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**Is Control at Work Necessarily Linked to Less Work-Life Conflict?
It Depends on One's Time Management Skills**

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**Is Control at Work Necessarily Linked to Less Work-Life Conflict? It
Depends on One's Time Management Skills**

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	ii
List of Tables	iv
List of Figures.....	iv
Legend.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Abstract.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Control at Work as a Potential Means of Reducing WLC.....	2
Time Management Behaviour as a Potential Means of Reducing WLC.....	3
The Interaction Effect of SGP and Control at Work on WLC.....	5
<i>Hypothesis 1</i>	6
Does SGP Moderate whether WIL Mediates the Positive Link between Control at Work and Employee Life Satisfaction?	6
Method	7
Participants.....	7
Measures	9
<i>Setting goals and priorities</i>	9
<i>Work-life conflict</i>	9
<i>Employee life satisfaction</i>	10
Methods Used to Reduce Response Biases	10
Results.....	10
Discussion.....	19

Theoretical Implications	19
Practical Implications	20
Limitations and Future Research	21
Conclusion	22
References.....	23
Appendix A: Measures	28
WIL Items.....	28
LIW Items.....	28

List of Tables

Table 1. Zero-Order Correlations, Descriptive Statistics, and Internal Consistency Estimates	11
Table 2. Moderated Regression Results (H1).....	13
Table 3. Moderated Mediation Regression Results (H2).....	16
Table 4. Indirect Effects as a Function of Moderator Values.....	18

List of Figures

Figure 1. Moderation Model of SGP on Relationship Between Control at Work and WIL... 14	14
Figure 2. Moderated (SGP) Mediation (WIL) between Control at Work and Life Satisfaction Model.....	15

Legend

b - unstandardized regression coefficient

FIW - family interference with work

H1 - hypothesis 1

H2 - hypothesis 1

IO/OB - industrial-organizational/organizational behaviour

LIW - life interference with work

p - statistical significance

R^2 - explained variation

WFC - work-family conflict

WIF - work interference with family

WIL - work interference with life

WLC - work-life conflict

SGP - setting goals and priorities

SD - standard deviation

s.e. - standard error

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I would like to dedicate this work to my Father, John (Ian) Ferguson (1935-2005). A childhood of weekly Friday night visits to the library with my Father inspired a lifetime pursuit of learning. It's not yet over.

Abstract

Previous WFC research offered mixed (significant and non-significant) findings on relationships involving control at work, problem-focused coping, and SGP. Inconsistent results in the past may be due to confounded measures, and the focus on main effects has failed to model likely interactions between variables. Using a sample of 223 participants from diverse job settings, this study investigated the potential interaction between control at work and use of SGP on WLC. This study also explored whether SGP moderates the extent that WIL mediates the positive relationship between control at work and employee life satisfaction, such that the mediated relationship will be more positive among employees who use SGP. Established measures were used: Control at work scale, SGP, Satisfaction with Life Scale, WIL and LIW. Results supported these hypotheses and were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression. Implications regarding the interplay of employer and employee behaviours and actions were discussed.

Introduction

Past research has examined how employers and employees can each help to reduce conflict between employees' work and non-work roles. For example, while employers can offer employees more control at work, whether formally or informally, employees sometimes use particular coping or life management skills to more easily juggle work and other life responsibilities. It has been suggested that such employer and employee efforts may depend upon each other (interact) to help prevent or reduce conflict between work and non-work demands (Lapierre & Allen, 2006). To our knowledge no research has been undertaken to test this suggestion. The first goal of this research was to study the potential interaction effect between control provided to employees at work and employees' use of specific time management behaviours on work-life conflict (WLC). Our second goal was to extend the logic of this potential interaction effect by determining whether the mediating role of WLC between control at work and employee life satisfaction depends upon employees' use of specific time-management behaviours.

While considerable research has been conducted in the general area of WLC, its primary focus has been the conflict between work and family (Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton, 2000; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley, 2005; Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992a; 1992b; Duxbury, Higgins & Mills, 1992; Higgins, Duxbury & Irving, 1992). Several authors have highlighted the need for an examination of the broader issue of WLC. This call recognizes that people have multiple pursuits outside of work, including family, leisure, self-development (e.g., returning to school) and community membership (e.g., volunteering) (Barnett, 1998; Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Fox & Dwyer, 1999; Frone, 2003; Greenhaus,

Collins & Shaw, 2003; Rice, Frone & McFarlin, 1992). For this reason, our interest was in the larger concept of WLC.

Control at Work as a Potential Means of Reducing WLC

Control is defined as a person's ability to select a response from two or more choices (Ganster & Fusilier, 1989). Some research suggests that more control at work may result in decreased WLC. Thomas and Ganster (1995) found that employees who had access to workplace supports for family life, such as telework, flexible schedules, and supportive supervisors, had higher levels of perceived control. This increase in perceived control was associated with reduced work-family conflict (WFC). Similarly, in their review of the IO/OB literature on WFC, Eby et al. (2005) noted that perceptions of organizational support such as compressed work weeks, flextime, and reduced workload were related to less WFC. The availability of such family supportive organizational policies would presumably allow employees to manage their work and other responsibilities by choosing the options that best facilitate work-life balance. Moreover, regardless of job demands, Fox, Dwyer, and Ganster (1993) demonstrated that employees with higher levels of control still showed reductions in WFC.

However, Lapierre & Allen (2006) found that users of flextime and telework, two organizational policies that would presumably enhance employees' sense of control (cf. Thomas & Ganster, 1995), did not report lower levels of WFC. Moreover, Adams and Jex (1999) found that more control related positively to a specific direction of WFC, namely work interference with family (WIF), suggesting that greater control may hinder work-life balance in some situations. Also, Day and Chamberlain (2006) found that more control at

work was not as highly associated with lowered work-spouse conflict among employees who were highly committed to their work. These mixed findings suggest that more control at work may not necessarily be related to reduced WLC. As we discuss later, the positive effects of control at work on one's capacity to better manage multiple life roles may depend upon specific choices one makes when given an enhanced level of discretion at work. For example, if one uses flextime but plans work tasks such that additional work is brought home, WLC may potentially increase instead of being reduced.

Time Management Behaviour as a Potential Means of Reducing WLC

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) describe coping as a process by which an individual reacts to a situation that is perceived as beyond the scope of resources available for response. Folkman and Lazarus (1980) found that individuals tend to use problem-focused coping when they perceive that they can control the situation. Problem-focused coping is a response to external stressors that generally invokes the following types of actions: Identifying the problem, generating possible solutions, identifying the costs and benefits of each solution, setting priorities so that the most important things get done first, making a plan of action, and following it.

Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, and Phillips' (1990) research on time management behaviour suggests that such specific behaviours would likely be displayed by those tending to use a problem-focused approach to coping with the demands in their life. One particular type of time management behaviour that Macan et al. (1990) labeled "setting goals and priorities" (SGP) involves actions such as setting and reviewing one's goals, prioritizing goals to determine which tasks will be accomplished on a given day, and finishing higher

priority tasks before going on to less important ones. The conceptual overlap between these behaviours and those reflecting problem-focused coping is evident. While problem-focused coping and SGP are not interchangeable concepts, since problem-focused coping includes additional behaviours such as problem identification, solution generation, and cost-benefit analysis of potential solutions, SGP is likely included among such coping behaviours. We therefore view SGP as a specific type of problem-focused coping behaviour.

Theoretically, one would expect problem-focused coping in general, and SGP in particular, to play a role in averting WLC. Presumably if one takes specific actions to manage competing demands in one's life, in particular by setting goals and priorities, then one should be able to perform across multiple roles with reduced conflict between those roles. However, as noted by Eby et al. (2005), there is little research regarding the use of problem-focused coping or time management behaviour as a way of better managing multiple life roles (exceptions include Adams & Jex, 1999; Aryee, Luk, Leng & Lo, 1999; Lapierre & Allen, 2006). Adams and Jex (1999) reported that SGP shared a negative relationship with the extent that family interferes with work (FIW). However, they also reported a non-significant zero-order correlation between SGP and WIF. Similarly, while Lapierre and Allen (2006) found that a general measure of problem-focused coping related negatively to FIW, it was not significantly related to WIF. Echoing the suggestion that problem-focused coping would be most successful when people feel they can somehow influence or control the stressful situation (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Spector, 1998), Lapierre and Allen (2006) speculated that their non-significant finding may have been due to employees generally having less control at work than at home. Having little control at work means they would have little latitude to apply their problem-focused

coping skills as a way of more effectively overcoming work-related challenges that could interfere with their family life. In other words, Lapierre and Allen (2006) suggested that problem-focused coping may interact with control at work in influencing WIF. Failure to model this interaction effect in past WFC research may explain why observed relationships involving control at work, problem-focused coping, and SGP have been inconsistent.

The Interaction Effect of SGP and Control at Work on WLC

Past research suggests that more control at work has the potential to alleviate WLC. With more control at work one is often left with greater discretion in making decisions about work-related goals, tasks, and the scheduling of those tasks (Dwyer & Ganster, 1991; Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996). Therefore, some employees may become more efficient at work as compared to situations where they have very little control. To efficiently meet work-related demands suggests an ability to set goals and prioritize tasks and responsibilities – behaviours that reflect the SGP type of time management behaviour identified by Macan et al. (1990). By using SGP at work in an effort to more efficiently overcome work demands, employees would likely have more time and energy available to participate in other life activities, thereby reducing WLC. As with WFC, WLC can be conceptualized as existing in two distinct directions: Work demands interfering with non-work life activities (WIL) and non-work life demands interfering with work activities (LIW) (cf. Frone, 2003). Because control at work and SGP would theoretically interact in making more time and energy available for non-work activities, we would expect this interaction to be associated with a reduction in WIL, not LIW.

Our argument is consistent with the view that enhanced control over potentially stressful demands and the use of problem-focused coping to overcome those demands would jointly enable individuals to eliminate or weaken a stressor (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Spector, 1998). In this case, the stressor to be eliminated is WIL, which would at least partly stem from work-related demands (cf. Frone, 2003).

In the case of employees who do not tend to enact SGP, greater control could lead to more wasted time and energy at work, thereby increasing the extent that work interferes with non-work activities. Employees who tend not to enact SGP may actually be less efficient at work when they are given more, rather than less control. This is consistent with Fox, Dwyer, and Ganster's (1993) suggestion that the ways in which employees use decision-making latitude may lead to more conflict if they fail to use this increased control in such a way as to efficiently fulfill work-related demands. We therefore hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1. Control at work and SGP interact in relation to work interference with WIL, such that the relationship between control at work and WIL is negative when people tend to engage in SGP, and it is positive when people tend not to engage in SGP.

Does SGP Moderate whether WIL Mediates the Positive Link between Control at Work and Employee Life Satisfaction?

Employee control at work has been associated with reduced emotional strain and improved life satisfaction (Spector, 1986). WFC has been connected with lower levels of employee well-being, such as reduced levels of life satisfaction and increased levels of general psychological strain (Allen et al., 2000). Thomas and Ganster's (1995) study suggested that the potential beneficial effects of enhanced control on employee well-being

would be mediated (explained) by reductions in WFC. In other words, greater control could improve employee well-being by reducing work-family conflict. With WFC being a more narrow form of WLC, the potential positive effect of control at work on employee well-being may also be mediated by WLC. However, because we have theoretical reason to expect control at work and WIL to be more positively related when employees engage in more rather than less SGP, control at work should indirectly improve employee well-being through reduced WIL to the extent that employees engage in more rather than less SGP. We chose life satisfaction as our specific indicator of employee well-being because it is a commonly used measure of subjective well-being in WFC research (see Allen et al., 2000), is one of the foremost measures of one's overall quality of life (Moons, Budts, & De Geest, 2006), and seemed appropriate given our focus on the incompatibility between work and the rest of one's life. We therefore hypothesized:

Hypothesis 2. SGP moderates the extent that WIL mediates the positive relationship between control at work and employee life satisfaction, such that the mediated (indirect) relationship will be more positive among employees who engage in SGP than among those who do not.

Method

Participants

Our goal in recruiting participants was to ensure a sample involving people from a diverse set of jobs and organizations in order to maximize the range of control given to participants at work. To this end, three recruitment methods were used. The first involved sending invitations to participate to 200 managers of a municipal government. The second

involved placing an advertisement in the alumni news bulletin of an Eastern Ontario school of management inviting people to partake in the study. The third involved circulating an invitation among members of three health-related professional associations. All individuals who indicated an interest in participating were sent the study materials. Of the 354 individuals who received the survey materials, 239 completed them, representing a response rate of 68%. After eliminating cases with missing data, we had a total useable sample of 223.

In terms of age representation, 2.7% of participants were between 18 and 24 years old, 21.1% were between 25 and 34, 36.6% were between 35 and 44, 27.4% were between 55 and 64, and .4% were 65 or over. Men comprised 24.2% of the sample. 83.4% of respondents were either married or cohabitating. 88.8% were employed full-time. 19.7% of respondents had at least one live-in dependent aged 5 years or younger, 12.6% had at least one live-in dependent aged between 6 and 10, 9.9% had at least one live-in dependent aged between 11 to 15, 7.6% had at least one live-in dependent aged between 16 and 20, and 9% had at least one live-in dependent aged 20 or more. In terms of hours worked per week, 1.3% worked fewer than 20 hours, 7.2% between 20 and 30 hours, 39.9% between 31 and 40 hours, 38.6% between 41 and 50 hours, 10.3% between 51 and 60 hours, and 2.7% worked over 60 hours. Regarding hours per week spent on housework, 3.1% spent less than 1 hour, 49.3% spent between 1 and 5 hours, 22.9% spent between 6 and 9, 13.5% spent between 10 and 14 hours, 5.4% spent between 15 and 19 hours, 2.7% spent between 20 and 24 hours, .4% spent between 25 and 29 hours, and 2.7% spent more than 30 hours. 43.5% of participants engaged in volunteer activities. In terms of industry representation, the three most frequently reported sectors were health/social welfare (39%), government (19.7%), and service (7.2%). 51.8% of respondents worked at a managerial level (i.e., had people formally reporting to them).

Measures

Control at work. We used the control at work scale developed by Frese et al. (1996). Responses were obtained using a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from “Very little” to “Very much,” with higher scores indicating greater control. Sample items included “If you look at your life in general: How much decision-making power do you have,” “Can you determine how you do your work,” and “Can you plan and arrange your work on your own.” We also added two new items to the scale to ensure its content validity: “Do you have flexibility in choosing when you perform your work responsibilities,” and “How much control do you have over choosing your goals/responsibilities at work.” Frese et al. (1996) reported an internal consistency estimate of .78 for their original scale.

Setting goals and priorities. We used the 10-item setting goals and priorities (SGP) questionnaire included in Macan et al.’s (1990) Time Management Behaviour Scale. Respondents indicated to what extent each behaviour described in the scale was true, ranging from 1 (“Never true”) to 7 (“Always true”). Example items include “I break complex, difficult projects down into smaller manageable tasks,” “I set short-term goals for what I want to accomplish in a few days or weeks,” and “I set priorities to determine the order in which I will perform tasks each day.” Macan et al. (1990) reported an internal consistency estimate of .68 for this particular measure. In a subsequent study, Macan (1994) reported an internal consistency of .94 for the same scale. A similar internal consistency result of .90 was obtained by Adams and Jex (1999).

Work-life conflict. We measured both WIL and LIW using an adapted version of Gutek, Searle, and Klepa’s (1991) eight-item scale. This measure was reworded to reflect the

interference between work and non-work life activities, not between work and family activities specifically. All eight revised items are presented in Appendix A. Gutek et al. (1991) reported internal consistency estimates of .79 and .83 for FIW and .81 and .83 for WIF.

Employee life satisfaction. We used the Satisfaction With Life Scale validated by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) in their study of subjective well-being. Diener et al. (1985) reported an internal consistency estimate of .87 for this scale, and found that it correlates well with other measures of subjective well-being.

Methods Used to Reduce Response Biases

Following the recommendations of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003), we ensured a temporal separation of measurement. Specifically, we introduced a 10-day time-lag between the measurement of control at work and SGP and the measurement of WLC and employee life satisfaction. This helped to reduce single-source biases such as consistency bias. To reduce the potential for social desirability bias, we provided participants with multiple assurances that their responses would remain anonymous prior to survey completion.

Results

Zero-order correlations, descriptive statistics, and internal consistency estimates for each measure are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Zero-Order Correlations, Descriptive Statistics, and Internal Consistency Estimates

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Control at Work	3.76	.77	.86				
2. SGP	4.80	.91	.35***	.86			
3. WIL	2.99	1.01	-.06	-.11	.81		
4. LIW	1.70	.66	-.11	-.16*	.34***	.74	
5. Life Satisfaction	4.83	1.30	.27***	.31***	-.26***	-.19**	.90

Note. SGP = Setting Goals and Priorities; WIL = Work Interference with Life; LIW = Life Interference with Work. Internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's Alphas) are reported in the diagonal.

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

Hypothesis 1 was tested using moderated regression, as recommended by Aiken and West (1991) and Baron and Kenny (1986). The process involves hierarchical ordinary least squares multiple regression, where the independent variables are entered first in the equation, after which the multiplicative term representing the interaction between the independent variables is entered to determine whether it explains unique variation in the dependent variable above and beyond the variables entered in the first step.

As reported in Table 2, control at work and SGP significantly interact in explaining variation in WIL since the interaction term explains unique variation in WIL over and above the main effects. More specifically, the relationship between control at work and WIL tends to be negative when people engage in more SGP and tends to be more positive when they engage in less SGP. A graphic depiction of this moderated relationship is presented in Figure 1. Interestingly, neither of the main effects were significantly related to WIL when the interaction term was not included in the regression model. As suspected, our results also show that the relationship between control at work and LIW is not significantly moderated by SGP. However, SGP is negatively associated with LIW when the interaction term is not included in the equation. That this relationship loses statistical significance when the interaction term is added likely reflects the large amount of collinearity between SGP and the interaction term. Overall, these findings support Hypothesis 1.

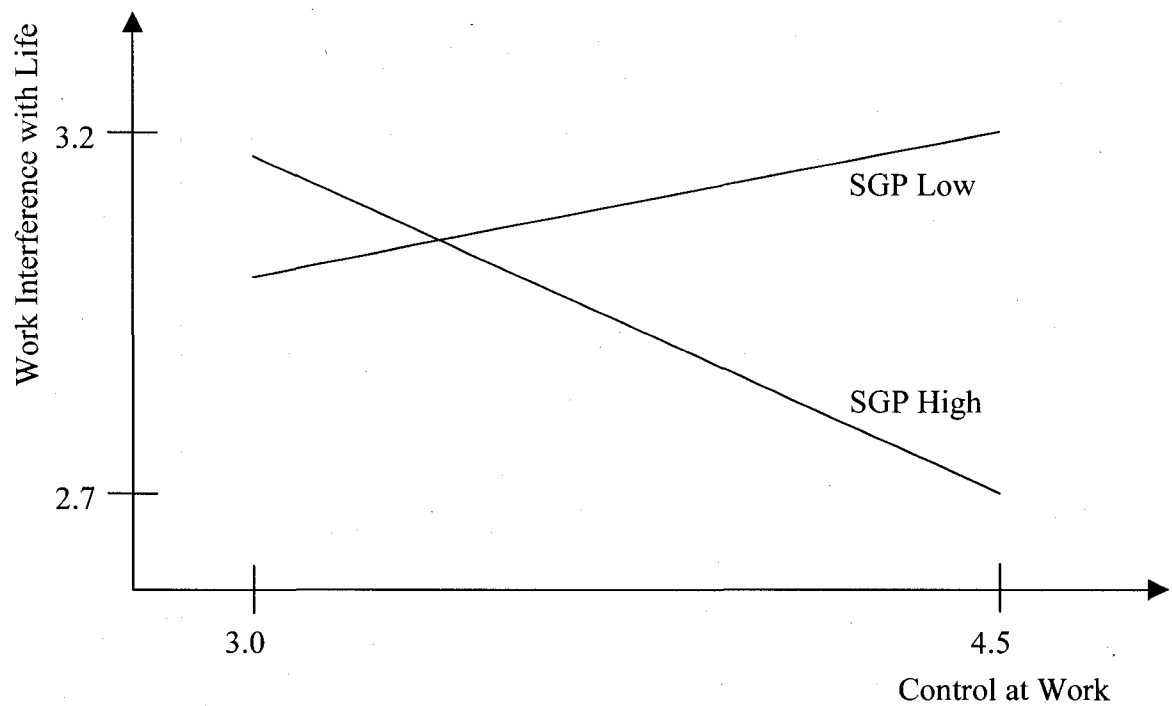
Table 2. Moderated Regression Results (H1)

Predictor	Dependent Variable: WIL				Dependent Variable: LIW			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	<i>b</i>	s.e.	<i>b</i>	s.e.	<i>b</i>	s.e.	<i>b</i>	s.e.
Control at Work	-.03	.09	.93*	.42	-.05	.06	-.03	.27
SGP	-.11	.08	.67	.34	-.10*	.05	-.09	.22
Control X SGP	-	-	-.21*	.09	-	-	-.01	.06
R^2	.01		.03*		.03*		.03	
Change in R^2			.02*				.00	

Note. *b* = unstandardized regression coefficient; s.e. = standard error; SGP = Setting Goals and Priorities.

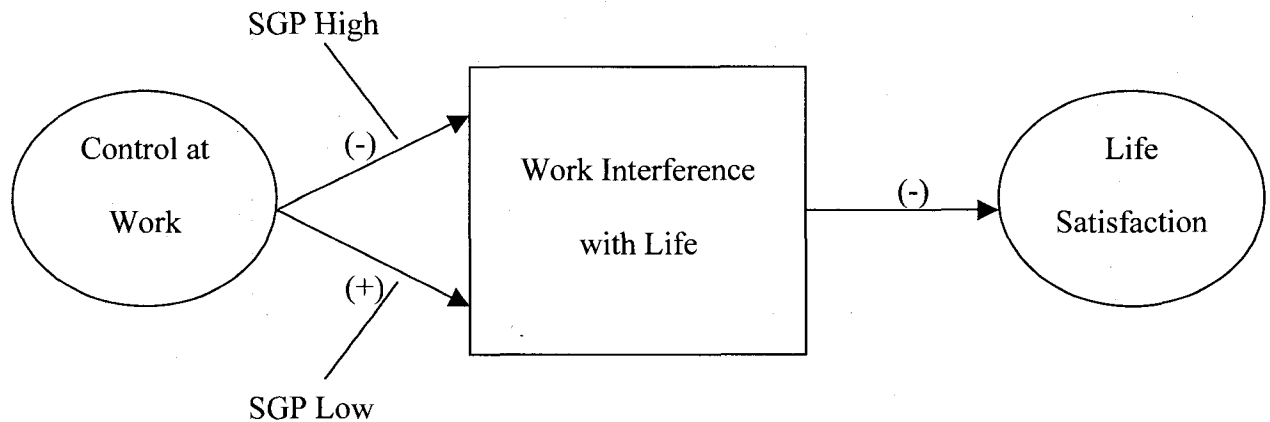
* $p < .01$.

Figure 1. Moderation Model of SGP on Relationship Between Control at Work and WIL



To test Hypothesis 2, we used the multiple regression-based approach recently recommended by Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt (2005) to assess whether moderated mediation exists. Moderated mediation occurs when the mediating process that is responsible for explaining the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable depends on the value of a moderator variable. In our case, we hypothesized that the positive relationship between control at work and employee life satisfaction would be mediated by WIL when people engage in more rather than less SGP. Put otherwise, SGP would moderate the extent that WIL explains the positive association between control at work and employee life satisfaction, such that this indirect (mediated) effect would be more positive as employees tend to engage in more rather than less SGP. A graphic depiction of this moderated mediation is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Moderated (SGP) Mediation (WIL) between Control at Work and Life Satisfaction Model



Muller et al. (2005) suggest that three conditions be met to provide evidence of moderated mediation. These three conditions are similar in logic to those presented by Baron and Kenny (1986) in the case of simple (unmoderated) mediation. First, it must be shown that the independent variable (control at work) is significantly related to the dependent variable (life satisfaction). Results presented under Step 1 of Table 3 provide evidence that this condition is met.

Table 3. Moderated Mediation Regression Results (H2)

Predictor	Step 1 (Equation 1)		Step 2		Step 3 (Equation 3)	
	<i>b</i>	s.e.	<i>b</i>	s.e.	<i>b</i>	s.e.
Control at Work	.32**	.11	.28	.51	.56	.50
SGP	.35***	.10	.32	.42	.52	.41
Control X SGP	-	-	.01	.11	-.05	.11
WIL			-	-	-.30***	.08
R^2	.13***		.13***		.18***	
Change in R^2			.00		.05***	

Note. WIL = Work Interference with Life; *b* = unstandardized regression coefficient; s.e. = standard error; SGP = Setting Goals and Priorities.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Strictly speaking, in the case of moderated mediation, the moderator should not influence the overall effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Muller et al., 2005). Thus, we would not expect SGP to significantly moderate the relationship between control at work and life satisfaction. We formally tested this assumption. As expected, results presented under Step 2 of Table 3 suggest that SGP does not significantly moderate the relationship between control at work and life satisfaction. That control at work lost significance after the interaction term was added to the regression model is likely due to the fact these two predictors are strongly related to one another

(indeed, the interaction term is a function of control at work), thereby attenuating the statistical significance of control at work.

The second condition outlined by Muller et al. (2005) is that the multiplicative term representing the interaction between the independent variable (control at work) and the moderator (SGP) explains significant variation in the mediator (WIL). This was shown when testing for Hypothesis 1. We therefore refer the reader to results reported in Table 2.

The third condition for moderated mediation to exist, in the case where the moderator influences the relationship between the independent variable and the mediator (as opposed to influencing the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable – see Muller et al. (2005) for further information), is that the mediator (WIL) significantly relate to the dependent variable (life satisfaction) after controlling for the independent variable (control at work), the moderator (SGP), and the multiplicative term representing the interaction between the independent variable and the moderator. Results presented under Step 3 of Table 3 provide evidence that this condition has been met.

The above pattern of results provides evidence of moderated mediation. To exemplify how the indirect (mediated) relationship between control at work and life satisfaction through WIL depends upon SGP, we present values of the indirect effect (regression coefficient linking control at work to WIL multiplied by the regression coefficient linking WIL to employee well-being) at incremental values of SGP (from the lowest to the highest value observed in our sample). As can be seen in Table 4, the indirect effect varies as a function of the moderator in the predicted direction.

Table 4. Indirect Effects as a Function of Moderator Values

SGP Value	Indirect Effect
2.00	-.15
2.24	-.14
2.48	-.12
2.72	-.11
2.96	-.09
3.20	-.08
3.44	-.06
3.68	-.05
3.92	-.03
4.16	-.02
4.40	.00
4.64	.01
4.88	.03
5.12	.04
5.36	.06
5.60	.07
5.84	.09
6.08	.10
6.32	.11
6.56	.13
6.80	.14

Note. SGP = Setting Goals and Priorities.

Muller et al. (2005) noted that formally testing whether the indirect effect is significantly different from zero with correlational (as opposed to experimental) data is uncalled for given the collinearity among the variables included in the regression models. Under such conditions, use of formal statistical tests such as those proposed by MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets (2002) could lead to erroneous conclusions being drawn.

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

Our hypothesis concerning SGP as a moderator in the theoretical relationship between control at work and WIL was supported. Our results are consistent with the argument that control at work, when given to employees who are more rather than less likely to set goals and priorities for themselves, would lessen the extent that work interferes with other life activities. This interaction was important to examine as previous research has examined SGP and perceived control of time together (Adams & Jex, 1999; Macan et al., 1990), but neither of these studies had examined the interaction between the two constructs. Our results may explain why previous WFC research offered mixed (significant and non-significant) findings on relationships involving control at work, problem-focused coping, and SGP (Adams & Jex, 1999; Ayree et al., 1999; Fox, Dwyer & Ganster, 1993; Lapierre & Allen, 2006; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Indeed, had we not examined the interaction effect between control and SGP, results presented under Step 1 of Table 2 would have suggested that neither variable relates to WIL. Our findings suggest that both employer efforts regarding the scope of control provided to employees at work and employee efforts regarding the use of SGP should be made to reduce WIL among employees. Either of these efforts in isolation may be insufficient for beneficial effects to be experienced.

While the relationship between control at work and LIW was not significantly moderated by SGP, that SGP was found to significantly relate to lower levels of LIW suggests it may potentially play a role in reducing this direction of WLC. Future research

should determine whether this relationship becomes even stronger when people have more rather than less control over non-work activities.

Although previous research examining the link between control at work and employee well-being has reported a positive relationship (Fox, et al., 1993; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), our results show that the mediating process explaining this relationship may vary among employees who experience WIL. Specifically our results support Hypothesis 2 in that we found that at higher levels of SGP, the indirect relationship between control at work and life satisfaction (through WIL) was positive, while it became negative at lower levels of SGP.

Overall, our findings point to the importance of considering the interplay between individuals and their work environment when studying the interference between work and non-work demands in life.

Practical Implications

Past research has examined how employers and employees can each help to reduce conflict between employees' work and non-work roles. To support the practical implementation of these findings in the workplace, organizations should continue to make efforts to offer employees support through the provision of more control through both formal and informal workplace policies such as telework, flexible schedules and supportive supervisors (Anderson, Coffey & Byerly, 2002; Frone & Yardley, 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999). It is equally important that employees know how to use SGP so that they are more successful in balancing work and other life responsibilities. Employers may wish to consider inclusion of SGP in

orientation and development programs for professionals, supervisors, and managers. Macan et al. (1990) indicated that time management behaviour training seemed beneficial in improving individuals' propensity to use such behaviours. As our results suggest, training in SGP may potentially be of benefit to LIW. If all employees were trained in SGP they may possibly make better use of employer supportive practices and policies and use less sick time and other benefits that may potentially be more costly to employers.

Limitations and Future Research

The results of our research are limited by cross-sectional data that preclude the inference of causal relationships. The results of our research are also limited by the method of recruitment and unknown responses of non-responders. It is not known whether these absent individuals would have changed our findings. Future research should include replication of this study, as well as longitudinal designs that will allow examination of changes over time and permit the development of causal relationships. Longitudinal research would allow the examination of the interplay between control and SGP as one moves through life and would clarify if SGP use increases over a lifetime or as people take on additional and differing life and work roles.

Other research questions also remain: What is the effect of various factors, such as life stage, and role, on the use of SGP; is performance across multiple roles linked to levels of control; what function can increased knowledge of time management play to change behaviour; are other active coping mechanisms as effective as SGP; and what are

the impact of reductions in WLC to organizational efficiency and cost effectiveness with regard to employer-borne costs such as sick time and family leave?

Conclusion

This study provided support for an interaction effect between control provided to employees at work and employees' use of specific time management behaviours on WIL. Our findings suggest that control at work, when given to employees who are more rather than less likely to set goals and priorities for themselves, would lessen the extent that work interferes with other life activities. We also found that at higher levels of SGP, the indirect relationship between control at work and life satisfaction (through WIL) was positive, while it became negative at lower levels of SGP. This implies that both employer and employee actions and behaviours may have a role to play in the mediation of the indirect relationship between control at work and life satisfaction.

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Appendix A: Measures

WIL Items

1. After work, I am too tired to do some of the things I like to do.
2. On the job I have so much work to do that it takes away from my personal interests.
3. My family/friends dislike how often I am preoccupied with my work while I am away from work.
4. My work takes up time that I'd like to spend doing other things in life.

Note. Scale items were adapted from Gutek, Searle, and Klepa (1991) and modified by the authors to reflect WIL.

LIW Items

1. I'm often too tired at work because of other things I do in my life.
2. My personal demands are so great that they take away from my work.
3. My superiors/peers dislike how often I am preoccupied with my personal life while at work.
4. My personal life takes up time that I'd like to spend at work.

Note. Scale items were adapted from Gutek, Searle, and Klepa (1991) and modified by the authors to reflect LIW.