

Crossing the boundaries of the organization: The relationship between transformational leadership and work-family conflict

Abstract

Although some studies have examined the direct relationship between transformational leadership and work-family conflict, few studies have investigated the psychological mechanisms that explain such relationship. We propose that the perceptions of procedural and interactional justice can mediate such relationship. We applied a survey questionnaire to 466 employees from three Colombian organizations. Our results from structural equation modelling analyses revealed that the relationship between transformational leadership and work-family conflict was completely mediated by the perception of interactional justice only. Thus, we conclude that by adopting transformational leadership style, managers/supervisors can promote perception of interactional justice which, in turn, seems to allow employees to better manage the interface of their work and family lives.

Keywords

Transformational leadership, organizational justice, work-family conflict, psychological mechanism

Introduction

Transformational leadership (TFL) has been one of the organizational topics with higher relevance in the research (Eagly et al., 2003; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe et al., 1996; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013) and managerial level (Bono & Judge, 2004). That is because, much research around the world have demonstrated the effect of TFL on employees' attitudes and behaviors (Mhatre & Riggio, 2014). For example, recent studies relate supervisors' TFL style with employees' organizational commitment (Cole & Bedeian, 2007), job satisfaction (Braun et al., 2013), creativity (Li et al., 2015), innovation (Howell & Avolio, 1993), organizational citizenship behavior (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006), and performance (Wang et al., 2005). In line with such studies, several research have proposed that organizational justice (OJ) plays a mediator role in the relationship between TFL and different variables such as trust in the leader (Zeinabadi y Rastegarpour, 2010), affective commitment (Kim & Kim, 2015) organizational citizenship behavior (Ehrhart, 2004; Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen & Lowe, 2009), among others.

On the other hand, it is well known that people have to face the problem of harmonizing their work responsibilities with their family demands (Williams & Alliger, 1994). Thus, employees must face the repetitive dilemma of choosing between one activity and another and assuming the respective implications associated with that decision. That phenomenon, called work-family conflict (WFC), represents a role conflict emerging when the family demands are interfered by the work requirements (Eby et al., 2005). Given its demonstrated relevance/effect on employees' work-related outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, intention to turnover, absenteeism, job performance) (Allen et al., 2000), WFC has become a relevant research topic (Eby et al., 2005; Allen & Paddock, 2015).

From the organizational/managerial perspective, research on WFC has paid attention to the supervisor and their interaction with employees. Thus, variables like supervisors' leadership style and perceptions of justice that their behaviors produce have been well analyzed on WFC studies (Gillet et al., 2016; Goh et al., 2015; Jiang & Men, 2017). For example, Judge and Colquitt (2004) found that some dimensions of OJ have a negative relationship with employees' WFC; while Munir et al. (2012) found that manager's TFL style was directly associated with employees' perceptions of work-life conflict. Hammond et al. (2015) suggested that such relationship between TFL and

WFC not be necessarily a direct relationship, but it could be mediated by other variables like managerial support and positive affect.

Therefore, researchers have related supervisors' TFL with their employees' OJ perceptions, as well as employee's OJ perceptions with their WFC, and supervisors' TFL with their employees' WFC. However, although the interaction between these variables has been studied separately, namely the authors, there are no investigations where all previous relationships have been analyzed together. There are some studies in which similar variables have been analyzed together. For example, Guillet et al. (2013) studied the mediating role of OJ in the relationship between TFL and quality of work life. Quality of work life, as defined by Elizur and Shye (1990), is a very different construct than WFC. However, Guillet et al. (2013) ideas suggest that OJ could be a potential mediator in the relationship between TFL and variables focused on employees as people rather than just the work done by them. As a consequence, studies need to be carried out to examine the links between TFL, OJ, and WFC. The purpose of this research was to analyze the mediating role of OJ in the relationships between TFL and WFC.

The article is structured as follows. After this introduction, we put forward the literature review and our hypotheses. Then, we described our method. Next, we showed the results of our analysis. Finally, we discussed our results and presented the conclusions and the main implications and limitations of our research.

Literature review

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership (TFL) was proposed by Burns (1978) and developed by Bass (1985). According to Bass and Avolio (1994), TFL represents a set of leader's behaviors transforming the needs of followers through their self-actualization, as well as stimulating their expectations and those of employers at higher levels. Such as transformation is based on the idea that TFL promotes the employees' development and increases their motivation (Burns, 1978). Following this argument, transformational leaders have four dimensions of behaviors: idealized influence (labeled by several authors as charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (Bass, 1985).

Idealized influence describes leaders who have great power and influence to be a model of conduct to their followers. Transformational leaders have high moral and ethical standards, and they provide to their followers a vision and a sense of mission (Northouse, 2004). Some later studies classify idealized influence in term of attributed and behavior (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Molero, Recio & Cuadrado, 2010). Inspirational motivation implies both the stimulation and increase of the motivation beyond the original expectations. In this case, leaders articulate an attractive vision to their followers and communicate and convey optimism about future goals (Sánchez, 2009). Intellectual stimulation represents the leaders' behaviors oriented to stimulate to their follower to think old problems in new ways. It implies to provide them autonomy and empowerment in their work; in other words, leaders try to raise the awareness of followers about problems, as well as to influence them to create innovative solutions for such a problems (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Finally, individual consideration involves the leaders' support and responsiveness to individual needs of their followers, as well as their role of mentor for each follower (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999; Avolio, Zhu, Koh & Bhatia, 2004).

Organizational justice

Organizational justice (OJ) is a social construct about what people consider to be fair, beyond their objective reality. Thus, OJ is a personal position (perception) about the ethical and moral behavior exhibited by the management (Cropanzano, Bowen & Gilliland, 2007). Cropanzano et al. (2007) suggest that people are concerned about justice in the organizations for three reasons. First, justice allows people to predict and control the outcomes (rewards) that they are likely going to receive when they finish their work successfully (Weiss, Suckow & Cropanzano, 1999). Second, people need to feel valued and accepted in the organizations; to be part of a group and to feel one is important to its members is more important even than the economic dimension (Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler & Smith, 1998). Third, people think fair treatment is the appropriate ethical and moral way of interacting with others; thus, when people face situations considered unfair, they react negatively (Folger, 2001).

Researchers classify OJ in three different dimensions: distributive justice (Leventhal, 1976), procedural justice (Greenberg, 1986; Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), and interactional justice. The interactional dimension, in turn, has been divided into two types: interpersonal justice and informational justice (Bies & Moag, 1986; Greenberg, 1993). Given that several researchers have highlighted that the procedural and interactional dimensions of justice are more related to the behavior exhibited by people in leadership positions (DeCremer, van Dijke & Bos, 2007; Judge, Piccolo & Ilies, 2004), then we only describe such dimensions.

On the one hand, procedural justice (PJ) refers to the idea of fairness in the process followed to determine and assign resources (rewards) in the organizations (Greenberg, 1990). Such author argues that this type of justice reflects a person's judgments about the impartiality in the decision-making process for the allocation of results. His basic premise is that a fair treatment determines the individuals' reactions concerning the decisions and, therefore, is a key driver of their behaviors.

Following Leventhal's (1980) ideas, literature has suggested that there are six rules that, when followed, promote making-decision processes that are considered fairer: a) *Consistency*. Procedures should be consistent across time and people; that is, the procedural characteristics are stable, and there are not people with special advantages. b) *Bias suppression*. The personal self-interests of those responsible for decision-making should be avoided during the allocation process. c) *Accuracy*. The procedure should be based on valid information and informed opinion to get the minimum error as possible. d) *Correctability*. People must have the opportunity to controvert, appeal and revert unfair decisions. e) *Representativeness*. The needs, values, concerns, and outlooks of all parties affected by the allocation must be represented in the decision-making process. f) *Ethicality*. The allocation process must be compatible with the fundamental moral and ethical values held by the people involved (Colquitt et al., 2005).

On the other hand, interactional justice (IJ) is focused on individuals' perceptions of the quality of the interpersonal treatment received during the decision-making and organizational procedures. This type of justice includes several behaviors that show social sensitivity as respect, honesty, dignity, and courtesy (Bies, 2001; Bies & Moag, 1986; Cropanzano et al., 2002).

As we suggested above, IJ is composed of two different parts: interpersonal justice and informational justice. The first part refers to treat people in respectful and polite ways during the decision-making procedures. The second one corresponds to give information to individuals about the reasons why certain procedures were adopted and the way in which they were implemented (Greenberg, 1990; Luo, 2007). Bies and Moag (1986) identified four rules governing the fairness of interpersonal treatment: a) *Truthfulness*. Individuals in authority positions should be open, honest and candid with their communications when they implement decision-making procedures. b) *Justification*. Authorities should provide adequate and clear explanations of the outcomes of a

decision-making process. c) *Respect*. Individuals in authority positions should treat individuals with dignity and sincerity, should avoid to be rude to others or attacking them. d) *Property*. Authorities should avoid making prejudicial statements or asking improper questions to others.

Work-family conflict

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work-family conflict (WFC) as a form of interrole conflict, where pressures or demands from work and family environments are mutually incompatible in some degree. That is, WFC represents those situations in which labor requirements generate to the employees some conflicts with their families or vice versa given that participation in one role is made more difficult by participation in the other (Jiang, 2012; Reynolds, 2005). According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), the review of the literature allows identifying three major types of WFC. First, time-based conflict. In this type of conflict, time spent in one domain (or environment) reduces the availability of time to devote in the other domain and, by that way, it difficult to fulfill requirements in such domain. Second, strain-based conflict. In this form of conflict, the strain from participation in one domain affects performance on the other one, thus, making it difficult to fulfill requirements of another. Third, behavior-based conflict. In this case, the incompatibility in specific behaviors required for each of the domains makes it difficult to fulfill the requirements of both domains.

Although early research treated WFC primarily as a unidimensional construct, recent research (Allen et al., 2000; Byron, 2005; Frone et al., 1992) have suggested that WFC is reciprocal. Thus, on the one hand, work can interfere with family (WIF), but on the other hand, the family also can interfere with work (FIW). WFC and FWC are considered distinct but related phenomenon. Authors such as Grandey et al. (2007) and Kyei-Poku (2014) have found that the work environment usually has a higher level of interference on the family environment than the level of interference that the family environment has on the work environment. Given this situation, in the present investigation, we will focus on how the work situations—namely the bosses' leadership style—is related (interferes) on the good development of the family life of their employees.

Transformational leadership and its relationship with work-family conflict

The actions of transformational leaders usually have consequences on the employees' attitudes and behaviors, even beyond the organizational context (Beauregard, 2011; Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner & Zimmerman, 2011; Li, McCauley & Shaffer, 2017). Some authors highlight, for example, that organizational support—strongly linked to the individualized consideration one dimension of LTF—contributes to reducing the perception of WFC (Allen 2001; Colombo & Ghislieri, 2008).

There are several reasons why being under the leadership of a transformational leader can help reduce levels of WFC of employees. For example, transformational leaders provide constructive feedback to their followers and encourage them to think creatively about complex problems (Shin & Zhou, 2003) such as the problem arising from the conflict between work and family. Wang and Walumbwa (2007) suggested that transformational leaders are more likely to allow their employees to make personal calls home, as well as to allow—without any threat of punishment—they to have a flexible work schedule. Finally, according to such authors, a transformational leader is often more sympathetic when an employee has to leave early to take his/her children or parents to medical appointments. Thus, given all these actions, transformational leaders contribute to reducing levels of WFC exhibited by their collaborators.

Taking into account the above arguments, we propose:

Hypothesis 1. *The TFL style of the boss is negatively related to the level of WFC exhibited by the employee.*

The mediator role of organizational justice

The relationship between TFL and WFC has been studied by several authors who have pointed out that such relationship is mediated by different variables. For instance, Hammond et al. (2015), Munir et al. (2012), Tang et al. (2015), and Wang and Walumbwa (2007) found that TFL-WFC relationship was mediated by variables such as managerial support, autonomy, and positive affect of the employee, among others.

According to Colquitt and Greenberg (2003), there is a link almost natural between leadership and OJ, although until recently it was confirmed by the research. This link is explained by the perception generated by the leaders over their followers in several organizational aspects, especially when leaders' behaviors and decision are seen as fair (Greenberg, 2004).

With respect to the relationship between leadership and OJ, Judge et al. (2004) suggested that leader with and leadership characterized by a high consideration should be better at fostering IJ. It insofar as this kind of leaders are concerned with aspects that generate satisfaction and motivation to the followers, using a high degree of empathy (Fleishman & Salter, 1963). Specifically, Yukl (2002) pointed out that IJ is positively related to the exchange of information between the leader and followers, personal support and approval, and delegation of responsibility. Such actions could be grounded, respectively, in the TFL dimensions known as individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. On the one hand, as we noted earlier, individualized consideration involves the support and responsiveness of the leader to the individual needs of the followers (Avolio et al., 2004). On the other hand, intellectual stimulation implies encouraging followers to think about old problems in a new way, giving them autonomy and empowerment at work (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Thus, perception about IJ may be significantly related to the behavior of TFL, even though such relationship, from the empiric point of view, it has not been widely addressed. Additionally, it is remarkable that DeCremer et al. (2007) found that IJ is the main dimension of organizational justice positively related to the perceptions of TFL.

Likewise, there is theoretical and empirical evidence linking TFL to the perceptions of PJ. For example, Zeinabadi and Rastegarpour (2010) raised that the relationship between TFL and PJ is based on the creation of a positive perception of justice derived from the employees' participation in the decision making that transformational leader allow their followers. In general, research suggests that perceptions of PJ work as a mediator variable between TFL and other organizational variables such as organizational citizenship behaviors (Kim & Kim, 2015) and job satisfaction (Yusof & Shamsuri, 2006).

Despite above, to our knowledge, there is no evidence of research studying simultaneously both type of justice (interactional and procedural) as mediating variables of the relationship between TFL and variables that go beyond the organizational context—but that can certainly also affect—such as WFC. That, even though the research has established a clear relationship between perceptions of OJ and the levels of WFC reported by employees.

Concerning such specific variables, authors like Judge and Colquitt (2004), Malisetty and Kumari (2016), and Kyei-Poku (2014) evidenced a negative relationship between OJ—in its procedural and interactional dimensions—and WFC. As far as PJ is concerned, this relationship is explained by the tension generated by employees perceiving the procedures that are being performed as wrong and unfair. For instance, employees whose bosses did not allow to explain

why they arrived late or made a mistake in their jobs, generally perceived this as an injustice. Conversely, employees who were listened to were more likely to perceive the process as fair, even if the results were not what they sought and finally they were sanctioned.

For its part, the relationship with IJ becomes evident both in its interpersonal and informational facets. In the interpersonal facet, this relationship is mainly evidenced when the boss is affordable in aspects such as providing permits and flexible working hours, especially when there are family commitments or personal issues, rather than encouraging employees to sacrifice important family matters to favor their work. In the informational facet, this relationship seems to be explained because employees value an open, honest and trustworthy communication. Conversely, they perceive as unfair those situations in which a small/specific group of people at the organization (e.g., the boss's favorites) handle relevant information of general interest (e.g., possible holiday periods or future changes in work shifts).

Finally, it is important to highlight that research has demonstrated that supervisors' leadership styles characterized by inadequate or unequal treatment and procedures, and therefore perceived as unfair by their collaborators, generate negative moods and emotions in the employees such as stress, frustration, and anxiety. This kind of employees' negative affect is usually linked to the levels of WFC reported by them (Malisetty & Kumari, 2016; Kyei-Poku, 2014). Thus, the relationship between boss' TFL style and employees' WFC level is not a direct relationship, but it is a mediated one because of the tension in the collaborator is generated precisely by the perception of injustice. The opposite happens when a leader understands and treats individually each of his/her collaborators, and s/he stimulates them to find alternative/creative solutions to their problems, since this type of behavior contributes to decrease the levels of WFC.

In sum, literature review suggests that different dimensions of TFL produce situations at the organizations which are perceived by employees as fair/unfair and, as it was said previously, such perceptions seem to be the psychological mechanism through which leadership style is related to the levels of WFC exhibited by the employees.

Taking into account the previous arguments, we propose:

Hypothesis 2a. *The perception of IJ mediates the negative relationship between TFL style of the boss and the level of WFC exhibited by the employee.*

Hypothesis 2b. *The perception of PJ mediates the negative relationship between TFL style of the boss and the level of WFC exhibited by the employee.*

Method

Sample

The data for this study was collected from three organizations from different economics sectors located in Colombia. A survey questionnaire was completed by 466 employees. 57.5% respondents were men and 42.5% were women. Employees' ages ranged from 18 to 63 years ($M = 33.7$; $SD = 10.39$). 163 (34.98%) respondents were single, 143 (36.67%) were married, 135 (28.97%) were in consensual union/cohabitation, 22 (4.72%) were divorced, and 3 (0.64%) other. Number of children and adults in charge ranged from 0 to 5 ($M = 1.09$; $SD = 1.10$) and from 0 to 5 ($M = 0.55$; $SD = 0.79$) respectively. Employees' tenure ranged from 0.25 to 37 years ($M = 6.48$; $SD = 7.21$). 16 (3.43%) had basic education (less than 5 years), 125 (26.82%) had high school, 132 (28.32%) had technical education, 141 (30.26%) had undergraduate education, and 52 (11.16%) had

postgraduate education. Finally, respondents' hierarchical distribution was 283 (60.72%) operational level, 170 (36.48%) middle managers, and 13 (2.78%) senior managers.

Measures

Transformational leadership. This variable was measured using the translated Spanish version of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Form 5X-Short) developed by Bass and Avolio (1995). The MLQ has been widely used in Spanish contexts (e.g., Cuadrado & Molero, 2002) and Colombian context, specifically (e.g., Roza & Abaunza, 2010). Thus, several studies have validated and adapted such scale to the cultural and organizational context of Latino America (Molero, Recio & Cuadrado, 2010; Vega & Zavala, 2004). We used twenty items representing the different dimensions of TFL identified by Bass and Avolio (1995). Some examples of the items are "My supervisor seeks differing perspectives when solving problems" and "My supervisor emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission." Responses were given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Prior research developed in Colombian context has reported adequate psychometric properties for this scale (e.g., García, 2011). In our research, the reliabilities of idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration were $\alpha = .78$, $\alpha = .68$, $\alpha = .81$, $\alpha = .67$, and $\alpha = .79$, respectively.

As theoretically TFL has different dimensions, we analyzed such dimensionality running a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The analysis indicated an acceptable fit for the five-dimension solution: $\chi^2(162, N = 466) = 573.72, p < .00; \chi^2/df = 3.54; RMSEA = .074; GFI = .89; CFI = .91; IFI = .91$. Given item loading, we decided eliminate from our analysis items 2 (.36) and 5 (.41) in intellectual stimulation and idealized influence (behavior), respectively. As a consequence, the average standardized item loadings onto each of the factors were as follows: idealized influence (attributed) = .68, idealized influence (behavior) = .64, inspirational motivation = .68, intellectual stimulation = .66, and individualized consideration = .69.

Organizational Justice. We used the Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (COJS) developed by Colquitt (2001), and validated and adapted to Spanish by Díaz-Gracia et al. (2014). Given our focus on procedural and interactional justices, we used only three of the four subscales composing the COJS: Procedural Justice (7 items), and Interpersonal Justices (4 items) and Informational Justices (5 items) to measure Interactional Justices. Some examples of the items are "Have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures," "Your supervisor has treated you with dignity" and "Your supervisor has been candid in (his/her) communications with you." Responses were given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Prior studies developed in Latin American (e.g., Fisher et al., 2011; Rodríguez et al., 2014) and Colombian contexts (García & Forero, 2014) have reported adequate psychometric properties for these subscales. In our research, the reliabilities of both procedural and interactional (interpersonal combined with informational) dimensions of justice were $\alpha = .90$.

Given that the COJS is a multidimensional scale, and that we were using it in a different social/organizational context, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the measure to verify the fit of its dimensional conceptualization. Our analysis indicated an acceptable fit for four-dimension solution: $\chi^2(161, N = 466) = 551.36, p < .00; \chi^2/df = 3.42; RMSEA = .072; GFI = .90; CFI = .94; IFI = .94$. As we proposed our hypothesis collapsing interpersonal and informational justice (interactional justices), we also analyses de dimensionality for a model of three-dimension. Similarly, three-dimension solution also showed acceptable fit: $\chi^2(163, N = 466) = 558.50, p < .00; \chi^2/df = 3.42; RMSEA = .072; GFI = .89; CFI = .94; IFI = .94$. Given that both models showed a very similar fit, we decided to use the three-dimension solution because such structure has been amply

proved and used in OB literature, in general and in its relationship with WFC, in particular (Kyei-Poku, 2014). Taking into account item loading (.29), we decided eliminate from our analysis item 14 in interpersonal justice. Thus, the average standardized item loadings onto each of the factors were: procedural justice = .73, interactional justice = .72.

Work-Family Conflict. This variable was measured with the Survey Work-Home Interaction-Nijmegen (SWING) developed by Geurts et al. (2005). The SWING has been validated and adapted to Spanish by Moreno-Jiménez et al. (2009) and the Latin American cultural/organizational context by Romeo et al. (2014). Given our focus on work interfering in the family, we used only the Negative Work-home Interaction (8 items) subscale to measure WFC. One example of the items is “You have to cancel appointments with your spouse/family/friends due to work-related commitments.” Items were rated on a 4-point frequency scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (always). Prior research developed in Latin American contexts have reported adequate psychometric properties for these subscales (e.g., Romeo et al., 2014). In our research, the reliability of WFC was $\alpha = .89$.

Analysis

We tested our hypothesis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) with Amos Graphics. Ding et al. (1995) highlight that between 100 and 150 participants are sufficient to be able to develop the analysis using SEM. SEM has been used across a broad set of social science research domains (Tarka, 2017), in general, and in the specific topics of leadership (Wang et al., 2005), organizational justice (e.g., Judge & Colquitt, 2004) and work-family interactions (Gillet et al., 2016). Likewise, we used the bootstrapping regression-based approach developed by Hayes (Hayes, 2009; Hayes, 2013) to confirm the mediating role of PJ and IJ in the relationship between TFL and WFC.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the study variables are reported in Table 1. As we said previously, we tested our hypotheses using SEM.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations of study variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Transformational Leadership	3.79	.68	(.92)			
2. Procedural Justice	3.17	.91	.469**	(.90)		
3. Interactional Justice	3.65	.85	.739**	.632**	(.90)	
4. Work-Family Conflict	1.96	.66	-.302**	-.157**	-.353**	(.89)

Reliabilities (Cronbach alpha) are on the diagonal.

** Significant correlation at .01 (bilateral)

Table 2 shows the values of the fit indexes for three different structural models through which we tested the proposed hypotheses. As it can be observed, all three models obtained good fit indexes.

In Model 1 we tested the relationship between TFL and WFC. As it can be evidenced in Table 3, there is a negative and significant relationship between these variables ($-.336$; $p < .00$), which support our hypothesis 1. On the other hand, in Model 2 we analyzed the TLF-WFC relationship mediated by both IJ and PJ (see Figure 1). Table 5 shows that TFL is positive and significant linked with IJ ($.817$; $p < .00$) as well as with PJ ($.539$; $p < .00$). However, only IJ had a negative and significant relationship with WFC ($-.414$; $p < .00$); the relationship between PJ and WFC was not

significant (.047; $p < .386$). Thus, the data corresponding to model 2 provide support for hypothesis 2b but do not support hypothesis 2a. We will discuss these results later.

Figure 1. Structural model 2

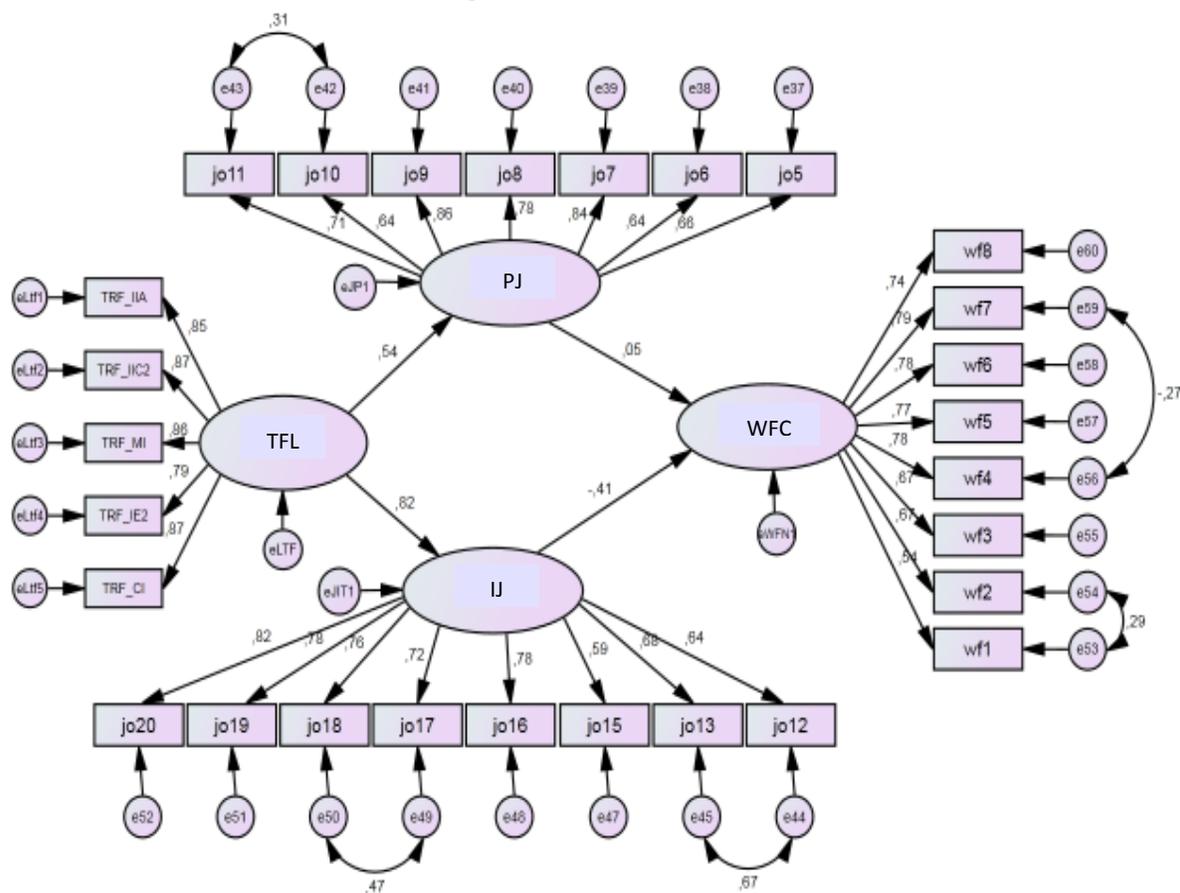


Table 2. Fit indexes of structural models

Index	Results			Level of acceptance
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	
χ^2	175.557	952.557	951.605	$P < .00$
df	63	341	340	
χ^2/df	2.79	2.79	2.80	< 3.00
CFI	.968	.928	.928	$> .90$
TLI	.961	.921	.921	$> .90$
IFI	.969	.929	.929	$> .90$
RFI	.941	.882	.882	$> .90$
NFI	.952	.893	.893	$> .90$
GFI	.944	.875	.875	$> .90$
AGFI	.920	.851	.851	$> .80$
RMSEA	.062	.062	.062	$\leq .08$

As Table 3 shows, the significant effect of TFL on WFB was completely indirect based on our model, as they were transmitted through the psychological mechanism of IJ and PJ. Our mediation prediction would be supported if the fit of the model 2 would not be improved when the direct

path from TFL to WFC adhered. As we expected, the addition of such path in Model 3 did not improve model fit (see Table 2). For example, the χ^2/df changed from 2.79 to 2.80 ($p < .00$), and the other fit indices were unchanged. As observed in Table 3 (Model 3), the TFL-WFC direct relationship although negative, it was no significant ($-.093, p < .361$), while the relationships between TFL and both dimensions of justice do remain positive and significant (.816 and .539, $p < .00$ for IJ and PJ, respectively). Nonetheless, as in the model 2, only the relationship between IJ and WFC was negative and significant ($-0.332; p < 0.00$).

Table 3. *Analysis of the theoretically predicted relations*

Relationship	Estimates		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
TFL → WFC	-.336***		-.093
TFL → IJ		.817***	.816***
TFL → PJ		.539***	.539***
IJ → WFC		-.414***	-.332***
PJ → WFC		.047	.047

The estimated values are standardized

*** $p < .00$

Thus, results in tables 2 and 3 suggest that the relationship between TFL and WFC is completely mediated by the perception of IJ, and although TFL is related to the perception of PJ, such as dimension of justice is not the psychological mechanism through which leadership affects the WFC. According to our data, only the perception of IJ is the psychological mechanism through which TFL can help to reduce the levels of WFC reported by the employees.

Discussion

The goal of this research was analyzing the role played by the perceptions of organizational justices—specifically its procedural and interactional dimensions—into the relationship between the perception that employees have about the leadership styles of their supervisors and the level of work-family conflict reported by those employees. Our findings contribute to advance the research and offer new perspectives to understand the relationship between TFL and WFC in organizations and, by that way, they offer some theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical implications

First of all, our research reveals that Supervisors' TFL style was negatively related to the levels of WFC reported by the collaborators, as well as that such as relationship was completely mediated by the perception of the collaborators about their supervisor as fair people (leader). This mediator role is coherent with previous research that has demonstrated that when the supervisors' behaviors are conceived as transformational by the employees, such as supervisors are often perceived as fair leaders (Cho & Dansereau, 2010; Wu, Neubert & Yi, 2007). Likewise, it is coherent with such as research that has found that procedural and interactional dimensions of organizational justices usually contribute to reducing the levels of employees' WFC (Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Kyei-Poku, 2014; Malisetty & Kumari, 2016).

As the literature has pointed out, the link between the TFL and PJ can be explained by the emergence of a positive perception of justice resulting from participation in the decision-making process which is usually allowed to the collaborators by the leaders transformational (Zeinabadi &

Rastegarpour, 2010). On the other hand, the positive relationship with IJ can be noticed by the exchange of information between the leader and his followers, the personal support and approval, and the delegation of responsibility, supported in the TFL's dimensions known as individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation (Avolio et al., 2004).

In our results, it was highlighted that the relationship between TFL and IJ is stronger than the relationship between such as leadership style and PJ. This result is also consistent with the findings reported in previous literature, which has shown that the interactional dimension of organizational justice has the strongest relationship with TFL (see DeCremer et al., 2007). This finding can be explained by the fact that IJ revolves mainly around the interaction/contact of the collaborator with his supervisor; while other two dimensions of justice (distributive and procedural) usually are associated to or revolve around the organization in general (e.g. its remuneration policies or its decision-making procedures) (Rousseau et al., 2009; Younts & Mueller, 2001).

Second, our results showed that only the perception of IJ was negatively and significantly related to the WFC level reported by the employees. This result is in line with the findings of authors such as Judge and Colquitt (2004) and Kyei-Poku (2014). On the other hand, unlike we expected, the relationship between PJ and WFC was not significant but was also positive. This seemingly contradictory (positive) relationship between such variables could be understood from the perspective of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). This is insofar as employees, who perceive that the procedures (e.g., participatory decision-making) implemented by the organization as being fair, may be inclined to "return the favor" to the organization through positive attitudes toward it; specifically, through a positive attitude like organizational commitment (Grant, Dutton & Rosso, 2008; Siegel et al., 2005). Kim and Kim (2015), for example, demonstrated that PJ partially mediated the relationship between TFL and affective commitment. Thus, based on the rule of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), the positive treatment that the organization offers to the employees could generate in them a "feeling of indebtedness". Such as feeling could, in turn, motivate them to devote their family's time to the work of the organization; a fact that increases the perception of conflict between work and family life.

Therefore, our results show that the negative relationship between TFL and WFC (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007, Munir et al., 2012, Tang et al., 2015, Zhang et al., 2012) is completely mediated by the interactional dimension of organizational justice. In this way, IJ represents the psychological mechanism through which leadership style of supervisors affects (decreasing) the levels of conflict that employees exhibit between the work and their family. That is, transformational leaders supporting their employees, responding to their personal needs, and helping them to think creatively when they have to face contradictory or problematic family-work situations (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), generates in the employees perceptions of justice about how they are treated by their supervisor. Those perceptions seem to help them better manage the relationship between work and family, or at least, they do not seem to perceive that their work is interfering with their family, since they see this work as fair. Good treatment at work is transferred to the family through the psychological effect generated by the perceptions of justice associated with such treatment. In this sense, the findings of this research are in line with research that suggests that the effect of TFL on WFC is not necessarily direct, but is indirect, since it is mediated by other variables (see Gillet et al., 2013; Hammond et al., 2015, Hayes, 2009, Mathieu & Taylor, 2006).

Practical implications

This research highlights the value of the perception of IJ in the reduction of levels of conflict between work and family, thanks to the exhibition of TFL behaviors by managers or supervisors in

the work context. A practical implication that emerges from our findings points out that the Human Resources Managers will evidence the importance of working on the development of leadership skills; skills oriented to managers or supervisors in an organization have better interactions with their collaborators or subordinates, treating them with respect, honesty, dignity, and courtesy. The above insofar as it is this type of treatment/interaction that helps to generate perceptions of justice in the employees and, in this way, contributes to decrease the levels of WFC that they present.

As previous research has emphasized, it is vital for organizations to try to minimize levels of conflict between work and family. This is because such as levels of conflict are often positively related to counterproductive phenomena such as stress, depletion and burnout of employees (see Amstad et al., 2011), their loss of physical health, as well as promoting lower levels of job satisfaction and higher levels of turnover (O'Neill & Davis, 2011). Then, foster TFL skills in the managers/supervisors, such as understanding and treating each of their followers individually and encouraging their follower to seek alternative solutions to their problems (such as calls to the house or flexible schedules to attend family issues), can be strategic and productive for organizations. The above-mentioned leadership style helps reduce WFC levels in employees and then contributes to reducing the high costs associated with employees' medical incapacities, withdrawal behaviors and negative attitudes towards their work (job dissatisfaction) and lack of motivation to do their jobs (Hammond et al., 2015).

Limitations and future research

Like any research, this study is not without limitations. It does not mean that their findings and conclusions lose their value. Indeed, recognizing the limitations allows the reader to understand the limits or scope of our approaches and suggestions (mainly to the managers) and to think of ways to improve it in the future (mainly to the researchers).

The first limitation is the fact that it was a cross-sectional study—as is the case with a great deal of research in this field. That is, the data were collected at a specific point in time and the evolution or gradual relationship of the phenomenon over time was not considered here. However, our data suggest that there is a clear relationship between the variables and they represent the first step to analyze this relationship in depth further. It is then for future research to conduct longitudinal studies to try to test if our results are maintained, or to provide a better understanding of the dynamic relationships between the variables analyzed by us.

Second, all the data about the variables were collected from the same source and using a single method; therefore, there may be some bias from the same source. However, we do take some steps to provide honest answers, and we make sure to provide the informants with their confidentiality. It is worth considering whether it is appropriate to measure leadership styles from the perspective of the follower and to ascertain to what extent the results are different when leadership is measured from the leader's self-rating. In our case, we felt that it was better to measure the leadership style of a source other than the boss himself, since, in essence, employees react to the way they perceive their supervisors and not to the way the leaders perceives themselves (Whittington et al., 2009). Similarly, avoiding self-reporting in the leadership style helps control the problem of obtaining "socially desirable responses" (Sosik, 2001). Such socially desirable responses, however, were more difficult to avoid when measuring a "socially sensitive" variable like the WFC level. Even so, the reliability reported by our scales (see Table 1) allows us to state that the measures of our variables were good.

Another limitation is that our research contemplated the analysis of a unique leadership style (TFL) when leadership literature has begun to address and analyze the effect of other leadership

styles such as ethical leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership, and responsible leadership. In order to be parsimonious and to maintain a simple theoretical model, here we only analyze the most studied (and robustly tested) leadership style in the literature. It will then be left to future research to analyze the differential or complementary effect of other leadership styles on WFC levels.

Finally, in the same line as the previous point, we only analyze the effect of a mediator variable. However, the combined effect of other variables associated with TFL style such as trust in the leader (Pillai et al., 1999) or perceived organizational support (Asgari et al., 2008) might be explored. It would be expected that with the inclusion of this type of variables, the understanding of the relationship between TFL and WFC will be even improved, since these will be more complex theoretical models. Our work is just one more step in that direction.

Conclusion

This research provides new elements of judgment that corroborate the negative and indirect relationship between TFL and the conflict between work and family life. Based on the results of our study, we conclude that the relationship between TFL and WFC is a complex one since, in fact, it is mediated by other variables that represent the mechanism through which these variables are related. In the specific case of the present research, this relationship was completely mediated by the perception of IJ, but not by the perception of PJ. Thus, we can conclude that the interactional dimension of organizational justice represents the psychological mechanism through which the (transformational) behavior of the leader contributes to reducing the levels of conflict that employees report between their work, as members of an organization, and their role of members of a family.

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