress have a direct effect on the organization. Experts are predicting that if the number of stress-related compensation claims continues to grow at current rates, these claims will lead all other claims, in an era when health care benefits for psychological problems have plummeted. In order to reduce the stress of the workers it is necessary to find out the conflict they face which is the major reason for stress. By that we can increase the work involvement and decrease the stress.

Thus the present day work force be it men or women who work in the private and government organizations tend to lack job involvement and role conflict due to excess amount of stress as well the style of life and the nature of job itself makes them more vulnerable to get into family and inter role conflict. Therefore it becomes imperative to study these aspects in detail among the private and government employees, thus the following hypotheses were arrived at to find the differences among them.

Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant difference in the level of Job Involvement and Role Conflict among Government and Private Employees
2. Male and Female Employees will differ in terms of Job Involvement and Role Conflict.

Method

Sample

A purposive sample consisting of 120 bottom level executives from a local Government office as well as from a Private Sector company from Coimbatore district headquarters were selected for the present study. Out of 120 samples 60 were Government employees and 60 were Private Sector employees, 30 men and 30 women from Government and 30 men and 30 women from a Private sector company constituted the final sample of the study.

Tools

The scale for Role Conflict developed by Kopelman Greenhaus and Connolly (1983) uses eight items to assess the extent of the interrole conflict that occurs between work and family roles (work-family conflict). By reversing the wording of the items so that the stressor is family demands, the measure can also be used to describe the spillover of family responsibilities to work roles (family-work conflict). Reliability: Coefficient alpha values of work family conflict ranged from .78 to .90. Validity: Work-family conflict correlated with job involvement, work role conflict, work role ambiguity, work time demands, family role conflict and family time demands. It correlated negatively with social support from work and family, family satisfaction, job

satisfaction and life satisfaction. When both the work family conflict items and the items reworded to assess family-work conflict were examined in a factor analysis, two distinct factors were found with the items loading appropriately on the separate factors.

The Job Involvement Scale developed by Ashok Pratap Singh (1997) consists of 40 items. Each statement of the scale has four responses ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The items of the scale are framed in such a way that they can be used for measuring the degree of involvement of all subjects irrespective of the nature of their work, organizations and tools they use. There is no time limit to complete the test.

The reliability of the scale was computed by using Cronback's coefficient technique and it was found to be 0.83.

Validity: The index of homogeneity and internal validity of the scale is determined by computing the point biserial coefficient of correlation ($r_{pb}=.40$) to ascertain how the scores on the individual items ranging from 1 to 4 contribute to total score. The scores on the Job Involvement Scale of Lodahl and Kejner (1965) was used as one of the criteria for this scale. The coefficient of correlation between the two tests was found to be .93.

Results and Discussions

From the Table I it can be inferred that there is no significant difference between Job Involvement among Government and Private Employees. Job involvement is grounded in the Motivation theory. Maslow (1943) proposed that individuals would seek to satisfy their need for self esteem by becoming involved in their work. Related studies on task involvement, work- role involvement and job dedication place similar emphasis on the self esteem aspect of work. People are involved in the job in order to satisfy their esteem needs. Despite their organization all individual try to seek Self esteem and also individual personality characteristics also determines the involvement associated with job. The characteristics of extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are directly related to job involvement, (Costa and McCrae, 1992; Hurley, Knudstrup and Segrest,

2003). Personality and Self Esteem and other individual traits might play major role in persons Job Involvement than the Organization. This may be the reason for Job involvement among Government and Private Employees.

The t-test presented in the table I also shows that there is a significant difference in the Work Conflict, Family Conflict and Inter role Conflict of Government and Private Employees. Private employees are showing more level of work Conflict than Government Employees. Private employees are highly pressured for Decision making process and other organization related issues. Simons and Peterson (2000) suggest that task conflict generally encompasses with decision phenomenon in the organization. Task conflict becomes pronounced while decision taking place are complex in nature or highly skilled in its manifestation. It leads to negativism in the development and maintainability of the team hence performance is being marred in such like situations (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003). Simons & Peterson (2000) argue that task conflict promotes team members' ability and perceptions about decision-making effectiveness. Conflict is not bad if it produces positive results (Newstrom et al., 1993) but high level of task conflict leads to reduction in team commitment and team member's satisfaction (Amason, 1996; Amason and Sapienza, 1997; Jehn and Mannix, 2001; Simons and Peterson 2000).

Private Employees are showing more Family Conflict. Family-work role conflict refers to the concurrent and incompatible time demands that people with both work and job involvement. Private organizations are working on the basis of inflexible time schedule. The working hours for an employee are more when compared to government workers due to completion, etc. Researchers have found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime required, an inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor, and an inhospitable organizational culture for balancing work and family all increase the likelihood that women employees will experience conflict between their work and family role (Bond, Galinsky and Swanberg 1998). Work overload (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984); stress, increased cognitive difficulties (Barling & MacEwen, 1991); impaired marital functioning (Barling, 1986; Blood

Table I 't' value of Job Involvement, Work Conflict, Family Conflict and Inter Role Conflict of Government and Private Employees

| Group Statistics | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------|----|-------|-------|---------|----|-------|-------|----------|
| Variables | Group | N | Mean | S.D. | Group | N | Mean | S.D. | t |
| Job Involvement | Government | 60 | 90.90 | 13.74 | Private | 60 | 88.12 | 10.50 | 1.13 N.S |
| Work Conflict | Gov | 60 | 22.16 | 6.49 | Private | 60 | 26 | 5.82 | 3.11** |
| Family Conflict | Gov | 60 | 22.88 | 7.58 | Private | 60 | 26.62 | 6.38 | 2.66** |
| Inter role Conflict | Gov | 60 | 22.18 | 7.15 | Private | 60 | 26.86 | 5.90 | 3.57 ** |

** p < .01

Ns- Not significant

& Wolfe, 1960); and family conflict (Wiersma & van den Berg, 1991). Private employees may have more workloads, stress it may impair Family Role and Conflict also many arises with it.

Private Employees are having more Inter Role Conflict than Government Employees. Studies reveal that there are several factors which affects inter role conflict. Individual professionals who work within a professional organization frequently experience such interrole conflict (Hrebiniak and Alutto, 1968). The study of Job Involvement and Identity found that Job involvement has been seen as influencing Inter role conflict through role segmentation and time and attention devoted to the job role. Crandall (1992) found that the total hours worked increased inter role conflict. And also it has been related to lower sales income, work overload, stress, increased cognitive difficulties, and family conflict. Since the difference in the total working hours and the increased family conflict etc., can be an influencing factor for increased inter role conflict of Private Employees. The reviews based on the perspectives indicate that the level of role conflict increases in proportion to the number of time spent in both family and work domains. Study by Getzels and Gubo (1954) , showing that role conflict occurs in certain situations where they are so ordered that an actor required to full fill simultaneously two or more roles that present inconsistent, contradictory or even mutually exclusive expectations. The actor cannot realistically conform to these expectations. The differences in the time spent on the work and the difference in the role expectations can be a reason for increased Work Conflict in Private Employees.

The t test shows (Table II) that there is no significant difference in the level of Job Involvement of Male and Female Employees. Female workers did not differ from men in their job satisfaction (Bilha 1983). In a study Higgins and Duxbury (1992) have identified that there is no gender difference in the relationship between work involvement and work conflict as well as family involvement and family conflict. Thus, both male and female employees do not differ in the job involvement; both the groups are having same level of Job Involvement. Since Job is having an important role in

satisfying the esteem needs, people consider it as center to the life and find it as important to their life. Similarly, a study on New Zealand police officers found no difference in level of job involvement between male and female respondents (Love & Singer, 1988).

The t test result shows that there is significant difference in the level of Work Conflict of Male and Female Employees. Female employees were experiencing less Work Conflict than male employees. A study by Poloma (1972) among women in professions(law, medicine and college teaching) found that over half of them coped with conflict between parental and work role by temporarily lowering their career ambitions and that their professional involvement had less priority than their husbands involvement.

The t test result also shows that there is no difference in the level among Family Conflict of Male and Female Employees. In the study, Higgins and Duxbury have identified in 1992 that there is no gender difference in the work involvement and work conflict as well as between family involvement and family conflict. Both the male and female employees show the same level of Family Conflict.

The result also shows that there is no significant difference in the level of Inter Role Conflict among Male and Female Employees. Crandall (1992) found that the total hours worked increased inter role conflict. Since both the groups are having high Family Conflict, Inter Role Conflict also increases with it.

Conclusions

From the present study, it can be concluded that Private and Government employees are not different in the level of Involvement associated with the Job. There is a significant difference in the Role Conflict among both Private and Government employees. There is no Gender difference in Job Involvement, Family Conflict and Inter Role conflict whereas Work Conflict was different among the male and female employees.

Table II 't' value of Job Involvement, Work Conflict, Family Conflict and Inter Role Conflict in Male and Female Employees.

| Group Statistics | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|----|-------|-------|--------|----|-------|-------|--------|
| Variables | Group | N | Mean | S.D. | Group | N | Mean | S.D. | t |
| Job Involvement | Male | 60 | 91.94 | 12.15 | female | 60 | 87.08 | 11.96 | 71N.S |
| Work Conflict | Male | 60 | 25.50 | 4.98 | Female | 60 | 22.66 | 7.39 | 2.25** |
| Family Conflict | Male | 60 | 24.34 | 5.89 | Female | 60 | 25.16 | 8.38 | .57NS |
| Inter role Conflict | Male | 60 | 23.12 | 6.58 | Female | 60 | 25.92 | 7.06 | .85N.S |

** p < .01

NS- Not Significant

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