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## IMPROVING CAREER SATISFACTION THROUGH REDUCING WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG NURSES: CAREER CALLING AS MODERATOR

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**Abstract:** Career calling is essential in individual career development, especially for women, such as nurses, who are prone to potential work and family conflicts. They are faced with tough challenges in order to enjoy satisfaction in their careers. This study explores the role of career calling as a moderator in the relationship between work-family conflict and career satisfaction. This study focuses on 120 nurses as respondents spread across three cities and re-gencies in East Kalimantan. This number of samples was obtained with a purposive approach, five times the number of indicators. The results with SEM-PLS show that work-family conflict negatively affects career satisfaction, while career calling positively affects career satisfaction. Moderation effect testing shows that career calling significantly amplifies the effect of work-family conflict on career satisfaction. Managers in health agencies must minimize the work-family conflicts of their nurses and develop a sense of calling in a nursing career to increase career satisfaction. Implication of the result: The HR function needs to manage conflict between work and family wisely and evolve people to be more inclusive with their calling in the job.

**Keywords:** Career Satisfaction, Work-Family Conflict, Career Calling

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## INTRODUCTION

The need for nurses is increasing every year. According to the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia, there is a projected significant increase in the demand for nurses in Indonesia, reaching 18 million individuals by 2023 (Khoirunnisaa, 2023). The nursing profession mostly shows elevated stress levels, extended work periods, and demanding job requirements. Meanwhile, Midje et al. (2023) assert that hospitals strategically maintain minimal staffing levels to optimize financial gains without regard for patient volume or the severity of their medical conditions. Nurses express strong discontent with the notion of a "nursing shortage," arguing that it is more accurate to characterize the situation as a scarcity of nurses who are willing to assume the potential risks to their personal well-being, professional licensure, and patient safety that are inherent in these demanding work environments (House et al., 2022). This condition has the potential to cause problems in satisfaction felt by nurses in their career.

Work and family conflicts have been observed by many researchers as determinants of job satisfaction (Armstrong et al., 2015). The conflict that connects work and family life should be considered especially relevant in nursing due to the weak boundaries between work and personal domains (Zurlo et al., 2020). Nurses tend to experience high levels of work-family conflict because nursing is a female-dominated occupation (Zhang et al., 2020). For women, careers have challenges because of the multiple roles that must be played in work and family. It is not easy to maintain a work-family balance while working shifts, housework, and childcare duties. These responsibilities increase stress levels and make nurses vulnerable to work-family conflict. Achieving stability between work and family expectations is difficult (Yildiz et al., 2021). Therefore, nurses' career satisfaction will become hampered or diminished as the conflict escalates.

Interestingly, many nurses identify a calling as a motivational factor for choosing nursing despite the challenges of the nursing role (Cao et al., 2019). It means that even with a heavy workload, nurses remain a promising choice of profession accompanied by a vocation for a profession that is quite strong to live. Nurses who believe they are living a calling are likely to exhibit greater work

effort and caring ability toward their patients (Zhou et al., 2021). Being called to be a nurse has been viewed as a person's intrinsic aspiration to engage in nursing activities, which means working meaningfully (Kallio et al., 2022).

The phenomenon of work-family conflict felt by nurses becomes increasingly when geographical conditions become a factor that aggravates the problem. The workload imbalance and the number of nurses between regions in a province also contribute. Although based on the data provided by (BPS Kaltim, 2023), there has been a substantial increase in the population of nurses in East Kalimantan, with the number rising from 7,538 individuals to 10,273 individuals. Nevertheless, the allocation of this numerical value exhibits disparity among the ten regencies or cities in East Kalimantan. Notably, Samarinda, Balikpapan, and Kutai Kartanegara emerge as the three regions boasting the most substantial nurse population in East Kalimantan. This factor influences the disparity in the workload distribution among nurses across different regions. In addition, population projections in the three regions show a significant increase from year to year. It means there will be more and more people whom health workers, including nurses, must serve. More to serve means a greater workload and a greater potential for conflict in work that nurses will feel.

Researchers have widely conducted studies on the influence of work-family conflict. Li et al. (2021) found that work-family conflicts have a significantly negative influence on the junior high school teachers' job satisfaction. Armstrong et al. (2015) also stated that family conflict was significantly related to job satisfaction. Specifically, Labrague and Ballad (2021) found that work-family conflict predicted nurse job satisfaction. The modified model by Huang et al. (2022) proposed the role of career calling that moderates the association between work-family conflict and overall job satisfaction in the context of health professionals. The career calling of health workers is expected to play a moderator role based on the job demand-resources model (Huang et al., 2022). However, some of the research above still generally investigates job satisfaction as a consequence construct. Further research related to specific satisfaction forms is still needed to look at more detailed outcome variables (Huang et al., 2022). The primary

objective of this study was to investigate the potential moderating influence of career calling on the relationship between work-family conflict and career satisfaction.

Prior studies have investigated the impact of work-family conflict on both overall job satisfaction and the concept of career calling. Nevertheless, research examining the impact of work-family conflict on distinct dimensions of satisfaction, such as career satisfaction, remains unexplored. The main objective of this study is to address the existing research void and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The novelty of this study is to examine the proposed model to gain insights into the underlying mechanisms that drive changes in behavior within the specific context of career satisfaction, work-family conflict, and career calling. Career satisfaction is regarded as contingent, as it serves as a pivotal measure of subjective career achievement and can be viewed as an essential element of career success within contemporary labor market cohorts (Spurk et al., 2015). Hence, the present study examines the moderating influence of career calling on the association between career satisfaction and work-family conflict among nurses in Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Career Satisfaction

Career satisfaction is a specific attitude shown by employees towards their work. Career satisfaction refers to the extent to which employees view their career advancement as relevant to their career goals and values, as they feel a level of happiness taking into account their career options (Ho et al., 2022). Career satisfaction is a concept similar to job satisfaction, with two variations: (1) covering a long-term perspective and (2) the spectrum of aspects considered in the assessment goes beyond a specific position/setting and refers to broader professional activities (Carvajal et al., 2021). It consists of positive work and psychological results from work experience (Gopalan and Pattusamy, 2020). Thus, career satisfaction is broader and includes an individual's perception of the accumulative effects of experience at different occupations and their advancement over a period of time through these jobs (Al-Ghazali and Sohail, 2021).

### Work-Family Conflict

Work-family conflict is a term of conflict that indicates excessive job demands. Work-family conflict is perceived as specific conflict while performing roles, and it occurs when a person is distracted by many functions and becomes dissatisfied with their life (Gull et al., 2021). Others stated that work-family conflict occurs when the responsibilities at the workplace limit the fulfillment of individual obligations in the family and vice versa (Yang et al., 2022). Due to time and energy constraints, individuals cannot meet work and family requirements simultaneously. So, it is difficult for individuals to adapt to the role of the family after fulfilling the role of the work (Li et al., 2021). Work-family conflict can be divided into work-family conflict and work-family conflict. Work-family conflict can result in the family domain, while family conflict tends to have impacts on the work domain (Rashighi and Harris, 2017).

### Career Calling

Career calling is an important element in employment. Scholars defined career calling as finding personal fulfillment in an individual's work and considering it meaningful and purposeful (Shang et al., 2022). Career callings create meaningful and sustainable experiences, encouraging people to do their jobs passionately without expecting additional rewards (L. Zhang et al., 2020). A career calling has three characteristics: First, it can be derived from inner beliefs, highlighting individual perceptions and attitudes towards work. Secondly, the calling in a career has a strong purpose and meaning, emphasizing the realization of self-esteem. Third, individuals with a strong calling have robust prosocial motivation and will take the initiative to help others, underscoring the promotion of social progress (Liu and Xu, 2022).

## HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Job demand theory was used to explain this study. Job demands refer to the extent to which job duties and requirements require employees' effort or physical, social, or psychological skills. Previous research provides strong evidence of relevant job demand outcomes among different groups of medical staff (S. Zhang et al., 2021). Based on the model in this theory, high job demands can have a

negative impact on employees, such as decreasing their level of satisfaction. One of the job demands is the conflict between work and family (Huang et al., 2022). People tend to think about the causes of work-to-family conflicts, their characteristics, consequences, how to deal with them, and so on. In turn, people's minds tend to center around work situations and blame work, which triggers negative emotions toward work, thus decreasing their satisfaction (Hong et al., 2021). Work-family conflict hinders a person's achievement in his career both in terms of salary and skill development, which means reduced satisfaction with career advancement.

**H1:** Work-family conflict negatively affects career satisfaction.

Employees with high career calling revealed a powerful sense of responsibility and higher motivation in their jobs and strongly emphasized growth and learning in their careers (Ding and Liu, 2022). Calling can provide a greater career advantage because it helps increase self-awareness, self-efficacy, and proactivity, thereby increasing one's potential to achieve objective and subjective success (DiRenzo et al., 2022). Career calling encourages people to reach self-actualization and positively impacts individual development while promoting a sense of meaningfulness and satisfaction in one's work (Shang et al., 2022). Research also shows that career calling affects satisfaction (Xie et al., 2017). Feeling motivated from within through a sense of calling to undergo a job will encour-

age a positive attitude in achieving greater achievements in an individual's career.

**H2:** Career calling positively affects career satisfaction.

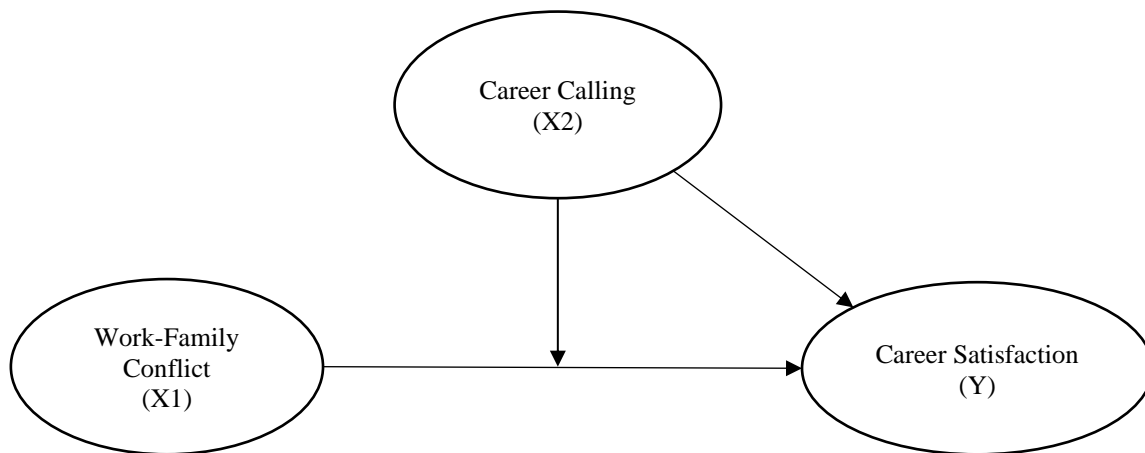
Some researchers have used career calling as moderators. Some are testing career calling in reinforcing the influence of work identity on career satisfaction (McKevitt et al., 2017). Career calling also interacted positively to moderate the relationship between career growth and the craftsman spirit (Ding and Liu, 2022). Specifically, a recent study concluded that career calling had a negative moderating effect on the path of job demands–job satisfaction (Huang et al., 2022). The impact of work-family conflict on satisfaction can be minimized when a person's career choice is based on a vocation in his job.

**H3:** Career calling negatively moderates the influence of work-family conflict and career satisfaction.

**METHOD**

**Research Design**

A quantitative approach with an explanatory method was used in this study. Data was obtained by distributing questionnaires via Google Forms to nurses in 3 cities and regencies: Samarinda, Balikpapan, and Kutai Kartanegara. Previously, several hospitals or clinics have been contacted directly to request approval to distribute questionnaires. Then, the hospital or clinic leaders share the survey link with the nurses.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**

**Table 1. Variable Operational Definitions**

Variables (Sources)	Indicators	Items
Work-Family Conflict/WFC  (Haslam et al., 2015)	Poor quality time (WFC1)	My work prevents me from spending sufficient quality time with my family.
	Out of time (WFC2)	At the end of the day, there is no time left to do the things I'd like at home.
	Distracted (WFC3)	I am often distracted by thoughts about work while spending time with my family.
	Excess overtime (WFC4)	I often complete work tasks outside of work hours
	Missout (WFC5)	My family misses out because of my work commitments
	Suffers of performance (WFC6)	My work performance suffers because of my personal and family commitments.
	Clash of commitment (WFC7)	When work and family commitments clash, I usually fulfill work commitments first.
	Tired (WFC8)	At the end of the day, I am too tired to enjoy spending time with my family.
	Regrets (WFC9)	I'd be a better partner or parent if I didn't work.
	Irritable (WFC10)	Working often makes me irritable or short-tempered at home.
Career Calling /CC  (Ding and Liu, 2022)	Enthusiasm (CC1)	I am full of enthusiasm for my work.
	Contentment (CC2)	Being in my profession gives me great satisfaction.
	Self-describing (CC3)	I usually think of my career first when describing who I am to others.
	Integration (CC4)	My career will always be a part of my life.
	Sense of Mission (CC5)	I feel a sense of mission in my career.
	Indelible (CC6)	In a sense, my career has always been in my heart.
	Think a lot (CC7)	Even if I didn't do this job, I often think about doing it.
	Meaningful (CC8)	Joining my current career makes my life more meaningful.
	Engagement (CC9)	Engaging in my career can deeply touch my heart and bring me joy.
Career Satisfaction/CS  (Spurk et al., 2015)	Achievement (CS1)	I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.
	Overall goals (CS2)	I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.
	Income (CS3)	I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.
	Advancement (CS4)	I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.
	Development new skills (CS5)	I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

Source: Processed Data (2023)

### Population and Sample

Respondents in this study were female nurses who worked in government and private hospitals. Due to the absence of a sample frame, the number of samples is determined using purposive sam-

pling with a formula of five times the number of indicators as the minimum required in research with structural models (Ferdinand, 2014). So, with 24 indicators, as many as 120 respondents were obtained.

## Measurement

The instrument used in this study used a scale of 7 Likert (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree). All items used have been validated through previous research. Work-family conflict is measured by the indicators used, consisting of 10 items, while career calling consists of 9 items and career satisfaction consists of 5 items. The translation of items has been adapted to the context of the research object based on previous sources (Robiansyah and Raharjo, 2023).

## Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modelling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) approach. The analysis is carried out through two parts: testing the measurement model and simultaneously following up with structural model testing, which is the advantage of SEM-PLS (Abdillah and Hartono, 2015). Evaluate measurement models by testing the validity and reliability of instruments. Validity testing is seen with the value of the loading factor and average variance extracted (AVE). At the same time, reliability testing uses Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. Testing structural models taking into account the values of path coefficients, statistical T, and p values. Moderation effect testing refers to the interaction between the independent and moderator variables against the dependent variables (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

## RESULTS

### Respondents Descriptive

The nurses who were respondents in the study were all 120 people spread across three cities and regencies (Samarinda, Balikpapan, and Kutai Kartanegara). Most nurses work in government agencies, i.e., 94 people (78.3%), while the rest are in private agencies. Their education is partly diploma (50.8%), the remaining 47.5% bachelor's

and 1.7% master's degrees. Some nurses' ages ranged from 20-30 years (51.7%), 31-40 years (35%), 41-50 years (11.7%), and 1.7% aged 51-60 years. Most respondents are married (65.8%), while those who are unmarried are 31.7% and divorced 2.5%. Most of them already had children (58.3% and the rest had no children. The period of service that has been undertaken is quite varied, namely 1-3 years (37.5%), 4-6 years (15.8%), 7-10 years (20.8%), and above ten years (25.8%).

### Outer Model Evaluation

The measurement model results show that the work-family conflict variable has a loading factor value above 0.7 except for three items (WFC8, WFC9, WFC10) whose loading factor value does not meet the criteria, so it must be dropped. The career calling variable also has a loading factor value above 0.7 except for two items, namely CC3 and CC7. In the career satisfaction variable, all items have a loading factor above 0.7, so they are all valid. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of all variables is above 0.5, so the discriminant validity is also met. The reliability testing results by looking at Cronbach's Alpha value and composite reliability show that variables have values above 0.7, so all variables are reliable.

### Inner Model Evaluation

The results of hypothesis testing show that work-family conflict variables negatively affect career satisfaction. It is indicated by a coefficient value of -0.203 and a statistical T value of 2.188 (sig. 0.029), so the first hypothesis is accepted. Similarly, the second hypothesis is accepted, which shows a coefficient value of 0.652 and a statistical T result of 7.446 (sig. 0.000). Testing the moderation effect of the career calling variable showed significant results with a coefficient value of -0.168 and a statistical T of 2.032 (sig. 0.043) so that the third hypothesis was also accepted.

**Table 2. Inner Model Evaluation**

Effect	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Hypothesis
WFC→CS	-0.203	2.188	0.029	Accepted
CC→CS	0.652	7.446	0.000	Accepted
Moderating→CS	-0.168	2.032	0.043	Accepted

Source: Processed Data (2023)

## DISCUSSION

### Work-Family Conflict and Career Satisfaction

Work-family conflict negatively affects career satisfaction. It supports the hypothesis built in this research based on previous theories and research (Hong et al., 2021). If the previous research (Huang et al., 2022) only tested the dependent variable of job satisfaction in general, this research developed a more specific finding: career satisfaction. In addition, these findings develop a more specific understanding than previous research (Gözükara and Çolakoğlu, 2016) that emphasizes work-family conflicts related to time and behavior. Work-family conflict as a demand from work or family can increase the burden of nurses in carrying out their duties, and their existence will further reduce satisfaction with their careers.

### Career Calling and Career Satisfaction

Career satisfaction was affected by career calling, so it supported the second hypothesis. The greater the sense of calling in a career, the greater satisfaction in the career. Feeling called makes career achievements more meaningful to the person (L. Zhang et al., 2020). It is relevant to the findings of previous research (Shang et al., 2022). Previous research has emphasized job satisfaction (Xie et al., 2017), but these findings specifically point to career calling to career satisfaction. Nurses who use calling as a source of motivation will feel greater satisfaction with their careers because they do not depend on satisfaction from external factors.

In organizational culture, findings (Hilda and Arsyawina, 2018) become relevant regarding the dominant organizational culture in one of the largest hospitals in East Kalimantan. Two significant cultural dimensions emerge in such organizations: attention to detail and orientation to people. Attention to detail is an important aspect of a nurse's job that demands a high concentration. It will work well when a nurse has a career calling that is high enough in her job to bring satisfying work results and encourage great career satisfaction.

### Career Calling as Moderator

The moderating effect of career calling has been shown to amplify the impact of work-family conflict on career satisfaction. Thus, the third hypothesis is also accepted. The findings reinforce previous research (Huang et al., 2022), which ma-

kes career calling a moderator. In particular, this study further confirms the role of career as moderator, as previously studied by researchers in various independent variables such as role identification (McKevitt et al., 2017), role conflict, and role ambiguity (Wu et al., 2019). So, nurses with high career calling will make the impact of work-family conflict reduce career satisfaction. Similarly, lower work-family conflict increases career satisfaction, and career calling amplifies that influence.

## IMPLICATIONS

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of employee behavior theory by considering work-family conflict to career satisfaction, which researchers still have not widely studied. Similarly, career calling is further reinforced in these findings as a predictor of career satisfaction and, at the same time, moderates' interaction with work-family conflicts. Practically, this finding is useful for policymakers, especially human resource management, in creating recruitment and career development programs for nurses, both government and private institutions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Other relevant dependent variables related to satisfaction are also worth considering, such as satisfaction with salary, superiors, or colleagues. In addition, individual motivational aspects such as employee engagement are also interesting to study more deeply related to career calling. Besides, the role of leadership in encouraging employee calling is still worth to be explored. It can also be explored further in future research concerning career outcomes, such as career growth.

This research is limited to three locations. In fact, East Kalimantan has ten cities/regions. Of course, to improve its generalization, it is necessary to expand the scope of its research area to not only one province but also national or regional. In addition, the respondents only had one type of profession, namely nurses. Several other professions, such as the entrepreneurs, teachers, artists, or programmers, are seen as a career calling for someone.

## CONCLUSIONS

Finally, it can be concluded that all hypotheses developed following the objectives of this

study are accepted. Work-family conflict negatively affects nurses' career satisfaction. Similarly, career calling negatively affects career satisfaction. In addition, the moderating effect of career calling has been shown to affect career satisfaction negatively.

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