Job characteristics and work-family relationship:

A case study in the health sector

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Abstract

Work and family represent the two most dominant life domains for individuals and, therefore, the attempt to manage the demands of professional and personal life has been considered a current challenge experienced by the workers. Work in modern society is characterized by a high amount of demands that require high efforts by workers to perform their work tasks, including work overload, overtime hours, and pressure/stress. These demands are the main antecedents of the Work-Family Conflict (WFC), since the workers must allocate his available resources (e.g., time, energy) into different tasks, making it difficult to balance work and family roles. Despite this, job characteristics also include resources that protect workers when meeting their job demands and help them have a better performance, they include professional development opportunities, feedback, and autonomy. Accordingly, workers also have job resources that improve their family's quality of life and allow them to benefit from their work-family relationship, resulting in Work-Family Enrichment (WFE).

The job characteristics and work-family relationship is a subject that can be apply to a wide range of areas, however the health sector has a high amount of job demands, especially emotional charge (i.e., emotionally demanding interactions with patients) and is undergoing a lot of changes in the working conditions, employment contracts, career development, among others.

The world of work has undergone some changes over the years, including the development of information and communication technologies and more working women.

Therefore, there is an increase of dual-career couples, which is a new challenge in balancing work and family roles.

The aim of the present study is to examine the impact of job characteristics, in health professionals, on their work-family relationship and the mediating role of gender. It is hypothesized that job demands and WFC have a positive relationship, as well as job resources and WFE. Regarding to gender, women are expected to experience higher levels of WFC than men and gender is expected to have a moderating role on the relationship between autonomy and WFE, in a way that this relationship becomes more positive when there are more men in the sample.

The present study follows a quantitative approach and the data is being collected in a sample of health professionals, more specifically in doctors and nurses, through a questionnaire. Finally, data analysis will be prosecuted using the statistical analysis software SPSS.

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