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PREDICTING INTERFERENCE BETWEEN WORK AND HOME:

A COMPARISON OF DISPOSITIONAL AND SITUATIONAL ANTECEDENTS

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Abstract

Purpose - To examine the relative power of four dispositional, self-evaluation traits (adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism, generalized self-efficacy, and general self-esteem) versus three situational factors (organizational time demands, potential negative career consequences, and managerial support) in predicting work interference with home (WIH) and home interference with work (HIW).

Methodology/Approach - A survey was conducted among 223 UK public sector employees. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis tested main effects of personality and situational characteristics on WIH and HIW. A usefulness analysis determined whether dispositional or situational variables had greater predictive power for the two dependent variables.

Findings - Significant, negative main effects of adaptive perfectionism on HIW, and of self-esteem on WIH. Positive relationships were found between maladaptive perfectionism and both WIH and HIW. Situational factors were also significant predictors of WHI: organizational time demands were positively associated with WIH, while managerial support had a negative relationship with WIH. Dispositional variables accounted for 15% of variance in HIW, but only 4% of variance in WIH.

Research limitations/implications - The cross-sectional design of the study does not permit firm conclusions regarding causality, and the results may be influenced by common method bias.

Practical implications - Raising awareness of the role of personality in work-home interference may assist managers in providing more effective support to employees. The danger exists that policy-makers will dismiss HIW as an individual responsibility due to the influence of dispositional factors.

Originality/Value - This study indicates that self-evaluation personality characteristics play a key role in predicting HIW, and are more important than traditionally investigated factors associated with the home and workplace environments.

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Personality is widely acknowledged as having an impact on a number of job-related outcomes. Researchers have argued in favour of dispositional explanations for job satisfaction (Arvey, Carter, & Buerkley, 1991), managerial effectiveness (House, Howard, & Walker, 1991), organizational citizenship behaviour (Borman, Penner, Allen & Motowidlo, 2001), and work stress (Chiu & Kosinski, 1999). Research on personality-based antecedents of work-home interference, however, is still in its infancy.

Work-home interference is a form of inter-role conflict in which the demands of the work role and the demands of the home role are mutually incompatible (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997), such that meeting demands in one domain (e.g., home) makes it difficult to meet demands in the other (e.g., work). Research has established the appropriateness of differentiating between work interference with home (WIH), in which work activities impede performance of family or other non-work roles, and home interference with work (HIW), in which life-role responsibilities hinder performance at work (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992). While work-home interference is typically characterized in the literature by time-based and strain-based demands, a mismatch between behaviours required in one role with behaviours appropriate in another role can contribute to behaviour-based interference (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Existing research on antecedents to work-home interference tends to focus on situational predictors, such as work hours, mental and physical job requirements, and organizational work-home culture (Carnicer, Sánchez, & Pérez, 2004; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). However, Friede & Ryan's (2005) model proposes three ways in which dispositional factors may influence the work-home interface. Personality may affect the type and amount of work and home role requirements that an individual experiences; it may influence an individual's perceptions of work and home role requirements; and it may influence

the coping strategies used to deal with interference between work and home, in turn affecting the degree of emotional strain or enrichment experienced.

Empirical results of the fledgling literature on personality-based antecedents have been encouraging. Work by Wayne, Musisca, and Fleeson (2004) has found a positive link between neuroticism and both directions of work-home interference, and a negative link between conscientiousness and work-home interference. Negative affectivity has also been positively related to both WIH and HIW (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Carlson, 1999), and in a study by Bonebright, Clay, and Ankenmann (2000), workaholics were found to have significantly more work-life conflict than nonworkaholics.

While there are undoubtedly a number of dispositional characteristics capable of influencing the interface between work and home, Friede and Ryan (2005) suggest that self-evaluations are particularly likely to have an effect on work-home perceptions and realities. Judge, Erez, and Bono (1998) have noted that self-consistency theory (Korman, 1970) suggests that individuals will seek out and be satisfied with roles that maximize cognitive consistency; those with more positive self-evaluations will choose situations in which they can be effective, and avoid those in which they cannot. Individuals with negative self-evaluations may actually experience more home and work stressors, and therefore perceive greater interference (Friede & Ryan, 2005). General self-esteem and generalized self-efficacy are part of core self-evaluations (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997), defined as the fundamental premises individuals hold about themselves or the extent to which individuals possess a positive self-concept (Judge, Erez, & Bono, 1998). Perfectionism also taps into self-evaluations with regard to personal standards for performance. For these reasons, these three dispositional variables have been selected for investigation in the present study.

This study has two aims. The first is to investigate the effect of additional personality characteristics (beyond those addressed previously in the literature) on time-, strain-, and behaviour-based work interference with home, and on time-, strain-, and behaviour-based home interference with work. Perfectionism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem have unique potential to affect employees' perceptions of work-home interference, due to the implications of these traits for individuals' tendencies to evaluate in either positive or negative terms their ability to deal with the situations in which they find themselves. This study will attempt to ascertain if these dispositional variables contribute to any variance in work-home interference beyond that explained by demographic control variables and known situational antecedents.

The second aim of this study is to compare the impact on work-home interference of dispositional variables with that of situational variables, and ascertain which explains a greater amount of variance in interference. Because the majority of work-home research tests only situational antecedents to interference, there is an assumption among researchers that situational characteristics are more important than dispositional ones in explaining variance in interference. In addition, because a number of the studies investigating dispositional antecedents to work-home interference have not included situational variables (e.g., Bonebright et al., 2000; Bruck & Allen, 2003; Wayne et al., 2004), the relative merits of situational vs. dispositional variables in explaining variance in interference are unknown.

Dispositional Antecedents

Perfectionism

Perfectionism has been defined as "an extreme or excessive striving for perfection, as in one's work" (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1988, p. 873). Research indicates that on a global level, perfectionism is best construed as two largely independent dimensions distinguishing between positive and negative aspects of the construct: adaptive and

maladaptive perfectionism (Slaney, Rice, Mobley, Trippi, and Ashby, 2001; Stumpf and Parker, 2000).

Both adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism are characterized by the setting of high personal standards for one's work or behaviour. The difference between the two lies in their response to a failure to achieve those standards. Adaptive perfectionists perceive a low level of distress resulting from the discrepancy between their personal standards and their performance, while maladaptive perfectionists perceive a high level of distress. Adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism do not appear to be opposite poles on a single continuum, but separate and largely independent factors (Slaney et al., 2001; Stumpf & Parker, 2000).

Adaptive perfectionism. Adaptive perfectionists have been found to indicate significantly greater willingness to initiate behaviour and to expend effort in completing the behaviour, more persistence in the face of adversity, and stronger belief in their ability to deal with others effectively (LoCicero & Ashby, 2000). High personal standards may therefore help to enhance performance in both work and non-work roles, to manage competing demands from work and home, and to transfer successful problem-solving techniques from one domain to the other, thus integrating work and home behaviours. Equally, individuals high in adaptive perfectionism are likely to remain undiscouraged by occasions in which work-home interference occurs. Both of these elements are likely to contribute to lower levels of perceived interference between work and home.

Maladaptive perfectionism. Individuals high in maladaptive perfectionism are characterized by tendencies for overly critical evaluations of their own behaviour (Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990). They also frequently experience a vague sense of doubt about the quality of their performance (Burns, 1980). Mitchelson and Burns (1998) found maladaptive perfectionism to be related to exhaustion at work, parental distress at home, and a decreased sense of overall satisfaction with life and satisfaction with self; they concluded that

maladaptive perfectionists are more negatively affected by life stressors than people low in maladaptive perfectionism.

If maladaptive perfectionists set high personal standards for balancing work and home, and then evaluate themselves critically, they are more likely to perceive interference between the two when such high standards are not always met. Experiencing doubt about the quality of their performance might also lend itself to negative evaluation of their ability to balance competing work and home demands, and to successfully integrate behaviours used at home and at work.

Hypothesis 1: Adaptive perfectionism will be negatively related to WIH and HIW.

Hypothesis 2: Maladaptive perfectionism will be positively related to WIH and HIW.

Self-efficacy

General self-efficacy is described as a stable cognition that people hold and carry with them, reflecting the expectation that they possess the ability to successfully perform tasks in a variety of achievement situations (Riggs et al., 1994, cited in Gardner & Pierce, 1998). Bandura (1986) posited that an individual's level of self-efficacy can work to directly reduce perceptions of and reactions to strain. This notion is supported by research from Matsui & Onglatco (1992), who found a significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and vocational strain, and Bandura (1997), who described correlational and experimental studies demonstrating that high self-efficacy mitigates psychological states such as stress by directly impacting sensitivity to stressors.

Further support is provided by Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger (1998), who found that core self-evaluations, primarily self-efficacy and self-esteem, influenced individuals' perceptions of work attributes such as autonomy and task significance. Individuals with positive self-concepts perceived more variety, challenge, control, and intrinsic worth in their work. Those with low core self-evaluations were more inclined to rate their job attributes

negatively, and to report less job and life satisfaction as a result. This has obvious implications for the occurrence of interference between work and home, indicating that individuals with low self-efficacy are more sensitive to stressors and thus have an increased potential for both experiencing strain and perceiving its diffusion across domains, whether from work to home or vice versa.

Self-efficacy beliefs influence which stimuli people choose to pay attention to, whether people appraise the situations in which they find themselves as positive or negative, and whether they remember past situations as having been positive, neutral, or negative (Bandura, 1997). All of these have the potential to influence employee experiences of interference between work and home. The more capable an individual feels of being able to successfully handle the demands of work and home, the less interference between work and home s/he is likely to experience. Support for this proposition was found by Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, and O'Brien (2001), whose research demonstrated that high levels of task-specific self-efficacy pertaining to job skills predicted lower levels of conflict between work and family.

Hypothesis 3: Self-efficacy will be negatively related to WIH and HIW.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem has been described as "the overall affective evaluation of one's own worth, value, or importance" (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991, p. 115). It is widely assumed that self-esteem is trait-like, and that levels of self-esteem are therefore stable over time within individuals (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Research has linked low self-esteem with depression (Shaver & Brennan, 1990; Tennen & Herzberger, 1987), and high self-esteem with greater task effort and persistence (Felson, 1984; McFarlin, Baumeister, & Blascovich, 1984). High self-esteem has also been found to correlate with increased satisfaction with career, marriage, children, leisure, and friendships, as well as with a sense of being resolved (i.e., non-conflicted) about the competing demands of career and family (Kinnier, Katz, & Berry,

1991). This tendency towards making positive evaluations of one's contractual and social relationships, as well as to work harder toward the achievement of desired goals, suggests that individuals with high self-esteem will be less likely to report negative outcomes such as increased levels of work-home interference.

Self-esteem theory suggests that perceptions of self-worth play a key role in how individuals both perceive and react to environmental stressors. Firstly, self-esteem is considered to be a resource that buffers the individual against stress (Rosenberg, 1979). Individuals with high self-esteem may have a "reserve" of self-worth and confidence upon which they can draw in problematic situations, such as dealing with the multiple role demands that contribute to work-home interference. Those with high self-esteem may therefore express less concern about the performance of multiple roles, because they know they can cope with such an experience (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999).

Secondly, Brockner's (1983) plasticity hypothesis posits that individuals with low self-esteem are more influenced by the environment than those with high self-esteem. As role stressors occur in the organizational and home environment, it is reasonable to assume on the basis of the plasticity hypothesis that individuals with low self-esteem would be more affected by these stressors than those with high self-esteem. Both the stress-buffering and plasticity hypotheses therefore suggest that individuals with low self-esteem would be more likely to report greater levels of work-home interference than would those with higher levels of self-worth.

Hypothesis 4: Self-esteem will be negatively related to WIH and HIW.

Situational Antecedents

A substantial number of situational factors have been found to predict work-home interference among employees (for a review, see Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Most of these involve situational elements of the workplace, rather than the

home. However, the single most investigated situational antecedent of WHI is arguably the presence of dependant children in the household – a home-related characteristic found to predict both increased WIH and HIW by virtue of increased home-related demands (Carlson, 1999; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Saltzstein, Ting, & Saltzstein, 2001).

Among the work-related situational contributors, a key antecedent to WHI established in the literature is the number of hours worked per week. By increasing the amount of time spent in the work domain and reducing the time available for fulfilling responsibilities at home, greater work hours often result in higher levels of WIH and, upon occasion, HIW (Fox & Dwyer, 1999; Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002).

Work-home culture is another situational element of the workplace that has been shown to affect employee levels of work-home interference. It is defined as the shared assumptions, beliefs and values regarding the extent to which an organization supports and values the integration of employees' work and personal lives (Thompson et al., 1999). Three components of work-home culture can be identified in the literature: organizational time demands, or expectations that employees prioritize work over family or personal responsibilities; potential negative career consequences associated with devoting time to family or personal responsibilities; and managerial support of employees' family or personal responsibilities.

Research indicates that these aspects of an organization's culture can contribute to the experience of interference between work and home. An organizational climate favouring the prioritization of work over family and the sacrificing of family to work has been shown to increase levels of both WIH and HIW among employees (Kossek, Colquitt, & Noe, 2001). Increased levels of WIH have also been reported by employees who perceive a link between spending time on home responsibilities and suffering negative career repercussions (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002; Thompson et al., 1999).

In contrast, the presence of supervisors who express support for employees attempting

to balance work and home has consistently demonstrated a negative effect on employee levels of work-home interference (Erdwins et al., 2001; Thomas and Ganster, 1995). Employees who perceive their organization's culture to be supportive of them have reported lower levels of generalized work-home interference (Allen, 2001), WIH (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1999; Thompson et al., 1999), and HIW (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000).

Hypothesis 5: Presence of dependant children and hours worked will be positively related to WIH and HIW.

Hypothesis 6: Organizational time demands and potential negative career consequences will be positively related to WIH and HIW; managerial support will be negatively related to WIH and HIW.

Method

Sample

Participants were drawn from two organizations in England: a local government council and a higher-education institution. Surveys were mailed out to all 300 employees of the local authority, and to all 486 employees of the higher-education institute. Two hundred and thirty-one surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 29%. Eight surveys were excluded from the final analyses due to missing responses, generating an effective sample size of 223.

The majority of respondents were women (62.3%). Participant ages ranged from 17 to 68, with an average age of just over 41 years. One hundred and seventy-eight respondents (79.8%) reported living with a spouse or partner, and of these, 82.8% were members of dual-earner households, where the spouse or partner was also employed. One hundred and forty-one (63.2%) respondents reported having children, with the average age of the youngest child just over 14 years, and 33 (14.8%) respondents reported having caregiving responsibilities for adult dependents. The average number of adult dependents for these respondents was 1.33.

Measures

Work-home interference. **W**ork-home interference was measured with the 18 items from Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams' (2000) multidimensional measure of work-family conflict. All items were modified in order to be applicable to respondents both with and without family responsibilities. For example, "The behaviours I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse" was modified to read, "The behaviours I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better partner, friend, or parent". Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the items on a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" = 1 to "strongly agree" = 7.

Factor analysis revealed that the three items from the time-based work interference with home subscale and the three items from the strain-based work interference with home subscale loaded on just one factor. The two subscales were therefore combined to form one scale, henceforth called "Work interference with home". In addition, the three items from the time-based home interference with work subscale and the three items from the strain-based home interference with work subscale loaded onto one factor; they were merged to produce one scale – "Home interference with work" - for the current study.

Factor analysis also revealed that the three items measuring behaviour-based work interference with home loaded on the same factor as the three items assessing behaviour-based home interference with work. Respondents of the survey evidently did not discriminate between the two possible directions of interference, indicating that when work behaviours are perceived as being ineffective or inappropriate in the home domain, home behaviours are also deemed unsuitable for the work domain, and vice versa. Because a composite, non-directional behaviour-based work-home interference scale does not permit meaningful interpretation of results, the behaviour-based dimension was dropped from the measure.

The factoring method used for all scales was principal axis. Ford, MacCallum, and Tait

(1986) recommend this common factoring method in place of the principal components method of analysis, which mixes common, specific, and random error variances. Varimax orthogonal rotation was used for all scales in accordance with Hinkin's (1998) recommendation, as the intent was to develop scales that were reasonably independent of one another.

The reliability alphas were .92 for the time- and strain-based WIH scale, and .85 for time- and strain-based HIW.

Adaptive perfectionism. Adaptive perfectionism was measured with the adaptive perfectionism subscale of Slaney, Mobley, Trippi, Ashby, and Johnson's (1996) revised Almost Perfect Scale. This scale has been subject to assessments of construct and content validity, both of which have been supported (see Slaney et al., 2001 for details). Seven items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived a low level of distress resulting from the discrepancy between their personal standards and their performance (e.g., "I expect the best from myself"). The same seven-point Likert response scale was used. In order to establish the conceptual distinctiveness of the scales measuring dispositional characteristics, items measuring perfectionism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem were all included in the factor analysis. One item was dropped from the adaptive perfectionism scale after factor analysis ("If you don't expect much out of yourself, you will never succeed") as its factor loading was less than .40. The reliability alpha for this scale was .89.

Maladaptive perfectionism. Maladaptive perfectionism was measured with the maladaptive perfectionism subscale of Slaney et al.'s (1996) revised Almost Perfect Scale. Seven items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived a high level of distress resulting from the discrepancy between their personal standards and their performance (e.g., "I hardly ever feel that what I've done is good enough"). The same seven-point Likert response scale was used. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .93.

Self-efficacy. General self-efficacy was measured with Chen, Gully and Eden's (2001) New General Self-Efficacy scale, which yielded high levels of content and predictive validity when assessed (see Chen et al., 2001). Eight items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived that they were able to successfully perform tasks in a variety of achievement situations (e.g., "In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me"). The same seven-point Likert response scale was used. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .90.

Self-esteem. Global self-esteem was measured using Rosenberg's (1965) scale. Ten items assessed respondents' perception of their overall worth (e.g., "I feel that I have a number of good qualities"). Items were answered using the same seven-point Likert scale. The reliability alpha for this scale was .86.

Work-home culture. Organizational work-home culture was measured using Thompson et al.'s (1999) scale. Fifteen items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived organizational time demands for prioritizing work over home, that personal or family responsibilities had the potential to generate negative career consequences, and that managerial support existed for work-home issues. Two items were dropped from the potential negative career consequences subscale following factor analysis, as both loaded highly on more than one factor ("To turn down a promotion for personal or family-related reasons will seriously hurt one's career progress in this organization"; "In this organization, employees who work part-time are viewed as less serious about their career than those who work full-time"). Reliability alphas were .94 for organizational time demands, .77 for potential negative career consequences, and .91 for managerial support.

Analysis

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The two forms of work-home interference – work interference with home and home interference with work – were individually regressed on the measures of adaptive perfectionism, maladaptive

perfectionism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. For each equation, the control variables were entered in step 1, followed by the situational variables in step 2, and the dispositional variables in step 3 to determine whether or not they contributed over and above the effects of situational characteristics.

In each of the hierarchical regression equations, several background variables were included in the analyses for control purposes. The control variables included were organization (Council = 0/College = 1, dummy-coded), age, and gender (male = 0/female = 1, dummy-coded). In previous research, these demographic variables have been established as important explanatory variables in their own right in terms of work-home interference. For instance, women have often reported more WIH and HIW than have men (Saltzstein et al., 2001), while age has been shown to have a negative relationship with WHI (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999). The type of organization has also been linked to work-home interference; Carnicer et al. (2004) found that government employees were less likely to experience interference than were those in the private sector. In order to focus on the main research questions that this study was designed to assess, however, these variables were used and treated simply as control variables in the regression equations.

A usefulness analysis (Darlington, 1968) was conducted to reveal the unique contribution of the dispositional variables in predicting the variance in work-home interference. Usefulness analysis provides the incremental change in explained variance that is attributable to the set of independent variables that goes beyond the contribution to explained variance of all the other variables in the equation. This analysis compares the change in R^2 associated with a set of independent variables while controlling for the effect of the other variables in the equation. Each set of independent variables (dispositional and situational) was entered into a hierarchical equation in separate steps and in reverse ordering. For the usefulness analysis, the dispositional variables were entered into the equation in a block rather than

individually. This permits an examination of the variance in WHI explained by the set of dispositional variables in excess of the explanatory capacity of the set of situational variables, and *vice versa*.

Results

The means, standard deviations, reliabilities and intercorrelations among the study variables are reported in Table 1, while the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

TAKE IN TABLE I

Hypothesis 1 was partially supported; adaptive perfectionism had a significant negative relationship with HIW (β = -.27, p < .001). Hypothesis 2 was strongly supported. Maladaptive perfectionism was positively and significantly related to WIH (β = .14, p < .05), and HIW (β = .22, p < .01). No support was found for Hypothesis 3, which predicted that self-efficacy would be negatively related to work-home interference.

TAKE IN TABLE II

TAKE IN TABLE III

Hypothesis 4 received partial support; self-esteem had a significant negative relationship with WIH (β = -.13, p = .05). Hypothesis 5 also received partial support; the presence of dependant children in the household was positively and significantly related to both WIH (β = .11, p < .05), and HIW (β = .18, p < .01), and hours worked had a positive and significant relationship with WIH (β = .21, p < .001). Hypothesis 6 was partially supported, with organizational time demands displaying a significant positive relationship with WIH (β = .51, p < .001), and a significant, negative relationship found between managerial support and WIH (β = -.14, p < .05).

TAKE IN TABLE IV

The results of the usefulness analysis are displayed in Table 4. The dispositional variables under investigation in this study accounted for significantly more variance beyond the situational variables in HIW ($\triangle R^2 = .15$, $p < .001$). Conversely, the situational variables under examination accounted for significantly more variance beyond the dispositional variables in WIH ($\triangle R^2 = .38$, $p < .001$).

Discussion

One of the aims of this study was to explore the effects of personality variables on employee perceptions of work-home interference. The results of this investigation lend support to the theoretical work of Friede and Ryan (2005) and the empirical results of Bonebright et al. (2000), Carlson (1999), and Erdwins et al. (2001) in establishing that personality characteristics play a role in determining to what degree an individual experiences interference between work and home. Consistent with Rothbard's (2001) premise that self-evaluations may influence whether an individual perceives engagement in multiple roles as depleting or enriching, both adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism as well as self-esteem were found to have significant effects on work-home interference in the present study.

As outlined earlier in this paper, Friede and Ryan (2005) proposed three ways in which personality might affect the experience of work-home interference. Firstly, individuals may self-select into more challenging or supportive environments depending on their dispositional characteristics. Secondly, individuals may differ in their perceptions of work and home role requirements as being either conflictual or enriching, depending on their personality. Finally, individuals may choose different strategies to cope with work and home demands, based on their personality, which in turn may influence the degree of emotional strain experienced.

Maladaptive perfectionism, being associated with negative self-evaluations of performance and increased sensitivity to stressors, corresponds most closely to pathway #2 in its relationship to work-home interference. In the current study, maladaptive perfectionism

predicted increased interference from work to home, and from home to work. The general tendency of maladaptive perfectionists to critically evaluate their performance (Frost et al., 1990) renders them prone to making negative evaluations of their efforts to achieve low levels of work-home interference. Also responsible may be the tendency of maladaptive perfectionists to be more negatively affected by life stressors than individuals low in maladaptive perfectionism (Mitchelson & Burns, 1998). While not measured in this study, the propensity for procrastination often displayed by maladaptive perfectionists (Johnson & Slaney, 1996) could also play a role in explaining their elevated levels of interference, by contributing to time pressures and consequent strain.

Adaptive perfectionism, in contrast, is associated with increased effort and persistence (LoCicero & Ashby, 2000), behaviours that may represent an effective way of coping with conflicting work and home demands. The negative relationship between adaptive perfectionism and HIW found in the present study therefore corresponds most closely to pathway #3 in Friede and Ryan's (2005) model of personality's influence on work and home role engagement, which proposes that personality may influence the strategies selected to approach the work-home interface.

The failure of adaptive perfectionism to predict WIH may be attributable to the greater permeability of the home domain; dispositional characteristics are believed to have the greatest effect on behaviour when the situation is relevant to the personality trait's expression, and is weak enough to allow an individual to choose how to behave in that situation (Stewart & Barrick, 2004). When seeking to manage demands from both work and home, accommodations can more often be made at home (Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997). When adaptive perfectionists initiate efforts to achieve their high standards for reduced interference between work and home, these efforts may be more successful in an environment where there is more

scope to adjust one's behaviour. Adaptive perfectionism may be less effective in the less malleable environment of the workplace, leading to a non-significant impact on WIH.

Like adaptive perfectionism, self-esteem is also associated with greater effort and persistence (McFarlin et al., 1984), corresponding to pathway #3 of Friede and Ryan's (2005) model in its relationship to work-home interference. Individuals with higher levels of self-esteem are also more likely to make positive evaluations of work and home situations, however (Kinnier et al., 1991). This corresponds to pathway #2, in which personality influences individuals' perceptions of work and home role requirements (Friede & Ryan, 2005).

Given the greater permeability of the home domain discussed above, it is curious that self-esteem was a predictor only of reduced WIH in the present study. There would appear to be no straightforward rationale for why self-esteem would influence an individual's coping strategies for WIH but not HIW, or affect an employee's perceptions of work role requirements but not home role demands. According to Morf (1989), individual dispositions would lead an individual to respond similarly to work and to home; the expectation is that the behaviour resulting from these dispositions would be similar in both domains. The standardized beta coefficient for self-esteem in the HIW analysis was in fact slightly higher than that in the WIH regression equation, but it came under the threshold for statistical significance. Either there is an as-yet undiscovered reason for why self-esteem might act as a buffer against WIH only, or this finding is a statistical anomaly peculiar to this one study. In either case, further research is warranted.

Consistent with previous research (Allen, 2001; Kossek et al., 2001), elements of work-home culture were found to have significant direct effects upon WIH. High levels of WIH were reported by employees experiencing strong organizational time demands and little managerial support. Feeling pressure to work long hours and assign priority to one's job rather

than one's home life contributed significantly to the spillover of work demands into the home domain, by increasing time pressures for those complying with organizational time demands, and potentially generating stress among those failing to fulfill such demands. The increased WIH experienced by employees receiving little support from immediate or upper management may be attributable to the failure of those managers to provide either instrumental support in the form of flexibility within employees' work schedules, and/or emotional support with regard to work-home concerns. Work-home culture had no significant effects upon HIW, providing support for the prevailing conceptualization of HIW as being caused by demographic characteristics and stressors originating in the home domain.

The second aim of this study was to explore whether the dispositional or the situational characteristics under investigation were responsible for explaining the greatest amount of variance in work-home interference. The results of the usefulness analysis suggest that while the situational variables under study explained more variance in WIH than did the dispositional characteristics, the opposite was true for HIW. These findings provide additional support for the notion of separate antecedents to WIH and HIW. Situational characteristics primarily associated with the work domain accounted for the majority of variance in WIH, while personality traits were responsible for explaining virtually all of the variance in HIW. This may be due to the interpersonal nature of many of the stressors contributing to HIW, the perception of which may be more influenced by an individual's personality characteristics. These results raise the possibility that HIW may be more strongly tied to the individual occupying home-related roles than to the roles themselves. The opposite may be true of WIH; interference from work to the home domain may arise predominantly due to factors associated with the work role, rather than the worker. This would help to explain the dissimilar influence of dispositional variables on the two directions of work-home interference. Of course, it must be remembered that only small subsets of all possible situational and dispositional variables were

considered in this study. Overall, however, the findings indicate that models of work-home interference containing only situation or person-based predictors risk underspecification; including both situation and person-based explanations results in a more complete prediction model of work-home interference.

Implications for Managers

In terms of the practical implications of these findings, it is important that neither policy-makers nor managers view the resolution of work-home interference as an individual responsibility due to the demonstrated influence of individual differences on the presence or absence of such interference. Lewis, Rapoport and Gambles (2003) argue that questions regarding the fundamental changes necessary for effective work-life integration need to be addressed at all levels of society. Working to reduce interference between work and home must remain a joint activity, with organizations, governments, and individual employees sharing accountability and responsibility for generating solutions. A climate of individualism in the work-home arena is not helpful.

From an organizational point of view, employees are unlikely to be selected on the basis of their predeliction for adaptive or maladaptive perfectionism, or self-esteem. It is equally unlikely that personality characteristics such as these can be encouraged or discouraged via conventional training procedures, given that these types of traits are considered relatively stable self-concepts (Gardner & Pierce, 1998). Raising managerial awareness of the influence of personality traits upon the experience of work-home interference may prove useful. It is well documented that managerial support of work-home issues is associated with lower levels of employee work-home interference (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). A manager aware of, for example, the distress caused by a mismatch between an employee's performance and personal standards may provide more effective support than one who assumes work-home interference is attributable only to situational characteristics such as work hours or demands from home.

Encouragement, reassurance, and sharing of personal experience with subordinates may provide a useful supplement to instrumental support activities such as arranging flexible working practices for affected employees.

Limitations and Future Research

Some limitations to the present study should be noted. Because the data were collected through the use of a single survey at a single point in time, the results may be influenced by common method bias. Moreover, the cross-sectional design of the study does not allow for firm conclusions regarding causality. It is conceivable that an employee experiencing high levels of work-home interference may evaluate himself or herself more negatively as a result, reporting lower levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem. Future research employing a longitudinal design would be better placed to assess issues of directionality.

Another limitation of the research was the failure of the multidimensional work-home interference measure to separate into its discrete time-based and strain-based components during factor analysis. While this is by no means an isolated incident in the work-home literature, it may signal a weakness either of the measurement instrument, or the conceptualization of work-home interference. Items measuring time-based interference and items measuring strain-based interference often load on the same factor (e.g., Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh, & Houtman, 2003), and previous researchers have sometimes found that their measures of time-based and strain-based interference were highly correlated, indicating significant overlap between the two, and have therefore combined the two scales to form a single composite measure of overall time- and strain-based interference (e.g., Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992; Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001). It has been suggested by Thompson and Beauvais (2000) that strong correlations between time-based and strain-based interference occur because strain is often a result of time demands. If this is indeed the case, the conceptualization of time-based interference and strain-based interference as independent

forms of interference may need to be re-evaluated, and the possibility that time-based interference is an antecedent to strain-based interference considered.

Because behaviour-based work-home interference is so rarely examined in the work-home literature, it is difficult to ascertain whether the failure of the behaviour-based measure to divide into its two directional components signifies a fault with the measurement instrument, or whether some underlying flaw in the conceptualization of behaviour-based interference is responsible. Exploratory, qualitative research seeking to determine what exactly behaviour-based interference entails would be invaluable in developing a more comprehensive underlying theory of the construct and enabling future researchers to investigate its antecedents and outcomes with greater success.

More total variance was explained for WIH than for HIW. This may be due to the focus of this study on work-oriented variables; other than demographic characteristics and the presence of dependant children, no factors originating in the home domain were taken into account which might have further explained HIW. Future research should include more detailed assessments of home demands in order to more accurately evaluate the power of dispositional over situational characteristics in explaining variance in HIW.

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Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Work-Home Interference, Dispositional, and Situational Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Work interference with home	4.01	1.62								
2. Home interference with work	2.21	1.00	.19**							
3. Organizational time demands	3.96	1.78	.65***	.05						
4. Potential negative career consequences	3.39	1.09	.22***	.07	.21***					
5. Managerial support	4.50	1.18	-.49***	-.03	-.63***	-.18**				
6. Adaptive perfectionism	5.75	0.86	.14*	-.24***	.12†	.02	.09			
7. Maladaptive perfectionism	3.46	1.32	.30***	.24***	.22***	.03	-.09	.08		
8. Self-efficacy										
9. Self-esteem										

Note. $N = 223$.

† $p < .10$.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Table 2

Hierarchical regression results predicting Work Interference with Home

Independent variable	*Standardized Beta Coefficients*					
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Step 1: Control variables						
Sex	-.09	.04	.01	.00	.00	-.01
Age	.08	.03	.03	.02	.02	.04
Organization	.21**	-.17**	-.18**	-.18***	-.18**	-.17**
Step 2: Situational variables						
Presence of young children		.10*	.11*	.11*	.11*	.11*
Hours worked weekly		.23***	.21***	.20***	.20***	.21***
Organizational time demands		.56***	.51***	.50***	.50***	.51***
Potential negative career consequences		.08	.06	.06	.06	.03
Managerial support		-.13*	-.13*	-.14*	-.14*	-.14*
Step 3: Maladaptive perfectionism			.19***	.19***	.19***	.14*
Step 4: Adaptive perfectionism				.05	.05	.07
Step 5: Self-efficacy					-.01	.04
Step 6: Self-esteem						-.13*
F	5.34***	26.75***	26.80***	24.21***	21.90***	20.73***
△F	5.34***	36.78***	13.64***	0.95	0.02	4.07*
$\triangle R^2$	.07***	.45***	.03***	.00	.00	.01*
Adjusted R^2	.06***	.50***	.53***	.53***	.53***	.53***

Note. $N = 223$.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.
*** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Hierarchical regression results predicting Home Interference with Work

Independent variable	*Standardized Beta Coefficients*					
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Step 1: Control variables						
Sex	-.02	-.01	-.05	-.02	-.02	-.03
Age	-.04	-.06	-.06	-.01	.00	.02
Organization	-.05	-.10	-.11	-.09	-.10	-.09
Step 2: Situational variables						
Presence of young children		.15*	.16*	.17*	.18**	.18**
Hours worked weekly		-.08	-.10	-.06	-.07	-.06
Organizational time demands		.15	.09	.13	.13	.14
Potential negative career consequences		.10	.08	.10	.10	.08
Managerial support		.00	.00	.05	.04	.05
Step 3: Maladaptive perfectionism			.24***	.24***	.27***	.22**
Step 4: Adaptive perfectionism				-.25***	-.29***	-.27***
Step 5: Self-efficacy					.11	.15
Step 6: Self-esteem						-.15
F	0.31	1.59	2.69**	3.78***	3.61***	3.56***
△F	0.31	2.35*	10.84***	12.22***	1.79	2.68
$\triangle R^2$	.01	.06*	.05***	.05***	.01	.01
Adjusted R^2	-.01	.02	.07**	.12***	.12***	.13***

Note. $N = 223$.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.
*** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Results of the Usefulness Analysis

Outcome measure	Dispositional variables, given situational variables, $\triangle R^2$ *(Adaptive perfectionism, maladaptive perfectionism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem)*	Situational variables, given dispositional variables, $\triangle R^2$ *(Presence of dependant children, hours worked weekly, organizational time demands, potential negative career consequences, managerial support)*
Work interference with home	.04**	.38***
Home interference with work	.15***	.05*

Note. $N = 223$.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.
*** $p < .001$.