PERSON–ORGANIZATION FIT, FAMILY-SUPPORTIVE ORGANIZATION PERCEPTIONS, AND SELF-EFFICACY AFFECT WORK–LIFE BALANCE

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I investigated the effects of person–organization (PO) fit, family-supportive organization perceptions (FSOP), and self-efficacy on work–life balance (WLB), using a sample of 765 employees of a Korean manufacturing company. Participants completed measures of PO fit, FSOP, self-efficacy, and WLB. Results revealed a main effect of PO fit on WLB, and a 3-way interaction among PO fit, self-efficacy, and FSOP as predictors of WLB. In terms of practical implications, my results suggest that WLB can be improved by enhancing PO fit, FSOP, and self-efficacy. Further implications for research and practice are discussed.

Keywords: person–organization fit, work–life balance, self-efficacy, family-supportive organization perceptions.

In this study, I examined issues related to balancing work with one’s home life, in order to explore the effect of person–organization (PO) fit on individual outcomes. To my knowledge, this is a new approach to investigating the interactive cognitive mechanisms through which PO fit exerts its influence on work–life balance. PO fit is defined as “compatibility between individuals and the organization that occurs when (a) at least one party provides what the other needs, and/or (b) both share similar fundamental characteristics” (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4–5). Past researchers have provided varying definitions of work–life balance (WLB; e.g., Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003; Kirchmeyer, 2000; Lewis, Rapoport, & Gamble, 2003); however, in this study I focused on that of Kirchmeyer (2000), that is, “achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains”
Kirchmeyer also prescribed the characteristics of WLB, suggesting that “it requires personal resources like energy, time, and commitment to be well distributed across domains” (p. 81).

As self-efficacy and family-supportive organization perceptions (FSOP) play significant roles in an employee’s perception of his/her organization and the values it espouses, it is imperative to study how these factors moderate the relationship between PO fit and WLB. Thus, my aim in the present study was to extend the literature by proposing and testing the three-way interaction among PO fit, self-efficacy, and FSOP in regard to predicting WLB.

**Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

**Person–Organization Fit and Work–Life Balance**

Researchers of PO fit have suggested that when employees’ values match those of the organization, positive outcomes, such as greater job satisfaction, work commitment, and job choice, can be attained (Han, Chiang, McConville, & Chiang, 2015; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Oh et al., 2014; Swider, Zimmerman, & Barrick, 2015). Fit research theorists have observed that PO fit correlates with a sense of subjective well-being (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), including such aspects as psychological strain (French, Caplan, & Van Harrison, 1982), boredom (Edwards & Van Harrison, 1993), and self-esteem (Hyland, 1987). This suggests that there will be a positive relationship between PO fit and WLB. As such, employees who perceive that they fit well with their organization may have a sense of balance between their work and life, making them more comfortable with their work setting. Given these theoretical considerations, I advanced the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1:** Person–organization fit will be positively related to work–life balance.

**Family-Supportive Organization Perceptions and Self-Efficacy as Moderators of the Relationship Between Person–Organization Fit and Work–Life Balance**

Bandura (1986) defined *self-efficacy* as “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances,” (p. 391) and stated that it has an influence on the relationship between PO fit and WLB. Further, self-efficacy “is concerned not with the skills one has but with judgements of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). Thus, employees with high, compared to low, self-efficacy are more likely to feel a better fit with their organization. More specifically, the relationship between PO fit and WLB may be moderated by self-efficacy because employees with high self-efficacy may perceive that they have better balance between work and life, causing them to be more confident in
their perceptions of both their job and their life in general. The rationale for this proposition can be found in the applied psychology literature, with Markman and Baron (2003) showing that adaptive human functioning is motivated, regulated, and directed by the ongoing exercise of self-efficacy.

Family-supportive organization perceptions (FSOP), which are defined as “the global perceptions that employees form regarding the extent to which the organization is family-supportive” (Allen, 2001, p. 416), play a significant role in the positive relationship between PO fit and WLB. The underpinning mechanism of this influence is social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) in which the obligation, attachment, and identification that employees feel toward their organization are emphasized (e.g., Aryee, Chu, Kim, & Ryu, 2013; Bagger & Li, 2014). Social exchange relationships involve the exchange of socioemotional benefits derived from close personal attachment. Individuals forming social exchange relationships with the organization tend to produce more favorable outcomes than do other individuals, such as better job performance, greater work commitment, and more organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002).

People who perceive that they are supported by their organization feel that they have a better balance between work and life (e.g., Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Breaugh & Frye, 2008). More specifically, WLB is perceived to be better when an organization supports employees by using family-supportive policies and systems. One of the major contributors to the feeling of balance in life is one’s family, so family-supportive systems strengthen and enhance employees’ overall WLB. Moreover, the perception that work and life are balanced may be felt more strongly by employees whose values are congruent with those expressed in organizational policies. Finally, I believed that self-efficacy would moderate the relationship between PO fit and WLB because the interaction between PO fit and self-efficacy would be stronger when FSOP was high than when it was low. Therefore, PO fit would be more likely to occur in those who have a higher, vs. lower, level of FSOP, and in those who have a higher, vs. lower, level of self-efficacy. Thus, I formed the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 2:** The three-way interaction among person–organization fit, self-efficacy, and family-supportive organization perceptions will predict work–life balance, in such a way that when self-efficacy and family-supportive organization perceptions are both high, person–organization fit will have the strongest positive relationship with work–life balance.

**Method**

**Participants and Procedure**

Data were collected from a manufacturing company in Korea between July and
August in 2009. With the permission of the chief executive officer and human resource management department, I surveyed team members using paper surveys that included measures of PO fit perception, self-efficacy, FSOP, and WLB. Of the 1,500 employees of the company, 1,143 completed the survey (response rate 76.2%). After excluding responses with missing data on key variables, the total usable sample size was reduced to 765 ($M_{age} = 33.4$ years, $SD = 5.5$), of whom 92.5% were men and 7.5% were women. The distribution of level of education among the participants was as follows: 2-year college = 7.1%, 4-year college = 62.1%, and graduate college = 30.8%. In terms of organizational tenure, 62.4% had worked for the company for less than 5 years, 21.7% for between 5 and 10 years, and 15.9% for more than 10 years.

Measures

Responses to all measures were made on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). All scales showed acceptable internal consistency.

Person–organization fit. PO fit was measured using the three-item scale developed by Cable and DeRue (2002). A sample item is “My organization’s values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.” Cronbach’s alpha reliability of the scale was .95 in this study.

Self-efficacy. Chen, Gully, and Eden’s (2001) eight-item measure was used to assess self-efficacy. A sample item is “I am confident that I can perform effectively on many difficult tasks.” Cronbach’s alpha reliability of the scale was .95 in this study.

Family-supportive organization perceptions. FSOP were measured with five items sourced from Allen (2001). A sample item is “Employees at this organization are given ample opportunity to perform both their job and their personal responsibilities well.” Cronbach’s alpha reliability of the scale was .73 in this study.

Work–life balance. WLB was measured using four items taken from Brett and Stroh (2003). A sample item is the following reverse-coded statement: “I feel that my job negatively affects my psychological well-being.” Cronbach’s alpha reliability of the scale was .83 in this study.

Control variables. Gender, age, level of education (e.g., Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012), and organizational tenure (e.g., Seong, Park, & Yun, 2008) were included as control variables.

Results

The descriptive statistics of the relationships among the study variables are displayed in Table 1.
Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>33.44</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>-10**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
<td>-10**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Level of education</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>14**</td>
<td>-00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organization tenure</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>64**</td>
<td>-01</td>
<td>-08*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PO fit</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>12**</td>
<td>-06</td>
<td>-04</td>
<td>09**</td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Self-efficacy</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>17**</td>
<td>-03</td>
<td>06*</td>
<td>08*</td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. FSOP</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>-07</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>33**</td>
<td>31**</td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. WLB</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>-02</td>
<td>-07</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>29**</td>
<td>39**</td>
<td>41**</td>
<td>(83)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 765. Reliability coefficients appear in parentheses along the main diagonal. PO fit = person–organization fit, FSOP = family-supportive organization perceptions, WLB = work–life balance. * p < .05, ** p < .01.

Data Analysis

Measurement model testing. Prior to testing the hypotheses, I checked the empirical distinctiveness of the measures with a series of analyses conducted using AMOS version 23.0. The analyses included a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the measures of PO fit, WLB, self-efficacy, and FSOP. The four-factor CFA demonstrated acceptable fit with the data, \( \chi^2 (df = 176) = 415.90, p < .001 \) (comparative fit index = .97, Tucker-Lewis index = .97, root mean square error of approximation = .049), confirming the expected underlying factor structure. All indicators were significantly related to their corresponding latent factors (p < .001).

Hypothesis testing 1: Main effect. I used the standardized coefficients reported in the model to evaluate the specific hypotheses. The standardized path coefficient for the relationship between PO fit and WLB was positive (\( \beta = .08, p < .05 \)), thus supporting Hypothesis 1 (see Table 2).

Table 2. Standardized Regression Coefficients of Work–Life Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational tenure</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>PO fit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FSOP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PO fit × Self-efficacy</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PO fit × FSOP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-efficacy × FSOP</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
<td>0.29***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis testing 2: Three-way interaction. The results of the hierarchical regression analyses supported Hypothesis 2 (see Table 2), showing that the three-way interaction among perceived PO fit, FSOP, and self-efficacy was positively associated with WLB ($\beta = .09, p < .05$). To interpret these relationships, I constructed plots of the three-way interaction from the models with significant effects. Following Aiken and West (1991), one standard deviation above and below the mean on the independent variables were plotted, holding the control variables at their means, to determine if the two-way interaction of PO fit perceptions and self-efficacy is stronger when FSOP is high than when it is low. Separate graphs were drawn of the two-way interactions at high (Figure 1) and low (Figure 2) levels of FSOP, and simple slopes analyses and slopes contrast tests were then performed. The results of these analyses further supported Hypothesis 2.

Figure 1. Three-way interaction effects on work–life balance: Person–organization fit is moderated by self-efficacy when there are high levels of family-supportive organizational perceptions.
Discussion

In this study, I investigated the relationship between PO fit and WLB and found that the two variables were significantly related, and that there was a three-way interaction among PO fit, self-efficacy, and FSOP on WLB. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the relationship between PO fit and WLB was much stronger when self-efficacy was high than when it was low. The interaction between PO fit and self-efficacy was stronger when FSOP was high than when it was low, which implies that perceived PO fit encourages employees to consider the support offered by the organization as particularly relevant to their family issues. Further, the distinction between self-efficacy and FSOP helps to clarify how individuals use self-efficacy in their perceptions of WLB. In this study, I have linked PO fit with employees’ self-efficacy and FSOP concerns in a framework that can be used to demonstrate how these managerial issues may influence WLB.

Theoretical Implications

The findings in the current study contributes to the literature on both PO fit and WLB, extending the theoretical underpinnings (e.g., attraction–selection–attrition theory, social identity theory, and the similarity-attraction paradigm) that have been previously introduced to explain how PO fit leads to individual outcomes (Chatman, 1991; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012) by integrating self-efficacy and social exchange theory to provide a theoretical basis for the boundary conditions that strengthen the relationship between fit and WLB. In this respect, in the current study I have also extended
the literature by confirming that there is an effect of PO fit on WLB, which has not previously been fully examined, but is increasingly important because of the trend of adoption of practices that promote WLB. Further research on PO fit and WLB is needed to provide more insight into how these variables manifest in team situations, such as supervisor support factors (e.g., Bagger & Li, 2014) and cooperative group norms (e.g., Gonzalez-Mulé, DeGeest, McCormick, Seong, & Brown, 2014), as well as in relation to individual and organizational factors.

Practical Implications
The results of this study have practical implications for organizations that intend to adopt family-supportive or related systems, as well as training programs for self-efficacy to stimulate PO fit. Whereas the majority of prior fit research has been focused on Western cultures, in this study I examined fit in an Eastern cultural context (e.g., Chuang, Hsu, Wang, & Judge, 2015; Seong, Kristof-Brown, Park, Hong, & Shin, 2015). Traditionally, Korean society has been characterized by a collectivistic cultural orientation, which places a strong emphasis on the family. My results in this study suggest that culturally relevant human resource management practices, including family-supportive practices, are highly effective for positive individual outcomes when they are combined with individual factors, such as self-efficacy. Such practices facilitate and strengthen PO fit, which is a culturally contextualized concept that eventually leads to a higher level of WLB. By linking PO fit, self-efficacy, and FSOP, in the present study I explicitly identified and examined a mechanism that explains how PO fit and WLB can be mutually reinforcing. In a practical sense, and consistent with prior research (e.g., Chuang et al., 2015; Lee & Ramaswami, 2013), my findings have implications for how managers can foster PO fit, thereby helping employees to feel that they have a balance between work and life. By adopting organizational policies and training programs that enhance self-efficacy, organizations can guide employees to increase their level of WLB.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research
The findings of this study should be interpreted in the light of its limitations. First, the data were collected at one point in time; thus, given the cross-sectional design, causality cannot be inferred. Therefore, future researchers should include longitudinal measurement of WLB in order to examine how employees’ perceptions impact on this over time. Another limitation is the potential risk of common method bias as the data were collected using a single survey. Although common method bias is unlikely to be of concern in this study because there were significant two-way interactions and quadratic effects (Evans, 1985; Siemsen, Roth, & Oliveira, 2010), future researchers should, nonetheless, collect data from different sources. Second, the measurement of fit should be reexamined in
future studies. Because individuals have different inclinations when interpreting their environments, various types of fit measures could be used, depending on the purpose. My aim in this study was to examine the effects of employees’ perceptions of fit on their WLB, which meant that the concept of perceived fit was suitable for use in this context. However, future researchers could consider examining the effects of both perceived fit and objective fit simultaneously.

Conclusion
My findings contribute to research on PO fit and how self-efficacy and FSOP affect WLB in organizational contexts. By examining this relationship from individual and organizational perspectives, I have provided insight into how employees form perceptions of fit, both as individuals (e.g., self-efficacy) and in relation to their organizations (e.g., FSOP), to enhance their WLB.

References


