The Work-Family Balance in Light of Globalization and Technology

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Edited by

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This book is dedicated to two of the exceptional women who shaped the International Center of Work and Family (ICWF) making it, and all of us who are part of it, what we are today.

Firstly, Maruja Moragas, a wife, mother, researcher and strong woman. Although she left us too soon, it was for a good reason as now she is resting with God. Secondly, Esther Jimenez, a leader, dear friend and teacher in every sense of the word. She will continue helping the ICWF, fitting it around her new duties as dean of education at another university. To both we would like to extend our eternal gratitude and our love.

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PREFACE

The papers in this volume are the product of a special work-life conference held at IESE in July of 2015. I was fortunate enough to attend and participate in this conference which focused on technology, globalization, and other contemporary issues related to work-family balance. The intellectual exchange fostered by the conference was exciting. Moreover, the topics were fascinating, cutting to the heart of our experience of work-life issues in the modern world.

I have personally been captivated by the role that technology is playing in our experience of work-life issues. Technology is fundamentally changing both the way we work and the boundaries between our work and non-work lives. It is allowing us to connect with others more fluidly and flexibly through a variety of channels such as email, skype, instant messaging, online social media and the like. But at the same time, it poses challenges for our interactions with others and our ability to process the information we now have access to. In other words, technology is opening up a new world of possibilities – to work interdependently with people across space and time; to multitask and stay connected at work while taking care of family matters, and to both broaden and deepen our network connections.

Equally important, another key trend is that we are living in a truly global world, which affects both the way we work and how we approach work-family issues in organizations. Globalization means that we are often working across boundaries with people in different parts of the world, who experience different cultural norms and structural institutional supports. As a result, it is imperative that we gain more traction on understanding how work-life issues play out in different national contexts because understanding national contexts has implications for both policy and how we apply what we have learned.

In addition to these important issues, other critical challenges face employees and managers in contemporary organizations – such as eldercare and the experience of gender. The recognition of eldercare as an important aspect of work-life challenges is a new and growing area within the work-life field. Moreover, understanding how gender influences our choices and how others respond to us with regard to work-life issues has been a long standing research focus. However, there are still many questions left unanswered. An important factor of recent work is the recognition that

gender does not necessarily mean female. Rather, gender is about both men and women and their differing experiences. Taking a fresh look at gender and how it affects what we know about work-life issues helps advance our ability to make important changes in the workplace.

The papers in this volume tackle these important realities and questions. They take a fresh look at how technology, globalization, and gender issues are affecting the dynamics of work and family balance. For example, the papers that examine technology help us push forward our understanding of both the enabling aspects of technology as well as some of the challenges it brings. They also highlight the importance of studying new phenomena and how it affects the way we work and live. The papers on globalization take a more nuanced look at work-life issues within different national contexts. Doing so allows us to understand how work life issues are similar and different across contexts. And finally, the focus on eldercare and gender continues the growing conversation about the different experiences people have of work-life issues. It helps to highlight why some people might manage the boundary between work and family differently and why their experiences might be both enriching or depleting, depending on what aspect of work life issues one is addressing. By addressing these central and timely issues, the papers in this volume help us to stay current and think about the critical challenges facing employees and managers in the work life domain. They help to push forward the frontier of work-life issues into the 21st century.

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INTRODUCTION

Technology is changing the way we balance work and family. In an age in which information technology has brought the promise of autonomy and control by allowing asynchronous communications; in which work systems have enabled people to work from various times and in various locations; in which work and non-work boundaries have as a result been blurred; the work and family interface needs to be reconsidered. In line with this, the main goal of the VI International Conference of Work and Family (July 1-2, 2015) was to understand the impact of technology on work-family dynamics, to address a wide range of current problems related to work-family balance, and contribute solutions to those problems. Among other important topics, the participants discussed questions such as how global workers cope with work-family issues, and how information technology impacts on work-family dynamics.

Not only has technology changed, so have many other social variables, among which three contemporary employment trends might be of upmost importance. The first is the changing nature of work (e.g., flexible human resource practices, information and communication technologies and globalization). The new nature of work, which is globalized and rapidly changing, increasingly provides and demands structural conditions for idiosyncrasy (Hornung, Rousseau, and Glaser 2009, 740). Second, the labour market has grown in deregulation and has changed towards a service economy. This requires employees to be committed to projects and willing to learn and go beyond the requirements of their jobs. Third, the number of dual-earner couples has grown dramatically. This translates into new needs for flexibility to take care of family responsibilities (Duxbury, Lyons, and Higgins 2007; Falkenberg and Monachello 1990).

Information technology carried the promise of autonomy and control over when and where to perform work (Mazmanian, Orlikowski, and Yates 2013) by allowing asynchronous communications (Barber and Santuzzi 2015) and by enabling people to work from various times and in various locations, thus offering flexibility and control over work (Valcour and Hunter 2005). This ease of access to communicate in an asynchronous way has led to a blurring of work and non-work boundaries, since people no longer need to communicate face-to-face in order hold meetings, delegate work, and generally access each other (Murray and Rostis 2007). Such

boundary fading has on the one hand facilitated work-family balance by increasing employees' control over their work periods and enabling them to gain the ability to creatively balance work and family pressures (Murray and Rostis 2007). But on the other hand, it has made work more laborious, contributed to overload (Barley, Meyerson, and Grodal 2011) and resulted in many employees being "technologically connected to work all hours of the day and night", which leads them to "end up working everywhere/all the time" (Mazmanian, Orlikowski, and Yates 2013, 1337–1338). Information technology has resulted in employees feeling telepressure, i.e. a strong urge to be responsive to people at work through ICT and a preoccupation with quick response times (Barber and Santuzzi 2015), experiencing the autonomy paradox, i.e. the need to be continuously connected through ICT (Mazmanian, Orlikowski, and Yates 2013), and becoming technologically tethered (Murray and Rostis 2007), i.e. being incapable of switching off. Thus, ICT presents employees with the dilemma of when, and to what extent, they should let job related communication interrupt their family time (Kossek and Lautsch 2008; Sweet 2014).

For all of these reasons, the aim of the VI International Conference of Work and Family was to reflect on the impact of technology and the global context on work-family dynamics. The International Center for Work and Family founded by Prof. Nuria Chinchilla organized its first academic forum in 2005 (International Conference of Work and Family) in order to create a vision and to build theory about work-family balance, with special attention to the cross-cultural dimension and the application of theory in an organizational context. The first book appeared in 2012 (Poelmans, Greenhaus, and Las Heras Maestro, 2012) as a result of the contributions presented at the first three ICWF conferences (2005, 2007, and 2009).

In line with previous editions, this new collection is the result of a careful selection of articles presented at the VI ICWF conference (2015). In total, over 70 scholars of more than 30 nationalities participated in our last conference. This book, as with the conference, has a clear international focus. As the reader will see, the chapters in the book represent countries in Africa (Ethiopia and South Africa), the Middle East (Israel and Oman), Asia (Singapore), Europe (Spain and Sweden) and North America (United States). We also selected those papers that used different analytical approaches. Among others, the reader will find an ethnographic study conducted in a Swedish University, a quantitative study among Hindu women in South Africa, and a research project that used an experience sample methodology (ESM) in Singapore. Two chapters offer scale validation studies: one presents a qualitative study conducted in Ethiopia, and the other offers a review about the (slow) advancement of women in

academia. Moreover, this book not only offers empirical studies by established scholars such as Ellen Kossek and Remus Ilies, but also presents innovative studies by early career scholars. Although the focus of the conference was on technology, other studies about work-family balance in a global context were more than welcome. Thus, this book consists of 10 chapters divided into three parts: 1) Work-Family and Technology, 2) Managers and Work-Family Balance, and 3) Globalization and Work-Family Balance. Each contributor posits a different set of questions that enrich the work-family balance arena.

PART 1: Technology and Work-Family Balance

In the first chapter, Rajah and Ilies developed and validated a scale on job connectedness. Moreover, using this scale, the authors tested the nomological network of job connectedness using, among other methods, an experience sampling methodology (ESM) with individuals working full-time in Singapore. Their results lead to an interesting debate about the effects of being connected as a voluntary act compared with being connected due to obligation.

In Chapter 2, Languilaire explored how professionals in terms of academic staff are managing the work and non-work interface in a new context fostered by Information Technology. Based on an inductive research approach, Languilaire used documents, interviews and surveys as methods to collect data. As a result, the author presents fictive stories of employees in a Swedish University, where each story is constructed to describe a specific work and non-work strategy to handle the new IT-based organization.

PART 2: Managers and Work-Family Balance

In the third chapter, Kossek and her colleagues examined not only two potential predictors (job strain and team size) of family supportive supervisor behaviours (FSSB), but also the impact of FSSB on sleep quality and safety performance. Using a sample of 261 employees in 71 workgroups from 12 grocery stores in the United States, the authors found very interesting results and encourage scholars to think on a new level: work-family subcultures.

In this line, Pasamar, who argued that managers can play contradictory pivotal roles in organizations, examined how Human Resource Managers perceive the positive and negative outcomes related to the implementation of work-life benefits in two different industries in Spain. According to the

author, women and those who feel their relationships between work and non-work activities are unbalanced value more highly all of the positive outcomes associated with work-life balance. Furthermore, HR managers in knowledge intensive firms perceive higher positive effects of work-life balance.

In the fifth chapter, Agha and her colleagues have made a great contribution by developing and validating a new scale in the work-family arena in the context of the Sultanate of Oman, which is moving towards becoming a busy and vibrant place to work (and live). They conclude that the work-life balance (WLB) scale with three constructs is reliable and valid.

PART 3: Globalization and Work-Family Balance

The third part of this edited collection consists of six more chapters. In the sixth chapter of this volume, Jaga and Bagraim examined work-family conflict among a specific cultural group: Hindu women in South Africa. According to the authors, when Hindu women marry, they are expected to assume a number of important traditional roles. In order to gain a meaningful understanding of work-family conflict among Hindu women, the authors tested their hypothesis with survey data from 317 participants. Their results evidence the importance of culturally sensitive work-family research.

In chapter seven, Boiarintseva and Ezzedeen offer the reader a review about the advancement of women in academia. The results of their study show that although women have made significant gains in universities, gender inequality still exists. Today, women continue to be under-represented in universities both across North America and internationally, and in order to reverse the situation, work-family policies are required.

In chapter eight, Hailu Gudeta and Van Engen examine the community roles of women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. Through conducting 25 in-depth interviews with women entrepreneurs, the authors found that participating in the community is a role that women should fulfil and not following this social obligation/expectation might have repercussions for them. Furthermore, this situation creates important challenges to combining work and family duties.

In the ninth chapter, Kim, Las Heras and Bosch examined why some individuals experience more enrichment than others. By conducting a qualitative study, the authors found that motivation, previous enrichment experience, and work-family boundary management facilitate enrichment and the transfer of resources from one role to another. Moreover, their

results revealed that this transfer can be unconscious and unintentional.

In the tenth chapter of this collection, Matzner-Heruti and Cohen-Israeli examine work-family integration of Israeli married and divorced fathers, both legally and empirically. Their analysis reveals that with regard to legal entitlement, paternal care is residual to maternal care, demonstrating that according to societal expectations, fatherly care is secondary to motherly care.

Finally, the last chapter draws from qualitative interviews with low-income parents in four regions in the United States who currently or previously received child care subsidies. Henly, Sandstrom and Ros Pilarz assess the child care assistance program's contribution to family economic wellbeing and caregiving needs, with particular attention to how parents perceive the benefits and challenges of using child care subsidies. They find that child care assistance is a critical economic and caregiving support to low-income families, but its benefits are sometimes limited due to administrative program hassles and unstable employment circumstances that can complicate subsidy use. Implications for child care and employment policy are also discussed in this last chapter.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the members of the ICWF Board, Ellen Gallinsky, Ellen Kossek, Tim Hall, Brad Harrington, and Susan Lewis, for their advice. Sincere thanks also go to all of the scholars that participated in the six ICWF conferences. Thanks also to all the ICWF staff who helped to organize the conference and this collection: Ana Amat and Camila Cepeda. Finally, thanks also to Cambridge Scholars Publishing, especially Victoria Carruthers, for their interest, time and patience.

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PART I:

TECHNOLOGY AND WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

1

TECHNOLOGY AND WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION: INTRODUCING THE NOMOLOGICAL NETWORK OF JOB CONNECTEDNESS[1]

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Introduction

Technology is so integral in the daily functioning of our work lives that few firms do without it. For the most part, technology has brought benefits to organizations, increasing work productivity, especially for firms which tend to use more skilled labor (Bresnahan, Brynjolfsson, and Hitt 2002). Employees can now stay connected to work matters through devices such as laptops, desk computers, PDAs, and smart phones, and through innovations such as video conferencing and email. This increased connectivity makes it possible for working individuals to attend to work matters anywhere, including from home and other remote locations. While such arrangements afford greater flexibility and autonomy to individuals, there is also a tendency for them to be constantly connected, or "digitally tied", to work via these devices and innovations.

Existing literature has yielded mixed findings with regards to using technology to work remotely. For instance, in their meta-analysis of telecommuting, Gajendran and Harrison (2007) found that the increased flexibility and locus of control that individuals have as a result of such

[1] We would like to acknowledge the National Youth Council of Singapore for funding this research.

working arrangements lead to greater job satisfaction and lower work-family conflict. However, it has also been found to be positively related to burnout and work-family conflict as work matters permeate personal boundaries more easily through higher connectivity (Golden 2012). Furthermore, there are varying responses to boundary interruptions between individuals. While some individuals are open to such interruptions, others get upset or annoyed as they prefer to keep their work and nonwork boundaries separate (Olson-Buchanan and Boswell 2006). Given these inconsistent behaviors and attitudes among individuals, it is surprising that research examining both the positive and negative outcomes in one setting has been scant. Our research aims to address these gaps in literature by examining the psychological processes behind staying connected to work matters through communication technologies. This behavior is termed job connectedness.

There are few things that attract responses as ambivalent as those towards using information and communication technologies (ICT) devices for working remotely. While the increased connectivity afforded by such innovations allow employees to gain control over work from different locations, the permeability of work matters into individuals' personal boundaries tends to create a sense of loss of control as well. Despite advancements in research in this area, gaps persist in literature examining mechanisms that can account for the positive and negative outcomes of staying connected through technology. Grounded in boundary management theory, this chapter takes a closer look as to why staying connected to the job through technological devices can have either positive or negative outcomes. To this end, we introduce the concept of job connectedness, develop and validate a normative scale of job connectedness, and explore its nomological network using results from an experience sampling study with over 1500 data-points from full-time employees.

Job Connectedness

Other than allowing employees to engage in work when and where they choose to, flexible work arrangements also allow individuals to communicate and remain connected remotely. This is beneficial for employees as they are able to continue performing their work roles efficiently despite being physically absent (Kossek, Lautsch, and Eaton 2006). Individuals are able to interact with external parties for work-related matters while having full access to internal company or relevant data. However, the connectedness that facilitates individuals in their work can also be a source of additional work demand when work matters disrupt

individuals' personal domains (Derks et al. 2016; Schaufeli and Bakker 2004). The same device (e.g., a smart phone) can be viewed as both helpful and dreadful to employees (Middleton 2008).

We define job connectedness as the extent to which individuals remain connected to job matters via communication technologies from a location other than the central or primary workplace. For job connectedness to occur, all three of the following elements must be present. First, individuals are connected for job-related matters. Using communication technologies for personal or social activities such as personal phone calls, browsing through social media websites such as Facebook, and checking personal emails, do not fall under the conceptualization of job connectedness. Second, individuals should be connected from a remote location away from the workplace. Job connectedness can occur at home, when commuting, or in other places individuals are currently in, such as a hotel room, a coffee shop, or a conference venue. Being physically in the office, despite regularly checking and sending emails, does not constitute job connectedness. Third, communication technologies are used. These include devices such as the mobile or smart phone, laptops, and tablets, and are complemented by innovations such as email, instant messaging, and video conferencing. Face to face meetings with clients (despite being done in a remote location), for example, is not considered to fall under the definition of job connectedness.

Job connectedness is also measured as an objective behavior free of attitudinal attachment. Whether one is connected to work matters voluntarily or involuntarily is not captured in the conceptualization of this construct. Admittedly, whether an individual checks his or her work email voluntarily or answers a work-related phone call involuntarily affects the direction of well-being outcomes. While we do not differentiate between the nature of job connectedness in measuring this behavior, we take individual motivations into account when testing the proposed research model. Some jobs also tend to have lower base rates of job connectedness. Where physical presence is required as part of the job (e.g., librarian, cashier, bank teller etc.), there tend to be fewer opportunities to be connected to the job remotely. Yet, we argue that job connectedness remains an important construct for closer examination due to the increasing pool of knowledge workers in our workforce who often use communication technologies for work-related purposes.

Boundary Management Theory

Boundary theory proposes that individuals develop boundaries between their work and personal lives by integrating and/or segmenting the domains

(Hall and Richter 1988). It is based on the idea that individuals hold multiple important roles across different domains, and navigate their boundaries by making transitions between their roles held within and between domains (Ashforth, Kreiner, and Fugate 2000). Integration refers to when individuals make no distinction between their work and personal domains as they maintain work and personal life as freely interacting domains. There is high permeability and high flexibility of domain boundaries. Segmentation, on the other hand, refers to when individuals keep work and personal domains strictly separate. Individuals allocate a certain time and space for matters relating to each domain, and do not allow elements of one domain to penetrate the other (Ashforth et al. 2000).

We propose that individuals' integration preference impacts the relationship between job connectedness and its outcomes. For individuals with high integration preference, being connected to job matters remotely is perceived favorably as individuals are allowed to integrate their work roles into their personal domain, attending to work matters behaviorally when they are physically in another domain. As a result, they tend to have higher control over their desired level of work-life balance, and thus experience higher levels of well-being. This proposed relationship will be expounded upon as we explain the proposed model for this study.

Nomological Network of Job Connectedness

Figure 1.1 shows the various well-being outcomes of job connectedness, as well as the potential moderators and mediator that can explain why engagement in the same behavior can lead to differing consequences for individuals. While we note that we mention "life boundaries" and "personal domains" in conceptualizing the variables surrounding job connectedness, we are measuring work-family conflict as a proxy for examining issues on work-life balance, which is admittedly only a sub-dimension of the grander work-life boundary. As one of the initial studies conducted in job connectedness, we shall first use work-family conflict as an outcome measure and in the future move towards more comprehensive measures of overall work-life conflict.

Moderators

Integration Preference

Job connectedness brings benefits to individuals who value flexibility and autonomy over how and when their work goals are accomplished. Yet,

because being connected to work can interfere with individuals' personal domains, some individuals may prefer to have lower flexibility and autonomy in their jobs if they can keep their work and personal boundaries separate. Such individuals, that is, those with high segmentation (low integration) preferences, tend to engage in less job connectedness and disengage themselves from work outside of the workplace, even if the organization allows them to work remotely (Kossek et al. 2006).

Individuals who prefer to restrict their work life to the workplace are less likely to perform work-related tasks outside of the office, and are also less likely to respond to work-related emails and phone calls remotely. Furthermore, they tend to view work-related disruptions via communication technologies less favorably, as these disruptions are perceived as additional job demands (Baethge, Rigotti, and Roe 2015). However, individuals with higher integration preferences are not only more open to receiving work-related queries from a remote location (e.g., at home); they also tend to favor flexible work arrangements which facilitate job connectedness.

An individual with a low integration preference will perceive a loss of psychological control over their work-life balance when they have to be connected to job matters remotely, as work matters seep into their family and personal boundaries beyond their ideal level. Individuals with high integration preferences who engage in high levels of job connectedness, on the other hand, are able to be connected to their work while fulfilling family and personal responsibilities. They are able to schedule for themselves work tasks as well as personal goals. In addition, as work and personal boundaries are highly flexible and permeable to them, being contacted during non-working hours is not perceived as a major disruption or job demand. Individuals whose levels of job connectedness are in line with their integration preferences have higher psychological control over their boundaries as their work behaviors and preferences are in accordance to their subjective perceptions of a work-life balance. Therefore, we postulate:

> *Hypothesis 1:* Integration preference moderates the relationship between job connectedness and psychological control over work-life balance, such that the relationship is positive when integration preference is high, and negative when it is low.

Voluntariness

Whether individuals perceive a sense of increased control over their work-life boundaries, or a sense of loss of this type of control, depends on the nature of the job connectedness behavior. Job connectedness that is more voluntary in nature will tend to lead to positive outcomes, because

connecting remotely to job matters out of choice allows individuals to tailor their daily schedules to fit their work and personal obligations.

Connecting to work through e-mails while commuting to work, for example, can allow individuals to have a head start to tackling their work demands, and subsequently plan how they would carry out their personal errands. This allows individuals to have increased control of their boundaries and can better determine how they will achieve their ideal level of work-life balance. Individuals who are connected out of necessity, however, will tend to feel added pressure and may experience a loss of control over their boundaries. An example is when individuals feel compelled to connect to work matters when they are engaging in social activities, unable to achieve the work-life balance according to their preferences. Thus, we arrive at the following:

> *Hypothesis 2*: Voluntariness moderates the relationship between job connectedness and psychological control over work-life balance, such that the relationship is positive when voluntariness is high, and negative when it is low.

Outcomes

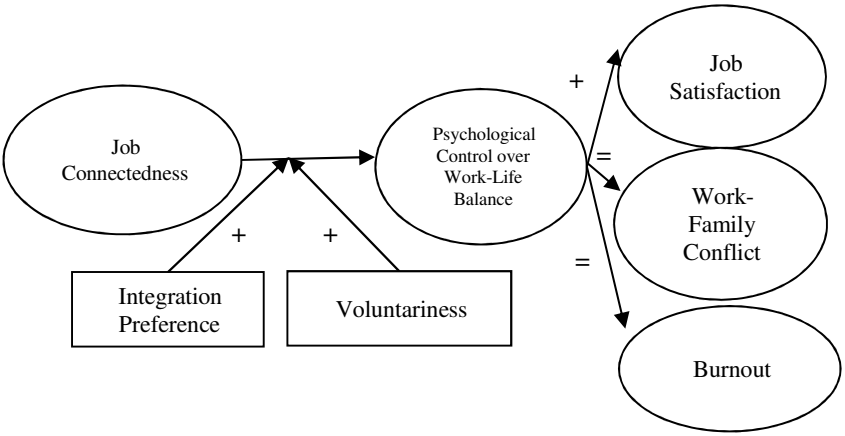
In the context of performance, individuals who have higher levels of job connectedness tend to receive better performance appraisals. This is because being available for work-related queries and tasks serves well for individuals' career outcomes as they are perceived as reliable, conscientious, and selfless (Leslie et al. 2012). When managers perceive that employees take advantage of flexible work arrangements to pursue productivity, rather than personal, reasons, these individuals will be viewed more favorably in terms of performance.

Despite its apparent positive relationship with job performance, job connectedness is not always positively associated with employee well-being. Findings from previous research seem to indicate that job connectedness has positive effects on job satisfaction, as well as reducing work-family conflict, as individuals are able to tailor their environment to fulfill both work and family responsibilities (Gajendran and Harrison 2007; Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Yet, other scholarly works found work-family conflict to increase when individuals remain connected to work matters at home (Olson-Buchanan and Boswell 2006).

We highlighted previously that psychological control over work-life balance can help account for why engagement in the same behavior (job connectedness) can lead to positive or negative outcomes. As our main research contribution lies in finding the mechanism that explains the

theoretical gap in literature, that is, to explain the divergent effects of job connectedness, we list the relationships between job connectedness and its outcomes in relation to its moderators and mediator.

Figure 1.1 Proposed nomological network of job connectedness



Job Satisfaction

Job connectedness is made more possible through flexible working arrangements, which essentially allow individuals to choose the location and timings when they wish to work. Such arrangements send a signal to employees that members of the organization care for the well-being of the employees, as employees are provided flexibility and autonomy over their working conditions (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). In addition, by providing the necessary tools to enable job connectedness, the organization is perceived to be providing additional support and resources to facilitate employees in their work roles (Demerouti et al. 2001; Schaufeli and Bakker 2004).

To the extent that these resources and support are in line with individuals' integration preferences, job connectedness will be positively related to job satisfaction. However, when individuals have low integration preferences, and/or when these "resources" are perceived to be additional demands and are out of line with individuals' integration preferences, lower levels of job satisfaction will result. When individuals are connecting out of choice instead of necessity, that is, when the nature of job connectedness is voluntary, individuals will also experience higher job satisfaction. Thus, we predict the following: