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Procedural Justice and Work-Home Conflict: The Moderating Role of Stress

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine the moderating role of stress in the relationship between perceived procedural justice and the work-home conflict of teachers. For this purpose, the data collection tools were collected from the study group consisting of 129 teachers that were selected randomly with a clustered sampling method from the schools in Gaziantep and Erzincan in 2015-2016 academic year. The data was analyzed by hierarchical multiple linear regression method in SPSS 22 and ModGraph-I was used for moderating tests. The findings of the research indicate that procedural justice behavior of school managers predict work-home conflict of participants negatively and significantly, and also the stress level of employees has a moderating role in the relationship between perceived procedural justice and work-home conflict. When an employee has a high level of stress, an increase in the level of procedural justice provides a significant decrease in work-home conflict. Being aware of that, from top to bottom all the policymakers including school managers must incorporate teachers into the decision-making process, must care about their demands which eventually would also affect their home life, and also must be transparent in all practices in order to increase procedural justice.

Keywords: *Procedural justice, organizational justice, work-home conflict, stress.*

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Introduction

Present day society forces individuals to build a meaningful relationship between work and home life in order to keep a healthy and balanced way of living. Individuals are supposed to give key importance both to their work and private life in order to realize themselves. However, since the work-home relationship is so unstable, the possibility of conflict between them is very high. When people experience work-home conflict, they will concurrently suffer from stress. A great deal of research has been carried out on stress in everyday circumstances. The pace of modern life is faster than at any time in our history. The rivalry between people is increasing rapidly day by day which puts employees under a great deal of stress. Work life is one of the main sources of stress and problems and quarrels in the working environment can lead to some destructive consequences for people. Also, family life can also create stress. The mismatch between family life and work can lead an individual to conflict, and if the conflict is unavoidable, it is necessary to manage the conflict successfully (Efeoglu & Ozgen, 2007, s.238).

The concept of stress has often attracted the attention of researchers. Feeling helpless and weak when faced with changes to many aspects of life can be one of the most common reasons of stress. Similarly, besides bad working conditions leading people to offences and quarrels, threatening their future hopes and expectations, causing them to feel suspicious, making them worry about everything, and causing some disorders, all the other factors leading to exhaustion, deadness, and effeteness in all procedures and practices can also cause physical and psychological damages (Okutan & Tengilimoglu, 2002, s.16).

The Notion and Scope of Stress

Selye (1977) was the first to use the notion of stress, and he defined it as “an ordinary reaction that the body gives to an extrinsic demand”. Some other definitions of stress are as follows: Magnuson (1990) defined it as the reaction people give for the gap between reality and their demands (cited by: Gumustekin & Oztemiz, 2004, p.64); Davis (1982) defines

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it as a tension in people's emotions, minds and physical self-threatening the ability to interact with the environment; Robbins (1996) classified it as the dynamical conclusion of uncertainty people face during opportunities, limitations and demands ; Cannon (DATE) defined it as physiologic stimulants necessary for recreating the inner balance breaking down after undesired environmental conditions and Lazarus defined as a total of relations the retaining the individual and surpassing the strength to stand (Ekinici & Ekici, 2003).

Stress in Work Life

When the effect of stress is measured against success at work, four procedural relations are essential (Guney, 2001, p.515): (1) work is a basic source of stress and has a restrictive and influential effect on employees' abilities, especially on the occasions such as excessive work-load, bad management, not fulfilling responsibilities, lack of a suitable working environment, lead to employees experiencing stress in their working lives (Albrect, 1988, p.50). (2) The stressors caused by some other factors out of work can also influence life at work eventually. (3) An individual can try to decrease or eliminate some stressors by the help of the work he does. (4) An increase or decrease in success at work can be considered as a sign of stress. In other words, the work he does can be seen as a kind of stress measurement.

Thus, it can be concluded from these four procedural relations that there is a relationship between the level of stress in working life and employees' effectiveness. Therefore, to increase organizational and personal efficiency, the level of stress in working environment must be strictly regulated because a stressful working life can cause the employees to become irritated, not to get on with people and to act in an unpredictable manner. On the other hand, stress can increase the working cost and can decrease the quality of both employee's and working life directly or indirectly. Within this scope, work stress can be defined as harmful physical and emotional reaction distorting people's normal functions, changing their psychological and/or physical behaviors and emerging when there is a disharmony between employees' abilities and sources or demands (Cam, 2004, p.3).

Work-Home Conflict

Recently, work-home conflict, which has become a noticeable problem for both organizations and individuals due to family structures becoming more nuclear, more and more women are entering the workplace, families are declining the help of grandparents in areas such as child care, cleaning and cooking, the life in big cities is getting more difficult, the demands of both children and work on parents are increasing. Work-home conflict, considered as role conflict, exists when employees have more than one role such as mother/father and wife/husband (Dubrin, 1997, p.116) and is defined as a dysfunctional situation in role demands generating from work and family areas (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003, p. 510). Similarly, Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) define work-home conflict as a nonoccurrence experienced owing to the fact that work and family roles come up synchronously.

Perceived Organizational Justice

The term, organizational justice, was first used by Greenberg (1987). Organizational justice is essential for both the work satisfaction of employees and the efficiency of organizational functions, and injustice must also be considered as an organizational problem (Greenberg, 1990).

Adam first researched justice using his equalization theory. These studies focused on perceived justice and its consequences. The researches on organizational justice have mostly examined the perceived rightness in decision making process. When equalization theory and other distributive justice models fell short to predict and explain the reactions of employees to perceived justice, the researches started to focus on procedural justice. Then, interpersonal justice studies started when researchers realized that interpersonal relationships are considered as a justice model (Bies & Moag, 1986 ; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001 ; Gilliland & Chan, 2009).

Distributive justice was first used as a term by Homans in 1961 (Sahin, 2007). He stated that individuals demand profit equal to their investments, and they perceive justice in organizations if these demands are met.

Procedural Justice was introduced as a concept by Thibaut and Walker (1975). This notion defines including the employees into decision making and all other practices in this process. It reflects the perception of justice in the process of any rewards and wages the employees may receive. Thibaut and Walker (1975) state that the process is perceived as being more fair-minded when employees are active in the decision making process.

Interpersonal justice was first mentioned in the literature by Bies and Moag (1986). Interpersonal justice delineates the humanistic role of organizational practices. It is based on concepts such as kindness, honesty and respect in the transferring process between the source and receiver of justice (cited by: Greenberg, 1990; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

The Importance of the Study

In modern times, working life is where people spend a considerable part of their time. Having a balance between work and life has been indispensable for individuals. Employees have to both deal with the harmful effects of work and keep a healthy family life. However, they often experience a work-home conflict.

In organizations, procedural justice and the level of work-home conflict have an influence on the success of organizations. Analyzing the results of this research is expected to guide organization managers.

The perception of procedural justice affects employees' attitudes and behaviors. When the literature is examined, it is clear that there have been few studies regarding these three concepts. That's why it is of crucial importance to examine the moderating role of stress in the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict. Analyzing these three concepts together would make a significant contribution into the literature.

The Purpose of the Study

In the literature, it is quite clear that the concepts of procedural justice, work-home conflict and stress are related to each other. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are few studies analyzing these three concepts together although there are lots of studies examining bilateral concepts. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship of procedural justice perception, work-home conflict and stress and also to analyze the moderating role of stress in the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict.

Method

Study Group

The population of this study was teachers working in cities of the Southeast Anatolian Region during the 2014-2015 academic year. The irrational cluster sampling method, which is defined as randomly choosing groups rather than specific individuals, has been applied. The study group consisted of 129 teachers working in the cities of Gaziantep and Erzincan. Schools were chosen randomly with minimum requirements. For deciding the number of the study group, to the formula prepared for the size whose main mass number was certain, 129 teachers was adequate for 95% confidence level (Ozdamar, 2003). 150 out of 160 questionnaires, delivered to teachers, were returned, but only 129 questionnaires were included in the study. Also, 21 questionnaires that were filled out carelessly had been eliminated.

While 55.8% of the teachers (n=129) participating in this study were male (n=72), 44.2% were female (n=57). 80.6% of the participants were married (n=104), whereas 19.4% of them were single (n=25). The most frequent age range of the participants was 31-40 years (n=58) with a percentage of 45%. On the other hand, the most frequent seniority range of the participants was 1-10 years (n=55) with a percentage of 42.6.

Data Collection Tools

In the questionnaire delivered as a data collection tool, in order to measure organizational justice, organizational justice scale was developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993) has been applied. Since Barlett's test results of organizational justice scale were significant, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient was .892 and $p < 0.05$, datamatrix was suitable for factor analysis. The scale was fixed to three dimensions since it originally had three dimensions as distributive justice, procedural justice and interpersonal justice. The items having low factor load points (DA4, IA1, IA5, EA11) among the items of the scale were removed from the questionnaire. After factor analysis, 17 items remained in the scale, which initially included 21 items. It explained 66.26% of total variance. Cronbach's Alpha reliability co-efficient was .911.

Work-home conflict scale which was adopted as two dimensions by Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian (1996) had two dimensions in our study after the factor analysis. The scale had 10 items, and having a high score from the scale means that the participant experience a high level of work-home conflict. Since Barlett's test results were significant, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient was .862 and $p < 0.05$, datamatrix was suitable for factor analysis. It explained 68.32% of total variance. Cronbach's Alpha reliability co-efficient was .885.

Work stress variance scale which originally had 7 items was developed by House and Rizzo (1972). Since Barlett's test results were significant, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient was .893 and $p < 0.05$, datamatrix was suitable for factor analysis. It explained 56.46% of total variance. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was .871.

Analysis

The data was analyzed in terms of validity and reliability. Factor analysis results and the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient showed that the scales were valid and reliable. First, the correlation between the variables was checked and then, regression results were analyzed in order to see the effects of organizational justice and stress on work-home conflicts of employees. In the following step, the moderating role of stress in the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict was analyzed by applying ModGraph-I test.

Findings

Table 1. Work-home conflict, stress and organizational justice mean, standard deviation and standard error results

Variables	\bar{x}	SD	Std. Err.
Work-home conflict	2.589	.716	.063
Stress	2.542	.790	.069
Organizational Justice (General)	3.477	.643	.056
Distributive justice	2.928	.793	.069
Procedural Justice	3.483	.823	.072
Interpersonal Justice	3.696	.782	.068

Table 1 displays the arithmetical means and standard deviations of teachers’ participation levels compared with items in the scales of the research. It shows that teachers’ perceptions of school managers’ organizational justice in general and managers’ procedural justice and interpersonal justice levels were high. Moreover, teachers’ perceptions of stress, work-home conflict and of school managers’ distributive justice levels were moderate.

Table 2. The correlation of the relationship between organizational commitment, stress and work-home conflict

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Work-Home Conflict	1					
2. Stress	.581***	1				
3. Organizational Justice	-.218*	-.123	1			
4. Distributive justice	-.106	-.106	.591***	1		
5. Procedural Justice	-.231*	-.153	.736***	.391***	1	
6. Interpersonal Justice	-.189*	-.081	.926***	.297**	.554***	1

*p<,05 **p<,01 ***p<,001

In Table 2, the correlation matrix indicated the relationship between variables analyzed in the research. When significant relationships were checked, it was clear that there was a positive correlation between stress and work-home conflict. On the other hand, there was a negative correlation between organizational justice in general, procedural justice, interpersonal justice and work-home conflict.

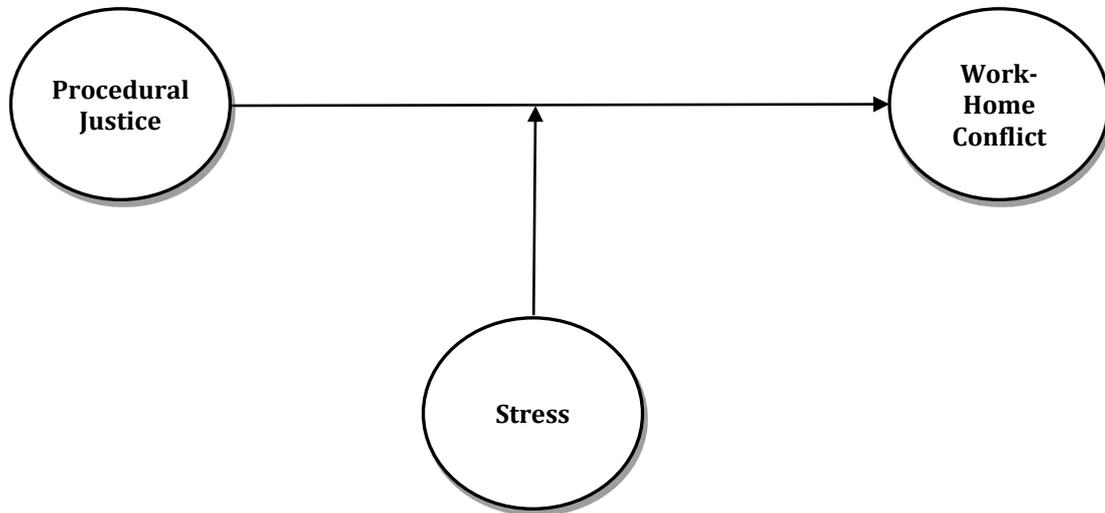


Figure 1. Moderating Role of Stress

Table 3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Table of Moderator Effect of Stress

Model	Predictor Variables	B	Std. Error	β	t	p
1 st step (enter)	(Constant)	2,075	,549	-	3,782	,000
	Gender (dummy)	,066	,141	,046	,468	,640
	Age	,017	,021	,198	,831	,407
	Senior	-,016	,023	-,169	-,694	,498
2 nd step (stepwise)	(constant)	1,991	,542	-	3,675	,000
	Gender (dummy)	,076	,139	,053	,545	,586
	Age	,022	,021	,255	1,053	,294
	Senior	-,024	,023	-,260	-1,024	,308
	Z score (Procedural Justice)	-,142	,065	-,198*	-2,191	,030
3 rd step	(constant)	1,572	,436	-	3,602	,000
	Gender (dummy)	,218	,112	,152	1,945	,054
	Age	,031	,016	,360	1,896	,060
	Senior	-,034	,018	-,355	-1,818	,071
	Z score (Procedural Justice)	-,101	,052	-,141*	-1,947	,054
	Z score (Stress)	,433	,052	,604***	8,407	,000
4 th step	(constant)	1,821	,421	-	4,327	,000
	Gender (dummy)	,181	,107	,126	1,686	,094
	Age	,022	,016	,254	1,388	,168
	Senior	-,024	,018	-,258	-1,374	,172
	Z score (Procedural justice)	-,056	,051	-,078	-1,096	,275
	Z score (Stress)	,454	,049	,633***	9,193	,000
	Interaction of Procedural justice and Stress	-,171	,046	-,259***	-3,694	,000

Dependent Variable: Work-Home Conflict

$\Delta R^2=0.454$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Multiple regression analysis results indicated that when demographic variables were kept under control, procedural justice predicted work-home conflict significantly and negatively ($\beta = -0,198$ $p < 0.05$). One unit of increase in procedural justice caused 0.198 unit of decrease in work-home conflict. Procedural justice explained 4.5% of work-home conflict ($\Delta R^2=0.045$; $p < 0.05$) which means the procedural justice behavior of school managers provide a decrease in work-home conflict.

Moreover, stress level also predicted work-home conflict ($\beta=0,604$ $p < 0.000$). One unit of increase in stress caused 0.604 unit of increase in work-home conflict ($\Delta R^2=0.393$; $p < 0.000$) which means stress provides an increase in work-home conflict.

In the last step, it was clear that the interaction of procedural justice and stress predicts work-home conflict significantly ($\beta = -0,259$ $p < 0.000$) which means that stress has a moderating role in the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict. That is to say, the effect of procedural justice on work-home conflict of employees was significantly different in three groups including low stress level, medium stress level and high stress level. The slope chart below indicated how stress level moderates the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict.

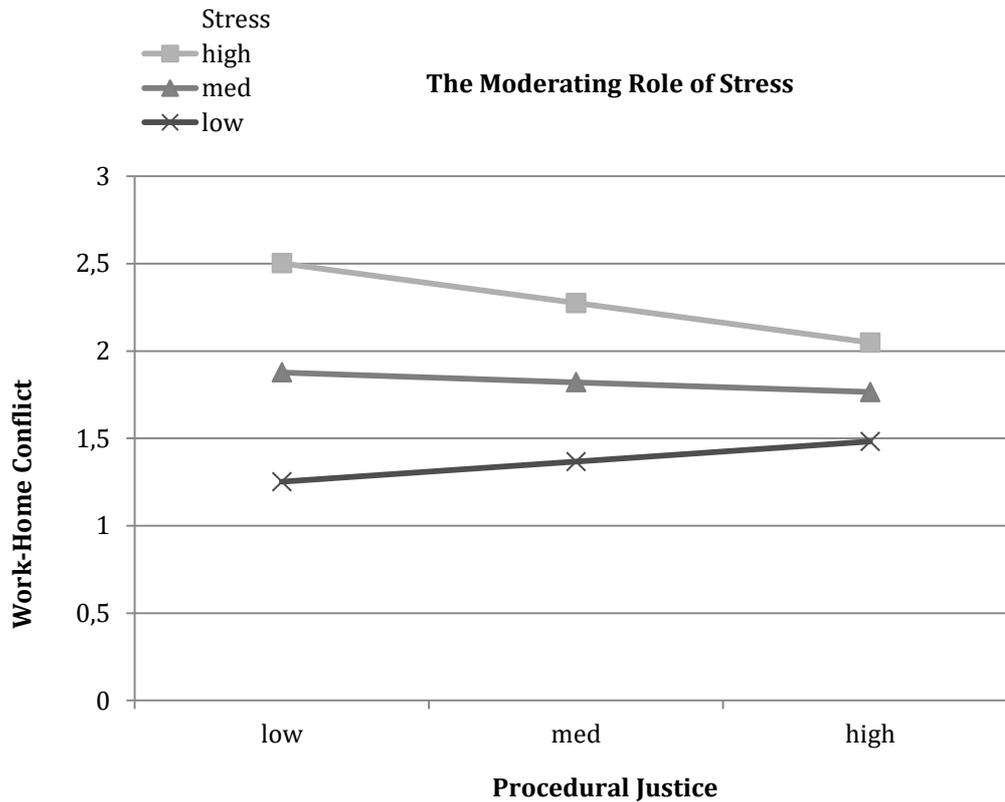


Figure 2: Slope Chart of the Moderating Role of Stress in the Relationship between Procedural Justice and Work-Home Conflict

ModGraph-I test results indicated that when demographic variables were kept under control, there was significant and negative relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict and stress moderates the effect of procedural justice on work-home conflict. When an employee had a high level of stress, an increase in the level procedural justice provided a significant decrease in work-home conflict. On the other hand, when an employee had a medium or low level of stress, procedural justice only caused a slight change in work-home conflict.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the literature, the concepts of stress, work-home conflict and organizational justice, and of course procedural justice which is a sub-dimension of organizational justice are all related to each other. On the other hand, a clear majority of these studies includes bilateral relationships. In the target literature there is very little research carried out in order to find a moderating or mediating role in the relationship between organizational justice and work-home conflict.

The study of Judge and Colquitt (2004) is one of the studies revealing the relationship of these concepts. In their research, it was carried out with 174 employees working in different universities in the U.S., they analyzed the mediating effect of work-home conflict in the relationship between organizational justice and stress. Their results indicated that procedural justice and interpersonal justice have the most powerful effects on the stress level of employees, and work-home conflict has a mediating role in this relationship. As an addition to the findings of Timothy and Jason, in the study which we also investigated the relationship of these three variables, we found out that stress is a moderating factor in the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict.

Onderoglu (2010) is another researcher investigating a mediating role in the relationship of work-home conflict and organizational justice with its all sub-dimensions including procedural justice, interactional justice and informational justice. In her study, she found out a mediating role of organizational support on the relationship between organizational justice and work-home conflict.

The study of Vermunt and Steensma (2001) is another one stating that organizational justice is a clear stressor in working environment which is leading the employees into feeling concerned about their future. Adiller (2011) also examined the relationship between work-home conflict and stress and found out a positive significant relationship in the research she carried out with 1120 employees. Similarly, in our study the correlation between stress and work-home conflict was significant which showed these two concepts are related to each other.

When the results of the present research are taken into consideration, it is clear that the study has made two theoretical contributions to school management. To begin with, the findings of the study indicate that the procedural justice behaviors of school managers is a significant predictor in the work-home conflict the teachers experience. In other words, the more procedural justice the teachers feel in schools, the less work-home conflict they experience in both their private life and work life. Work-home conflict is a kind of dilemma employees have when their role expectations of work and home encompassing the two most important parts of people's life do not correspond to each other and when their demands on working conditions, to keep order and peace in their home life, are not met or vice versa (Netemeyer, Boles & McMurrian, 1996; Frone & Rice, 1987). On the other hand, procedural justice includes the procedure and politics in working conditions, performance evaluation, salary and promotion (Greenberg, 1990) which are among the factors affecting the home life of employees directly. It is also an undeniable fact that the feeling of injustice in the working environment which would create a high level of dissatisfaction can cause an increase in work-home conflict (Greenhaus, Bedeian & Mossholder, 1987). Considering all these points, it should be clear why procedural justice has a significant effect on the work-home conflict of employees.

Another theoretical contribution which this study has made is the moderating role of stress in the relationship between procedural justice and work-home conflict. In theoretical basement procedural justice has a vital importance especially when employees feel "uncertainty and unpredictability" in working environment (Lind, 2001). On the other hand, Beehr and Bhagat (1985) state that "uncertainty and unpredictability" are the notions can be used to define stress (cited by: Judge & Colquitt, 2004). That can be one of factors explaining why an increase in the level procedural justice provides a significant decrease in work-home conflict when employees who have a high level of stress or "uncertainty and unpredictability" although procedural justice only causes a slight change in work-home conflict when an employee has a medium or low level of stress.

Procedural justice has two sub-dimensions including the procedures during the decision-making process and manner of application of the politics and practices by the decision makers (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). In other words, to be able to provide procedural justice in a working environment, managers must include the employees in the decision-making process to show that they care about their demands. When people feel there is a huge gap between the practices the managers apply and their demands, they feel more stressful since stress is also defined as the reaction people give for the gap between the reality and their demands (Gumustekin & Oztemiz, 2004). The present research shows that the employees having a high level of stress, that is to say, the people feeling a bigger gap between the reality and their demands can experience less work-home home conflict when procedural justice exists more in working environment, and when the managers show that they care about their employees' demands. That can be another point explaining the significant effect of the interaction of procedural justice and stress on work-home conflict.

Recommendations

While adjusting the politics and procedures on the working environment conditions, salaries, performance evaluations, promotions and all the other issues regarding procedural justice, the policymakers, including the top ones to school managers, must take into account that feeling injustice would lead the teachers to experience more work-home conflicts in both their private and working life, and also they should remember that the teachers having higher level of stress in schools would be affected more from that. School managers must include the employees into the decision making process, must take heed of the demands of the employees as much as possible and must be transparent in all politics and practices, especially for the employees having a higher level of stress. They also should be aware of the fact that if they believe all the procedures are being applied fairly in schools, they will have less work-home conflict.

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