

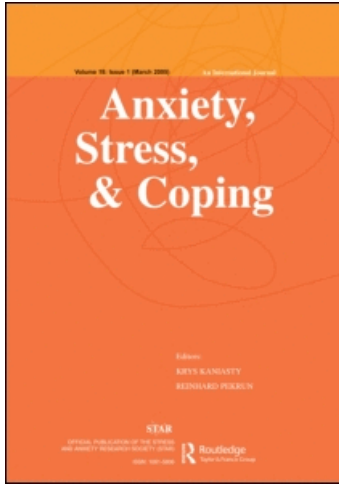
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Anxiety, Stress & Coping

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713454398>

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Accepted uncorrected manuscript posted online: 05 October 2010

First published on: 04 November 2010

To cite this Article Breevaart, Kimberley and Bakker, Arnold B.(2011) 'Working parents of children with behavioral problems: a study on the family-work interface', *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, 24: 3, 239 – 253, First published on: 04 November 2010 (iFirst)

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/10615806.2010.527958

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2010.527958>

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Working parents of children with behavioral problems: a study on the family–work interface

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(Received 31 May 2010; final version received 24 September 2010)

This study examines the process by which child behavioral problems are related to parents' well-being. We developed a family–work spillover model that was tested among 225 working parents. It was hypothesized that family–self conflict (FSC) mediates the relationship between child behavioral problems and parental strain, and that family–work conflict (FWC) mediates the relationship between parental strain and work engagement. Further, it was hypothesized that social support moderates the relationship between child behavioral problems and FSC. The results of (moderated) structural equation modeling supported the mediating role of FSC and FWC and the moderating role of social support. These findings suggest that the negative effects of raising a child with behavioral problems on parental well-being can be buffered by social support.

Keywords: child behavioral problems; family–self conflict; family–work conflict; parental strain; social support; work engagement

Research on the family–work interface is flourishing – as witnessed by recent books and reviews (e.g., Byron, 2005; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Frone, 2003; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). However, only few studies have attempted to focus on subgroups of employees who are most likely to experience family–work conflict (FWC): working parents who raise a child with behavioral problems. Therefore, the focus of the present study is on this specific group. Research has shown that raising a child with behavioral problems is positively related to strain (e.g., Briegel, Schneider, & Schwab, 2008; Strahm, 2008), but the process through which this happens has been neglected. This study will focus on a possible mediator of the relationship between child behavioral problems and parental strain. How does raising a child with behavioral problems influence parental well-being? Further, how do experiences in the family domain relate to parental well-being (work engagement) in the work domain?

The goal of this study is to answer these questions by looking at the role of family–self conflict (FSC), FWC, and social support. The central research question is how raising a child with behavioral problems influences parental well-being in the family (strain) and in the work domain (work engagement).

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Children with behavioral problems

Zeijl, Crone, Wiefferink, Keuzenkamp, and Reijneveld (2005) showed that 11–28% of all Dutch children from age 0 to 12 had some form of psychosocial problems. Also, the number of children with behavioral problems appears to be increasing. Collishaw, Maughan, Goodman, and Pickles (2004) examined conduct, hyperactive, and emotional problems among 15- and 16-year-old children in the UK. It appeared that over the preceding 25 years, conduct problems had substantially increased from 6.8 to 14.9%. Emotional problems appeared to have increased more recently, from 10.5 to 16.9% over the preceding 13 years. Although Deater-Deckard and Scarr (1996) showed that parents of all children may experience some strain, the research evidence clearly indicates that raising a child with behavioral problems often leads to elevated levels of parental strain (e.g., Briegel et al., 2008; Hoffman et al., 2008; Strahm, 2008). In order to be able to help these parents, it is important to examine why raising a child with behavioral problems is stressful.

Research also shows that the combination of raising a child with behavioral problems and working can be stressful. For example, parents have to make adjustments at their work like fewer working hours, need higher work flexibility and may have difficulties with childcare arrangements that negatively influence work life (Brennan, Rosenzweig, Ogilvie, Wuest, & Shindo, 2007; Rosenzweig, Brennan, Huffstutter, & Bradley, 2008; Rosenzweig, Brennan, & Ogilvie, 2002). Although much research has been conducted about the influence of the work domain on the home domain, there has been less attention for the influence of the home domain on the work domain. Since the family is the most important aspect of life for many people, this study will focus on the process through which child behavioral problems influence parental strain and on the influence of raising a child with behavioral problems on parental work engagement.

Family–self conflict (FSC)

Research has shown that raising a child with behavioral problems is rather demanding for working parents. In fact, parents may have only limited time to spend on other things besides care taking and working. According to Barnett (1998), most work–family interface researchers focus only on the family and the work role and forget about the personal interests of the individual. Demerouti (2009) has called the latter the “self” – all individual qualities that make a person unique. These qualities include, for example, interests, hobbies, and preferences. Besides spending time working and spending time on the family, a person may also spend time on personal matters independent of the other two domains. According to the scarcity hypothesis (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), individuals fulfilling multiple roles will experience conflict and strain. Therefore, trying to fulfill the family and the self-role at home may lead parents to experience FSC. Demerouti’s (2009) research has indeed shown that home demands were positively related to FSC. When most time is consumed by family life, parents may not have much time left to spend on their hobbies and/or personal interests. This may cause parents to experience strain. Based on this overview, we formulated the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The relationship between child behavioral problems and parental strain is mediated by FSC (all relationships are positive).

Social support

An important question is whether raising a child with behavioral problems inevitably leads to parental strain or if there is something that can be done to reduce strain. Social support is probably the most well-known buffer against strain (Haines, Hurlbert, & Zimmer, 1991). This means that when parents raising a child with behavioral problems receive sufficient social support from their environment, they may not experience the strain they would experience otherwise. Bristol (1984) conducted several studies to examine the effect of social support on the level of parental strain. It appeared that social support, especially from spouses and relatives, was a powerful buffer against the experience of strain.

Weiss (2002) compared parents of autistic children with parents of children without behavioral problems concerning the amount of strain and social support. The results showed that parents with autistic children experienced more strain, but were able to adapt successfully because of social support. This implies that raising a child with behavioral problems does not necessarily create FSC. If parents receive help from their environment and feel understood, raising a child with behavioral problems may not be as demanding compared to when social support is low. Instead, with high levels of social support, parents may have sufficient time to spend on their selves. As a result, they may experience less FSC than parents receiving limited social support. Since the present study is about both the family and the work domain, social support from spouses, family, and colleagues will be measured. This leads to the next hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Social support moderates the relationship between children's behavioral problems and FSC. Specifically, the positive relationship between child behavioral problems and FSC is weaker when social support is high (vs. low).

Family–work conflict (FWC)

Most researchers have focused on the spillover of strain from the work domain to the family domain. The opposite, FWC, has been called “the neglected side of the work–family interface” (Stevens, Minnotte, Mannon, & Kiger, 2007). However, there are some studies that have examined the spillover from the family domain to the work domain. Dilworth (2004) was one of the firsts to study the family factors that may predispose parents to experience FWC. Among the predictors was time spent on household and child rearing practices. In a similar vein, Stevens et al. (2007) found that for female workers, having pre-school aged children was a predictor of FWC. In a more recent study, Wierda-Boer, Gerris, and Vermulst (2009) studied both job strain and parental strain as predictors of FWC and work–family conflict (WFC). They reasoned that role-related stress reactions may lead to cognitive preoccupation with the source of the strain. Strain in one domain then is positively related to strain in the other domain, because of the person's inability to meet the obligations of the other role (e.g., Westman, Etzion, & Gortler, 2004). It appeared that job strain was positively related to WFC and that parental strain was positively related to FWC.

What happens to employees' well-being, when strain from the family domain spills over to the work domain? Research has shown that strain at work may eventually lead to burnout. The opposite of burnout, work engagement – a positive, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), has gained popularity in psychology. However, work engagement has not been linked to FWC before. Since work engagement is a form of work-related well-being and is associated with many positive outcomes, it is important to study the effect of home experiences on work engagement. When strain spills over from the family to the work domain, it may have a negative impact on the work domain by reducing work engagement. Parents who experience strain may have a hard time to detach from the source of the strain. This undermines the opportunity to get engaged and immersed in one's work. In addition, since considerable energy is consumed by the experienced strain, parents may experience less vigor at work. In sum, we predict that:

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between parental strain and work engagement is mediated by FWC. The relationship between parental strain and FWC is positive and the relationship between FWC and work engagement is negative.

Method

Procedure

Participants were recruited in several ways. First of all, special schools for children with behavioral difficulties were approached to distribute questionnaires among the parents. In addition, one regular school was approached for parents raising children without behavioral problems. Furthermore, some questionnaires were distributed through an organization that offers support to parents raising a child with behavioral problems. Parents could return their questionnaires by using a pre-stamped envelope. Participants were also recruited through the Internet. A website was created so that parents could fill in the questionnaire electronically; and several organizations that offer help to parents were approached to add a link to the questionnaire on their website. Also, parents were recruited through emails from several yahoo groups for parents raising a child with behavioral problems. Finally, the link to the website was put in a newsletter of an organization that offers help to parents raising a child with behavioral problems. Participants could win one of five book vouchers with a value of 20 Euros each. In order to qualify for the book vouchers, participants had to fill in their email address. The emails were only used to contact the winners. Except for the email address, the questionnaire was filled in anonymously.

Participants

The participants in the study were 225 working parents from the Netherlands. In total, 91 of the 400 distributed questionnaires were returned, but only 83 could be used. This was because people without work also filled in the questionnaire, meaning they could not answer all of the questions and could therefore not be included in this study. The above would mean a response rate of 21%. However, another 142 questionnaires were

filled in electronically. Since it is unknown how many of these people received a paper questionnaire, no good estimate of the response rate can be given.

The sample consisted of 32 men and 193 women. The youngest parent was 29 and the oldest parent 58 ($M = 40.56$, $SD = 5.39$). Most parents were married or lived together (87.1%). The majority of the parents had two children (59.1%) and worked in the health and welfare sector (36.4%), the government (9.3%), the business services (8.3%), education (7.8%), the industry (7.8%), or some other sector (30.4%). Of the children of these parents, 70.7% were boys. This should come as no surprise, since the most frequently named disorders in this study are more prevalent among boys than among girls. Most of the children were between the age of 7 and 11 (44%) and 76% of the children had a disorder; 21.3% had a combination of two or more disorders. Specifically, 19.1% had an ADHD Spectrum Disorder, 11.6% had an Autism Spectrum Disorder and 10.2% was diagnosed with PDD-NOS. The remaining children (13.8%) had other disorders, like the Down syndrome and Gille de la Tourette. The reason for including children with many different disorders is that in this study behavioral problems were treated as a continuum from no behavioral problems to many behavioral problems. By recruiting children with different behavioral problems and children without behavioral problems, there was a lot of variety in the sample. In this way a wide range of child behavioral problems was covered. Severity of the problems was not measured, because this can not be done objectively when using questionnaires.

Measures

Behavioral problems

The Dutch version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ; Goodman, 1977) was used to measure child behavioral problems. This questionnaire consists of five scales with five items each. These scales measure emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behavior. The first four scales measure problem behavior and these were used in the present study. All items are measured on a three-point scale (1 = *not true*, 3 = *definitely true*). Example items are: "My child is restless, overactive and cannot stay still for long," and "My child is rather solitary, prefers to play alone." Psychometric properties for the Dutch version of the SDQ are acceptable (Muris, Meesters, & van den Berg, 2003; Van Widenfelt, Goedhart, Treffers, & Goodman, 2003).

Family-self conflict (FSC)

The FSC scale of the Work-Family-Self Interaction Questionnaire (Demerouti, 2009) was used to measure FSC. All four items were measured on a five-point scale (1 = *never*, five = *always*). A sample question is: "How often does it happen that the time that you spend on your family life makes it difficult to spend time on your personal interests?"

Parental strain

Parental strain was assessed with the five-item exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS; Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, & Jackson,

1996). The items were adapted in order to make the questions applicable to every day life and not only to the work domain. An example is “At the end of the day I feel empty” (1 = *never*, 6 = *always*).

Social support

Social support was measured with a subscale of the Questionnaire Organizational Stress Doetinchem (Bergers, Marcelissen, & De Wolff, 1986). The items were adapted so that they referred to perceived support from colleagues, family, and partner instead of colleagues and supervisor. The scale consists of four questions including “When there are problems, can you talk about it with your family?” (1 = *never* and 4 = *often*), which have to be answered for every source of social support.

Family–work conflict (FWC)

FWC was measured with the strain-based subscale of the family–work interface questionnaire of Van Steenbergen, Ellemers, and Mooijaart (2007). The scale consists of three items, for example “Because I am often stressed by family responsibilities, I have difficulties concentrating at my work” (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

Work engagement

Work engagement was assessed using the nine-item version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). It measures three aspects of engagement; vigor, dedication, and absorption. These aspects are measured with three items each, for example “I am inspired by my work” (1 = *never*, 7 = *daily*).

Strategy of analysis

We used the AMOS 5.0 software package (Arbuckle, 2003) to test our mediating hypotheses with structural equation modeling (SEM) and our moderating hypothesis with moderated structural equation modeling (MSEM; Mathieu, Tannenbaum, & Salas, 1992) analyses. We used MSEM instead of hierarchical regression, because MSEM corrects for measurement error and because MSEM assesses the fit of the model. Missing data (approximately 5%) were replaced by the mean score at the particular scale. We controlled for number of children, gender of the children, and gender of the parents in all analyses.

To test the moderating effect (Hypothesis 2), we used the steps described by Mathieu et al. (1992) as described in Cortina, Chen, and Dunlap (2001). We tested a model with child behavioral problems, social support, and the interaction between these two variables as exogenous variables. The exogenous variables each had only one indicator; the standardized score of the variable. The interaction variables also had only one indicator; the multiplication of the standardized scores of the child behavioral problems scale with the standardized scores of the social support scale. The model had direct paths from the three exogenous variables (child behavioral problems, social support and the interaction term) to the endogenous variable (FSC). Paths from the latent exogenous variables to their indicators were fixed at the square root of the scale reliabilities. The error variances of the indicators were also set at

the product of their variances and one minus their reliabilities. The calculation of the error variance of the interaction term was somewhat more complex. Therefore, we refer to Cortina et al. (2001).

The exogenous variable child behavioral problems was allowed to correlate with the exogenous variable social support, while the correlations between child behavioral problems and social support with the interaction term were expected to be zero. The interaction is significant when the path coefficient from the interaction term to the endogenous variable is statistically significant. The model was also tested with and without the interaction term and these two models were compared based on their chi-square statistic to test significance. Figure 1 represents the model that was used to test the hypothesis.

To test the mediation hypotheses we used three different steps. First, we tested a measurement model to test the construct validity of the study variables. The model included child behavioral problems (four dimensions), FSC (four items), parental strain (five items), FWC (three items), and work engagement (three dimensions), with scale items tapping the latent variable. The second step consisted of testing the structural model. This model included pathways from child behavioral problems to parental strain via FSC (Hypothesis 1) and from parental strain to work engagement via FWC (Hypothesis 3). Because of reasons of parsimony, we used item parceling for the variables without dimensions. Finally, since bootstrapping results in more accurate confidence intervals of indirect effect ($x \rightarrow m \rightarrow y$) than Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure and the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982), bootstrapping was used to test the significance of the mediation hypotheses. It results in more accurate

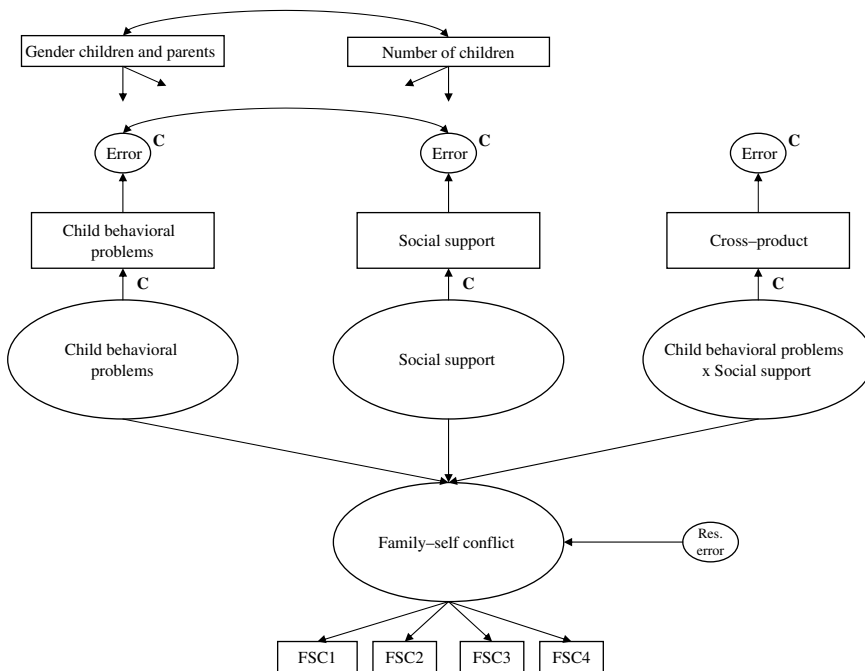


Figure 1. The study model to test the interaction hypothesis. All constrained paths and error variances are marked with C. Res.error, residual error; FSC, family-self conflict.

confidence intervals because it does not assume that the sampling distribution is normal, which is important because indirect effects have distributions that are skewed away from zero (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Bootstrapping extracted new samples for our sample 2000 times and calculated all direct and indirect estimates of the model (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). When the confidence interval does not include zero, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a significant mediation.

The chi-square statistic, the goodness-of-fit-index (GFI), the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the comparative fit index (CFI) were used to assess the fit of the models to the data. Values higher than .90 are acceptable for the GFI and CFI (Hoyle, 1995) and values higher than .95 indicate excellent fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). For the RMSEA, values up to .08 are acceptable (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). Since all study variables were tested using self-reports, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis to test for the threat of common method bias with Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Results indicate that one factor could not account for the variance in the data ($\chi^2 = 1241.83$; $df = 152$; $GFI = .61$; $RMSEA = .18$; $CFI = .62$) and therefore, the threat of common method bias is unlikely.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, internal consistencies and inter-correlations for all the study variables. As can be seen, all scales show acceptable reliabilities, since Cronbach's alphas are .70 or higher. It can also be seen that the mean score on some of the questionnaires are relatively high. However, this should not be a statistical problem since the standard deviations are also high.

Results of SEM analyses

The measurement model showed a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 235.84$; $df = 142$; $GFI = .91$; $RMSEA = .05$; $CFI = .97$) and all items had significant factor loadings ($p < .001$). Figure 2 shows the structural model that links child behavioral problems to parental strain via FSC and that links parental strain to work engagement via FWC. Standardized regression weights are shown when taking into account the direct effects. All pathways are significant and the structural model fits well to the data

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, internal consistencies (Cronbach's alphas on the diagonal) and inter-correlations between the study variables ($N = 225$).

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Child behavioral problems	2.00	.00	(.86)					
2 Social support	3.13	.44	-.30**	(.80)				
3 Family-self conflict	2.66	.93	.42**	-.35**	(.88)			
4 Parental strain	2.91	1.14	.51**	-.45**	.64**	(.94)		
5 Family-work conflict	2.58	.99	.34**	-.19**	.41**	.44**	(.89)	
6 Work engagement	4.78	1.18	-.17*	.20**	-.19**	-.28**	-.41**	(.94)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

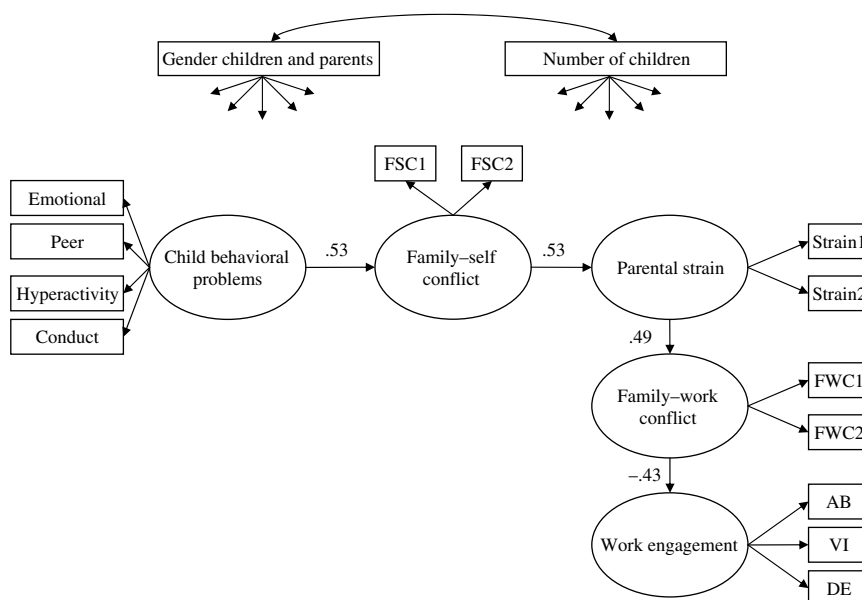


Figure 2. The study model to test the mediator hypotheses. FSC, family–self conflict; FWC, family–work conflict; AB, absorption; VI, vigor; DE, dedication.

($\chi^2(83) = 110.18$, GFI = .94, RMSEA = .04, CFI = .98). FSC partially mediated the relationship between child behavioral problems and parental strain. FWC fully mediated the relationship between parental strain and work engagement, since the standardized regression weight of the direct effect became non-significant when the mediator was included in the model. Bootstrapping results (Table 2) indicate that the mediated effects are statistically significant. These results support Hypothesis 1 and 3.

Results of MSEM analysis

Table 3 shows the results of the MSEM analysis. Child behavioral problems appeared to be positively related to family–self conflict (FSC), while social support was negatively related to FSC. The results of the MSEM analysis support Hypothesis 2. Child behavioral problems significantly interacted with social support to predict FSC. All fit indices indicate that there is acceptable fits between the model and the

Table 2. Indirect pathways using bootstrapping (N = 225).

	Bootstrapping		BC 95% CI		
	Est.	S.E.	Lower	Upper	p
Indirect effect $x \rightarrow m \rightarrow y$					
Child behavioral problems → FSC → Parental strain	.28	.05	.19	.39	.001
Parental Strain → FWC → Work Engagement	-.21	.06	-.34	-.12	.001

Note: BC, bias corrected; CI, confidence interval. Entries represent standardized coefficients.

Table 3. Results of MSEM: interaction of child behavioral problems and social support ($N = 225$).

Predictor	FSC			Fit			
	UPC	SE	SPC	χ^2	GFI	RMSEA	CFI
Child behavioral problems	.37	.05	.46***				
Social support	-.27	.05	-.35***				
Child behavioral problems \times Social support	-.23	.08	-.24**				
R^2	45%			63.35	.95	.08	.94

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Note: UPC, unstandardized path coefficient; SPC, standardized path coefficient; GFI, goodness-of-fit index; RMSEA, root-mean-square-error of approximation; CFI, comparative-fit-index; df, 13.

data. Moreover, the chi-square difference test showed that the fit of the model with the path from the interaction variable to the endogenous variable was significantly better than the model without this path. This offers additional support for Hypothesis 2.

Special software from Dawson and Richter (2006) was used to plot the moderation effect. Figure 3 displays the direction of the moderation effect. As predicted, child behavioral problems only resulted in higher levels of FSC when social support was low. When social support was high, the relationship between child behavioral problems and FSC was not significant.

Discussion

The central research question of this study was how experiences in the family domain influence parental well-being in the family and work domain. This study focused on a subgroup of employees particularly prone to experiencing FWC instead of focusing on regular employees. This is important, because this subgroup may have the most problems with combining their family life with their work life, which may have a

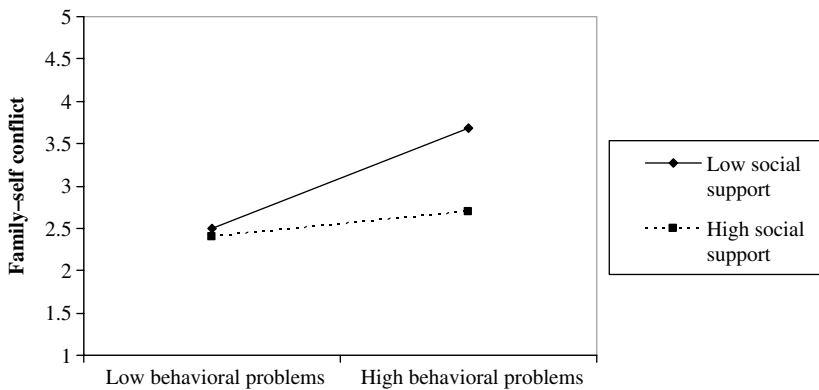


Figure 3. Social support as a moderator between child behavior problems and family-self conflict.

negative influence on the work domain. Below we discuss the contributions of this study.

Mediating role of family–self conflict (FSC)

Consistent with previous research (Briegel et al., 2008; Hoffman et al., 2008; Strahm, 2008), results showed that raising a child with behavioral problems was positively related to parental strain. The findings indicated that FSC was an important explanatory variable, since it mediated the relationship between child behavioral problems and parental strain. This means that parents of children with behavioral problems may not have enough time to spend on their personal interests because of the time spent on family responsibilities, and this causes strain. This study supports Barnett's (1998) notion that it is important to spend time on the self. Besides the family and work role, research should also pay attention to the "self" (Demerouti, 2009). However, it should be noted that there might be other important processes besides FSC that play a role in the relationship between child behavioral problems and parental strain. For example, it may be that raising a child with behavioral problems is related to parental strain because of marital problems.

It would be interesting for future research to focus on severity of the child's behavioral problems. Although the frequency of the problems may be a good indicator of the severity of the problems, it would be interesting and relevant to take the severity of the children's problems into account. It would be plausible that parents of children with more severe behavioral problems experience even more FSC and strain compared to parents raising a child with less severe behavioral problems. For instance, a child with severe behavioral problems may ask for more attention and care giving than a child with mild behavioral problems. It may be even impossible for one of these parents to have a job. However, it is also conceivable that parents receive or ask for more help (e.g., special day-care) when their child has severe behavioral problems. In that case, parents may experience less FSC and parental strain.

Moderating role of social support

Our findings showed that parents raising a child with behavioral problems experience FSC. However, results also indicated that social support can buffer this effect. When parents raising a child with many behavioral problems receive sufficient social support, they experience less FSC than parents receiving low support. It may be that social support leads to less FSC because household and/or childrearing practices are being shared. This gives parents more time to spend on their selves besides their family and work. Another explanation may be that by being socially supported, the situation becomes more bearable and parents take more time for their selves. The above shows that it is important for parents not to isolate, but to share their situation, especially when the child experiences high behavioral problems. Since most parents were approached via special schools or organizations and groups that offer support, future research should also focus on parents not seeking for help and support. Although these parents may be difficult to reach, it would be interesting to see whether these parents experience even more strain and if social support is especially important for these parents.

Since support from family, friends, and colleagues is an important buffer against experiencing FSI, interventions could focus on the amount of social support parents receive. For example, when communication with the partner fails, relationship therapy could work. Also, parents could be encouraged to talk about their situation with their colleagues. In that case, colleagues can better understand their situation and parents may experience a lower threshold to talk about their situation with their colleagues. According to Rosenzweig, Huffstutter, and Burris (2004), parents value relationships with their supervisor and co-workers, because they give them the support necessary to meet both family and work responsibilities.

Mediating role of family–work conflict (FWC)

Parental strain appeared to be negatively related to work engagement because of FWC. In accordance with role scarcity theory (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) it appeared that parents raising a child with behavioral problems experienced parental strain. And this strain led the family life to be in conflict with work life. This means that parental strain is brought to work and make parents less engaged at work. Apparently, raising a child with behavioral problems can be so exhausting that parents' work engagement is undermined. This negatively influences the work domain, since engaged employees are shown to perform better (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009), be more creative (e.g., Hakanen, Perhoniemi, & Toppinen-Tanner, 2008) and proactive (Sonntag, 2003).

Limitations

Of course, the present study also has some limitations. First, no causal conclusions can be drawn, since the study is cross-sectional. Furthermore, most of the participants were female. Since women are the primary caregivers and often have lower working hours, results could be different for men. Gender of the parents appeared only to be related to FSC in this study, with women experiencing more FSC than man. However, this difference was not significant, which could be due to the low number of men in this study. It would be interesting for future research to focus on the difference between men and women, considering the amount of time spent working and spent on household activities. Future research could also focus on a longitudinal study with data from different sources and not only from one parent. Besides, future research could integrate contextual factors like working hours, the number of children in the family, severity of the behavioral problems, and help available to parents. Given the specific, relatively small and hard to reach population under study, these difficult to measure factors were not integrated into this study.

Conclusion

Raising a child with behavioral problems seems to negatively affect parental well-being unless parents receive sufficient social support. Parents may experience strain because of FSC, and consequently bring this strain to work and become less engaged at work. However, with enough social support, child behavioral problems should not

predict FSC and parental strain. These findings imply that raising a child with behavioral problems can be combined with work without interference between the two life domains if parents receive sufficient social support from their environment. It is important to inform parents raising a child with behavioral problems about the positive effects of social support on their well-being.

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