Work-life balance crafting behaviors: an empirical study

Luz N. Gravador
Mendiola Teng-Calleja

Follow this and additional works at: https://archium.ateneo.edu/psychology-faculty-pubs

Part of the Industrial and Organizational Psychology Commons
Work-life balance crafting behaviors: an empirical study

Luz Nario Gravador and Mendiola Teng-Calleja

Department of Psychology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, The Philippines

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to address gaps in the work-life balance (WLB) literature by identifying WLB crafting behaviors employed by individuals, empirically testing which of these behaviors significantly affect WLB, and examining the relationship between the identified WLB crafting behaviors, WLB, and subjective well-being (SWB).

Design/methodology/approach – The study utilized a quantitative approach. In total, 314 employees participated in the online survey. Structural equation modeling was used to test the hypothesized relationships among the variables.

Findings – Results show that protecting private time and working efficiently significantly relate with WLB and that WLB mediates the relationships between these two WLB crafting behaviors and SWB. Findings also suggest a significant direct relationship between behaviors that foster family relationships and SWB.

Research limitations/implications – The study is correlational in nature. Future studies may make use of experimental designs or conduct a longitudinal study. Other variables can be examined in future research such as life circumstances (i.e. life cycle stage change, objective health status) or other constructs within the self-concordance model (i.e. goal concordance, need satisfaction fulfillment).

Practical implications – The results suggest the importance of organization support in employees’ mastery of significant crafting behaviors through offering socialization, productivity, and time management employee programs.

Originality/value – The present research, unlike previous studies on employees’ proactive behaviors to attain WLB, empirically tested the identified behaviors and was able to identify the WLB crafting behaviors with significant relationships with WLB and SWB.

Keywords Quantitative, Work-life balance (WLB), Proactive behaviours, Self-concordance, Subjective well-being

Goals influence our everyday behavior (Cantor and Blanton, 1996). Individuals experience satisfaction that eventually translates to enhanced well-being, when they use capabilities to achieve identified goals (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999). At a time where work-life balance (WLB) is a primary occupational health concern for organizations (Group Risk Development, 2012), achieving WLB becomes an area where employees need to exercise goal-oriented behaviors (Sturges, 2012). WLB is defined as “an individual’s subjective appraisal of the accord between his/her work and non-work activities and life” (Brough et al., 2014; p. 5). Perceived balance between work and non-work interests is related with one’s well-being (Fisher, 2002; Greenhaus et al., 2003). Thus, as posited in Sheldon and Elliot’s (1999) self-concordance model, achieving goals including those pertaining to having WLB results in positive well-being.

Challenges in achieving WLB have been explored in previous studies but little is known about individual employee efforts to attain WLB as well as its possible association with well-being (McDowall and Lindsay, 2014; Sturges, 2012; Eby et al., 2005). Most research on WLB examined organizational policies and practices that facilitate WLB (e.g. Thomas and Ganster, 1995), but few studies look at self-regulatory behaviors that employees use to attain WLB (Eby et al., 2005). Recent studies have explored WLB proactive behaviors used by employees from certain occupational settings (e.g. Haddon and Hede, 2009; McDowall and Lindsay, 2014; Sturges, 2012). However, these studies neither conducted an empirical validation of these behaviors identified from qualitative studies nor tested models that linked these goal-oriented behaviors to outcomes such as well-being. Eby et al. (2005),
in a recent content analysis and review of the literature on this topic, pointed out the importance of developing and validating models that relate work and family/life domains. A recent study that endeavored to use this approach only focused on leisure crafting behaviors (Petrou and Bakker, 2016) and not on the wide array of behaviors that encompass goal-directed WLB crafting activities. To address gaps in current literature, this research identified individual employee’s strategies to manage WLB and labeled these as proactive WLB crafting behaviors; empirically tested these WLB crafting behaviors by examining which behaviors significantly affect WLB; and validated a model that demonstrated the relationship between the identified WLB crafting behaviors, WLB, and subjective well-being (SWB). Identifying these individual strategies and validating which of these positively impact WLB and well-being may orient employees on possible WLB crafting behaviors that they can adopt based on their specific conditions. Findings may also guide organizational efforts that seek to enable employee WLB crafting behaviors that are empirically validated to lead to desirable outcomes (i.e. WLB and well-being). The self-concordance model (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999) was used as the framework for determining the impact of the goal-directed WLB crafting behaviors.

Self-concordance model
Sheldon and Elliot (1999) proposed the self-concordance model to explain the process through which goals relate to well-being. The self-concordance model builds from and complements the self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 1985), suggesting that individuals are not just responding to situational or domain-specific forces. Instead, they are proactive in striving for life improvement and self-expansion because they are driven by intrinsic and identified personal goals (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999), such as WLB. The model proposes that self-concordant goal pursuit promotes sustained effort over time, which will then increase the probability that the goals will be attained, and later lead to positive changes in well-being (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999).

Some studies suggest that an individual’s effort in the goal pursuit process was positively associated with goal progress (Smith et al., 2007; Vasalampi et al., 2009; Sheldon and Elliot, 1998). The goal pursuit can be assumed to have activated proactive behavior, such as exerting effort, to bring about change (Sheldon and Elliot, 1998). In this study, WLB crafting behaviors are assumed to capture individual efforts to attain WLB as a goal. It is critical to identify and empirically validate what work-life crafting behaviors are relevant in achieving the goal of having WLB which is assumed to enable SWB. The succeeding section discusses literature that supports the assumed relationship between the goal of achieving WLB and WLB crafting behaviors.

WLB and WLB crafting behaviors
Achieving a balance between different life domains is increasingly becoming a priority for many people (Schein, 1996). People seek full and meaningful experiences in the various aspects of their lives (Marks et al., 2001; Marks and MacDermid, 1996). Once their career has been established, achieving a balance between work and life out of work becomes one of their career goals (Sturges, 2008). Organizations saw the importance of WLB and started introducing WLB initiatives. However, there appeared to be discrepancies on what the employees need and what policies were currently available (Hechanova, 2005). Thus, employees themselves exert effort to find solutions and engage in goal-oriented behaviors seeking to achieve WLB.

Using Wrzesniewski and Dutton’s (2001) job-crafting typology as the framework, a qualitative study explored the different techniques young professionals in the UK use to manage their WLB (Sturges, 2012). Job crafting normally involves changing job aspects to change their job boundaries in order to gain control over their work and identity in the
workplace (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). When applied to the study, Sturges (2012)
found that similar to job crafting, employees also employ WLB crafting behaviors that can
be categorized as physical, cognitive, and relational. Although different in emphasis and
outcome, the two constructs seem similar in terms of describing behaviors that are proactive
and self-initiated.

WLB crafting behaviors identified in the study were categorized according to the
typologies of job crafting behaviors: physical, cognitive, and relational crafting. Physical
crafting are strategies used to manage the temporal experience of work, work location
options, employer choice, and travel time requirement. Some examples observed were choice
of time when to report to work, being able to work from home, choosing a project or
employer that encourages WLB, and living near the work location. Cognitive crafting were
techniques used in which individuals personally describe what is WLB for them, justify
the work demands, and sacrifice balance for future benefits. Relational crafting makes use of
the individual’s relationship with the people at work and at home to juggle the demands
of the two domains (Sturges, 2012). Another qualitative study in Australia explored the
effective strategies employed by lawyers to manage WLB (Haddon and Hede, 2009).
Their study identified seven main themes of strategies, namely, boundary management,
technology, leisure activities, support, flexibility, cognitive strategies and behavioral
strategies. These themes concurred with the findings of previous WLB research (Bulger
et al., 2007; Carver et al., 1989; Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004; Grzywacz et al., 2008; Joudrey
and Wallace, 2009; Valcour and Hunter, 2005), suggesting that employees are active agents
in attaining WLB. Thus, understanding how employees proactively attain WLB to be able
to identify relevant specific strategies warrants attention. Furthermore, the driver of these
behaviors, WLB, is generally agreed to play an important role in an employee’s well-being
(Clark, 2000; Clarke et al., 2004; Marks and MacDermid, 1996). To extend current knowledge
on WLB crafting behaviors, this study validates the initial findings of previous qualitative
studies (e.g. Sturges, 2012) and empirically tested a model that relates these behaviors to
the achievement of WLB that will, in turn, result in increased well-being as posited by the
self-concordance model.

Well-being
Numerous literatures have dissected the meaning of well-being (e.g. Diener et al., 1999;
Keyes et al., 2002; Seligman, 2011; Stratham and Chase, 2010). However, due to its inherent
complexity, there is still a lack of concrete and coherent definition of this construct
(McNaught, 2011). Some discourses have linked well-being to health using the World Health
Organization’s (1946, p. 100) definition of health as “not the mere absence of diseases but a
state of well-being,” but this does not seem to completely capture the essence of well-being.
Health tends to be used in biomedical and positivist literature while well-being veers more
toward the emotional and psychological domains (La Placa et al., 2013).

According to Ryan and Deci (2001), “well-being refers to optimal functioning and
experience” (p. 142). They described eudaimonic and hedonic perspectives on well-being
that correspondingly shaped two distinct research traditions on this construct. The
eudaimonic perspective, equates well-being to the realization and fulfilment of one’s true
nature (Ryan and Deci, 2001) as well as to the positive functioning of an individual (Ryff and
Singer, 1998). This perspective has been used to examine relationships between well-being
and mental and physical health, personality traits, family, and neurological processes
(Ryff, 2014). On the other hand, hedonic well-being, commonly known as SWB, refers to the
experience of pleasure and happiness (Deci and Ryan, 2008; Ryan and Deci, 2001). It focuses
on the capacity of individuals to assess their own perceived quality of life from the hedonic
perspective (McNaught, 2011). Specifically, it is assumed that SWB results from an
evaluation of one’s life, particularly of the experience of life satisfaction as well as pleasant,
and unpleasant emotions (Diener et al., 1997). Life satisfaction pertains to how people assess their life as a whole or its various domains while the emotional aspects examine the frequency of positive and negative emotions generally experienced by the person (Diener, 2000). Identified gaps between what one actually experiences and what one perceives as a happy and pleasurable life motivate goal-directed behaviors such as WLB crafting behaviors.

The happiness measured in SWB is not only limited to the physical satisfaction, for it can be gained from the attainment of goals or valued outcomes in different domains (Diener et al., 1997). SWB is also a function of anticipating to achieve whatever outcomes an individual value (expectancy-value approach; Oishi et al., 1999). Many studies have used SWB to measure overall well-being because of its holistic perspective in examining how people feel about their life. Findings suggest that people with high SWB often experience positive outcomes in various areas and circumstances in life. Attaining work-family balance, for example, predicts well-being and overall quality of life (Fisher, 2002; Greenhaus et al., 2003). Contrariwise, imbalance was related to decreased well-being and quality of life (Aryee, 1992; Grant-Vallone and Donaldson, 2001; Noor, 2004; Rice et al., 1992). The aforementioned studies suggest that attaining WLB is related to SWB and examining concerns on the different life domains can aid in directing future research or interventions to help people attain balance and quality of life (Fouche and Martindale, 2011).

The existing literature suggests a relationship between the efforts in achieving self-concordant goals and experiencing well-being as a result of attaining these goals (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999; Sheldon et al., 1996). Sheldon and Elliot (1999) posited in the self-concordance model that sustained effort (e.g. in continuously engaging in WLB crafting behaviors to achieve WLB) predicts goal attainment, which, in turn, leads to enhanced well-being. Thus, this study seeks to validate WLB crafting behaviors as well as empirically determine its relationship with WLB and SWB. In doing so, individual efforts and organizational support may focus on proactive WLB crafting behaviors that are relevant to attaining WLB and eventually well-being.

Method

In order to determine actions that constitute work-life crafting behaviors, we conducted an online qualitative survey to determine how employees across job levels and industries achieve WLB. Thematic analysis was used to examine the data and to extract behaviors that were later transformed to survey items that measure WLB crafting behaviors. The survey measuring WLB crafting behaviors, WLB, and SWB was administered to a similar population and analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the assumed relationships among the variables. The detailed description of the data gathering and analysis procedures are described in the succeeding sections.

Qualitative survey

We gathered qualitative data through online survey among 60 full-time employees. Respondents were 24-66-years old occupying rank-and-file to executive-level positions in different organizations from various industries. Participants belonged to different life cycle stages with the majority being unattached or unmarried adults and married with young child/children (54 and 17 percent, respectively). In total, 58 percent were females. The respondents were asked the question: “How do you achieve work-life balance?” Thematic analysis following the procedures of Braun and Clarke (2006) was conducted to identify WLB crafting behaviors. In adopting this method, we first listed all of the respondents’ answers to the survey question. Using the list, related and recurring behaviors were grouped together to identify meaningful patterns of behavior. All patterns including uncommon comments were coded broadly. Initially coded groups were then reanalyzed to
identify potential themes, consider integration of relevant groups into the same theme, and
review the relationship between identified codes and potential themes. Identified potential
themes were examined to refine selection and determine its fit with the data set. Once the fit
was confirmed, themes were named and defined. The findings were used to craft the survey
items for WLB crafting behaviors used in the study.

Quantitative survey
Described below are the survey tool, participants, and data gathering and analysis
procedures for the quantitative study.

Pilot study. A pilot study was first conducted among 54 full-time employees through an
online survey to test the face validity of the items constructed to measure WLB crafting
behaviors and to check for the initial reliability of the items under each factor. The
participants in the pilot study were also asked open-ended questions inquiring about
the clarity of items and recommendations for improvement. Revisions made in the actual
questionnaire as a result of the pilot study are discussed in the Materials section.

Participants. Participants consisted of employees from different sectors. Out of 500
questionnaires distributed, 461 were returned resulting to a response rate of 92 percent.
After data cleaning, 314 respondents (119 males, 195 females) were included in the study.
The participants were full-time employees with at least six months of tenure in their current
organization, belonging to rank-and-file to executive-level positions, and whose ages ranged
from 21 to 73 years (see Table I).

Materials. We developed a survey instrument for WLB crafting behaviors. Items
measuring WLB and SWB were adopted from existing survey instruments (i.e. Brough et al.,
2014; Diener et al., 1997).

WLB crafting behaviors. We developed a WLB crafting behaviors survey instrument
using a five-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always). A total of 72 items comprising of
the WLB crafting behaviors from the exploratory study and Sturge’s (2012) UK study was
used for the pilot study. The WLB crafting behaviors identified in this research included
behaviors revolving around taking time off from work, fostering relationship with family
and with others, and working efficiently. The evaluation of the initial items was conducted
considering the items’ comprehensiveness or relevance across individuals in different job
roles, and comments from the pilot study. Specifically, behaviors such as “choosing what
time to report to work” were removed as this seem applicable only to employees allowed to
have a flexible working schedule. Also, respondents’ comments in the pilot study such as
“since the time scope is only three months, remove this item” became the basis for not
including behaviors such as choosing to leave near office location or work. Out of 72 initially
listed behaviors or items, 65 were used for the final survey. Exploratory factor analysis was
conducted to initially select the items for the data analysis and to confirm if hypothesized
themes fit the data. As recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), three statistical
measures were used to test the factorability of the data. These were the inter-correlation
among items, Bartlett’s test of sphericity, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of
sampling adequacy. The correlation matrix showed that majority of the items have
correlation coefficients of 0.30 or more signifying the appropriateness of using factor
analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant at \( p < 0.01 \), while the KMO was at
0.88, signifying a good sample size. EFA resulted in ten factors. Sample items that were
removed because they did not load in any of the factors or that cross-loaded include
“Making your workload lighter on Fridays” and “Thinking that the benefits you get from
the organization offset your long working hours.” Confirmatory factory analysis using
principal axis factoring with factor loadings suppressed at \( > 0.40 \) and testing the ten-factor
structure derived from EFA was conducted on the full sample (\( n = 314 \)). Comparing the CFA
results of ten-, nine-, and eight-factor structures, it is the eight-factor structure that showed adequate strong loaders that made theoretical sense. Costello and Osborne (2005) recommended deleting cross-loading items if there are strong loaders ( > 0.50) as in the case of the eight-factor structure. The analyses concluded with 8 WLB crafting behavior themes that included 25 items (see Table II).

The identified physical crafting behavior themes that take control of the temporal aspect of the two domains were working efficiently, using technology, protecting private time, limiting work demands, and taking a time off. Physical crafting behaviors on managing where work is done, specifically working away from the office, also emerged in the findings. Relational crafting behavior themes focusing on fostering relationships with family and friends/peers were also among the identified themes. Table III provides a description of each cluster of proactive WLB crafting behavior.

As seen in Table II, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ of the WLB crafting behavior clusters ranged from 0.61 to 0.84. Since there was the literature that supports including factors with internal consistency reliability greater than 0.50 (e.g. Pedhazur and Schmelkin, 1991), all the 25 items included in the 8 factors were retained.

WLB. This refers to one's subjective evaluation of the harmony between his/her work and non-work activities, and life in general (Brough et al., 2014). In this study, WLB was

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average = 35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years of service</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1-44 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average = 7 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job level</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank and file</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic materials</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPO/BTO/IT</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer goods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding company</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial goods</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media/publication</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. Profile of respondents

791
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WLB crafting behavioral items</th>
<th>Fostering relationship with others</th>
<th>Protecting private time</th>
<th>Taking a time off/vacation</th>
<th>Fostering relationship with family</th>
<th>Working efficiently</th>
<th>Limiting work demands</th>
<th>Using technology</th>
<th>Working away from the office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spending time with friends</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with friends</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending social functions of friends/peers</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking vacation/traveling with friends</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in stress-relieving and recreational activities</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(shopping, traveling, physical activities, sports, reading, spa, drinking, watching movie/Tv/series, surfing the internet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting your private time from work demands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgetting about work activities/task during days off/weekends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritizing non-work activities during my days off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the office only during working hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plotting vacation/annual leaves to attend to non-work activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning your leisure trips/vacation early</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveling/taking a vacation with family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining with family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending school programs of family members/children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making sure that you have a rest day with family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning something new</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in your most productive time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employing time management at work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting down meetings while at work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limiting the workload that you accept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using technology to nurture family relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using technology to manage family tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working from home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working away from the office with the help of mobile technology and internet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s α</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: n = 314. Factor loadings > 0.50
measured using the scale proposed by Brough et al. Four items were used such as “Overall, I believe that my work and non-work life are balanced” and “I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities” to measure WLB. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each item using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Based on the data gathered from the current study, the WLB scale’s reliability was $\alpha = 0.84$.

SWB. SWB is composed of emotional well-being and life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1997); thus, the satisfaction with life scale or SWLS (Diener et al., 1985) was used for this construct. For emotional well-being, participants were asked the extent to which they feel certain moods in their everyday life in the past three months. They were asked to assess positive (happy, joyful, pleased, and confident) and negative (sad, depressed, frustrated, anxious) moods. Participants used a five-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always) to report how much they have experienced each mood in the past three months. The life satisfaction component of SWB was measured using five items such as “So far I have got all the things I want in life” and “In most ways, my life is close to ideal.” Participants were asked to express their agreement to each item using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The SWB score was obtained by subtracting negative affect scores from the added scores of positive affect and life satisfaction items (Gröpel and Kuhl, 2009; Sheldon and Elliot, 1999). Principal component analysis was conducted to the composites of SWB to test its unidimensionality. Life satisfaction and composite of affect items loaded under one factor accounting for 66 percent of the sample’s variance. This supported the finding that one underlying construct is measured by both emotional well-being and life satisfaction (Diener, 1994). Based on the data gathered from this study, this scale’s reliability was $\alpha = 0.72$.

**Procedures.** Purposive sampling was used during data gathering to ensure that respondents from different life cycle stages, job levels, and industries are recruited. Online and pencil-and-paper questionnaires were distributed. Three out of ten organizations responded to the letter invitation, and the rest of the respondents are from the online survey shared via different social media websites and forums. A two-sample $t$-test was conducted to compare scores of responses from online and pencil-and-paper questionnaires. There was no significant difference in the WLB crafting behavior scores from online ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.9$) and from pencil-and-paper questionnaires ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.5$); $t (312) = 0.46$, $p = 0.65$. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WLB crafting behaviors</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fostering relationship with others</td>
<td>Connecting with peers/friends through communication and spending quality time with them by taking a vacation, traveling, attending social functions, or engaging in de-stressing activities together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Protecting private time</td>
<td>Managing a clear and distinct temporal boundary between work and non-work activities to avoid work demands during days off or time after working hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Taking a time off/vacation</td>
<td>Plotting and maximizing leaves or days off to attend to non-work activities such as leisure and family activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fostering relationship with family</td>
<td>Spending quality time with family members by dining, communicating, attending school programs, or allotting a rest day with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Working efficiently</td>
<td>Structuring work effectively by employing time management and process improvement strategies and by working in one’s most productive time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Limiting work demands</td>
<td>Reducing work meetings and workload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Using technology</td>
<td>Using technology to manage family tasks and nurture relationship with family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Working away from the office</td>
<td>Working from home or outside the office with the help of internet and mobile technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III. Work-life balance crafting behaviors
No significant difference was also observed in the WLB scores of responses from online ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.9$) and from pencil-and-paper questionnaires ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.7$); $t (311) = -1.87$, $p = 0.06$. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in the SWB scores of responses from online ($M = 28.35$, $SD = 9.6$) and from pencil-and-paper questionnaires ($M = 33.42$, $SD = 6.8$); $t (86) = -4.4$, $p = 0.00$ which can be explained by the significant difference in age. The difference could be due to the polarity of the participants' age involved in the two methods. Most of the older participants (ages 40 and up) in the study responded via the pencil-and-paper questionnaire. Previous studies on SWB (e.g. McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Paul and Moser, 2009) observed that age is positively related to SWB. Age was therefore controlled in succeeding analyses.

The signed pencil-and-paper questionnaires and the introduction page of the online survey assured the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. The participants accomplished the online survey within one to three days from the time the survey link was sent to them. As a token of appreciation, 10 gift certificates worth 500 Philippine pesos were raffled off to those who participated in survey at the completion of the study.

**Data analysis.** In order to analyze the data, we used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences program and EQS. SEM was utilized to test the assumed relationships among the variables. SEM, also known as causal modeling, is a collection of statistical techniques involving a multiple regression analysis of factors (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007).

Harman’s single factor test was conducted before running SEM to rule out the presence of common method variance. All the studied variables were entered into an exploratory factor analysis as a single factor using unrotated principal component factor analysis. The newly introduced factor only accounted for 33 percent of the variance, suggesting the absence of common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

Assumptions of normality were also verified prior to SEM. Due to the skewness of the gathered data, robust estimates were conducted in EQS to correct non-normality. SEM was then performed to understand the relationship of all the different factors on WLB. Recommendations of Jaccard and Wan (1996) of having at least one acceptable fit for each index under the absolute, relative, and adjusted categories were used to determine the acceptability of the model.

**Results**

The means, standard deviations, and correlations of the three constructs are presented in Table IV. The means of the three constructs are mostly within the upper half of the scores per survey instruments. This suggests that participants have frequently used WLB crafting behaviors and have a positive WLB and SWB. Age and years of service showed significant associations with the variables being studied (see Table IV). Thus, these two and other demographic variables were controlled in the succeeding analyses.

SEM was conducted to test the predicted relationship among variables. For the model to be significant, at least one fit index per category should have acceptable values (Jaccard and Wan, 1996). Model fit was assessed through EQS using standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), comparative Fit index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Mediation analysis using SEM following Holmbeck’s (1997) recommendation was conducted. Three path models were estimated: direct effects model with WLB crafting behaviors as predictor of SWB; a full mediation model in which the relationship of WLB crafting behaviors and SWB was only possible through WLB; and partial mediation model including both direct paths from WLB crafting behaviors to SWB and indirect path through WLB. Model fit would be acceptable if the SRMR is 0.10 and below, the CFI’s value is greater than 0.90 and the RMSEA’s value is 0.08 and below (Hu and Bentler, 1999).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>35.16</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of service</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>7.83</td>
<td>0.69**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering relationship with others</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>-0.26**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting private time</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.15**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking time off/vacation</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.54**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering relationship with family</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working efficiently</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limiting work demands</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-0.13*</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using technology</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working away from the office</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-life balance (WLB)</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective well-being</td>
<td>29.09</td>
<td>9.44</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.26**</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: $n = 314$. *p < 0.05 level; **p < 0.01 level
Model A or the direct path model’s (see Figure 1) SRMR = 0.05, RMSEA = 0.04 (90 percent confidence interval lower bound = 0.02, higher bound = 0.05), and CFI = 0.96 after dropping the following three paths as suggested by EQS to increase the model’s goodness of fit: fostering relationship with others to SWB, taking time off/vacation to SWB, and correlation between working efficiently and working away from the office. All three indices were satisfied and model was deemed a good fit. Only working efficiently has a significant strong positive relationship with SWB with $\beta = 0.68$ and accounts for 100 percent of the variance of SWB.

Using robust estimates of EQS to address non-normality, results of Model B or a fully mediated model (see Figure 2) fits the data adequately after dropping the three paths removed in Model A. Model B has an SRMR = 0.06, RMSEA = 0.04 (90 percent confidence interval lower bound = 0.03, higher bound = 0.05), and CFI = 0.94. The model fit test’s result shows that all three indices were satisfied and was deemed a good fit. Only protecting private time and working efficiently have a significant moderate positive relationship with WLB with $\beta = 0.50$ and 0.38, respectively. WLB has a perfect positive relationship with SWB with $\beta = 1.00$. Protecting private time and working efficiently account for 41 percent of the variance in WLB. WLB accounts for 99 percent of the variability in SWB.

Model C or partial mediated model (see Figure 3) has an SRMR = 0.05, RMSEA = 0.04 (90 percent confidence interval lower bound = 0.03, higher bound = 0.05), and CFI = 0.95 after removing the three paths dropped in Model A. All three indices were also satisfied and the partial mediated model was deemed a good fit. Protecting private time and working efficiently are the only WLB crafting behaviors with a significant relationship with WLB with $\beta = 0.53$ and 0.37, respectively. Both protecting private time and working efficiently...
can explain 41 percent of the variance in WLB. Protecting private time, fostering relationship with family and WLB have a significant positive relationship with SWB with $\beta = 0.51$, 0.51, and 0.88, respectively. WLB, protecting private time, and fostering relationship with family account for 100 percent of the variability in SWB.

To determine whether a full or partial mediation fits the data better, we examined the difference of robust $\chi^2$ for Models B and C (Muthén and Muthén, 1998-2010). $\chi^2$-difference test revealed that the decrease from Model B to Model C's $\chi^2$ is significant ($\Delta df = 6$, $\Delta \chi^2 = 29.47$, $p < 0.05$). Akaike information criterion value of Model C (−102.23) is lower than Model B's (−84.76). Both results suggest that the partial mediation model fits the data better.
Model C, as seen in Figure 3, suggests that protecting private time and working efficiently are WLB crafting behaviors that have a significant relationship with WLB. The relationship between protecting private time and SWB is partially mediated by WLB. WLB fully mediates the relationship between working efficiently and SWB. Lastly, fostering relationship with family has a direct significant strong positive relationship with SWB.

Discussion
The study expands the current literature on WLB in three ways. First, building on previous qualitative studies on employees’ proactive behaviors to attain WLB (e.g. Haddon and Hede, 2009; McDowall and Lindsay, 2014; Petrou and Bakker, 2016; Sturges, 2012), this study quantitatively validated factors that constitute proactive WLB crafting behaviors. As found in previous studies (e.g. Sturges, 2012), WLB crafting behaviors reflect the dimensions of job crafting behaviors—particularly the physical and relational dimensions. Second, it identified specific clusters of WLB crafting behaviors that contribute to the attainment of goal-directed WLB. Third, using the self-concordance model (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999) as the anchor, the study validated a model that demonstrates how WLB crafting behaviors lead to the attainment of WLB and the eventual experience of SWB.

A recent study conducted by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) emphasize the need for a more social or organizational rather than a psychological or individual understanding of work-family/life balance. Such emphasis seems to undermine the need for identifying individual goal-directed WLB crafting behaviors. Nonetheless, this similar study recognized the importance of having complementing activities by the individual (e.g. time management) and the organization (e.g. systems for flexible work schedule) to enable WLB. The aims and consequent significant findings of this current study contribute to identifying behaviors, particularly WLB crafting behaviors, that individuals usually expend in attaining WLB to, in turn, experience well-being. Following Grzywacz and Carlson’s (2007) proposition, these results may be used by organizations in identifying complementary systems and policies that can support these WLB crafting behaviors which may constitute initial or exploratory multi-level organizational strategies for promoting WLB.

The study identified eight clusters of WLB crafting behaviors (ranging from physical to relational) during the first phase of the study. Using SEM, the study determined which WLB crafting behaviors are significantly associated with WLB and SWB while controlling for relevant demographic characteristics.

The results of data analysis suggest that protecting private time and working efficiently have significant relationships with WLB. Together, they account for approximately 41 percent of the changes in WLB. These physical crafting behaviors on taking control of the temporal aspect of work and non-work domains relate to the border theory (Clark, 2000), suggesting that when individuals regard the two domains as different, strong borders facilitate balance. The significant moderate positive relationships of the two mentioned WLB crafting behaviors support Clark’s (2000) proposition.

In relation to SWB, protecting private time and working efficiently are mediated by WLB. The mediating role of WLB can be explained by need satisfaction fulfillment. Anchored on the SDT, Ford et al. (2007) Greenblatt (2002) suggest that attaining balance of the three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) either at work or in the non-work domain is related to a positive change of well-being. The SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1985) views autonomy, relatedness, and competence as sustenance needed by individuals. Autonomy refers to the experience of personal choice and endorsement of actions and activities. Relatedness is about one’s feelings of closeness and connection with significant others. Competence refers to feelings of expertise over one’s environment and one’s ability to bring about desired results. Experiences of these three psychological needs are vital underlying bases that function to positively affect well-being (Reis et al., 2000; Sheldon et al., 1996).
WLB fully mediating the relationship between working efficiently and SWB is consistent with the temporal sequence of goal approach within the context of the self-concordance model of Sheldon and Elliot (1999), positing that goal attainment is necessary before enhanced well-being is achieved. Top-down theories on well-being propose that one’s global disposition or individual judgment of personal goal attainment influences SWB (Sheldon and Elliot, 1999). Thus, an individual who succeeds in achieving WLB by working efficiently may experience a boost on WLB attainment that may influence his or her SWB. The significant moderate positive relationships between working efficiently and WLB and significant strong positive relationship between WLB and SWB are consistent with Sheldon and Elliot’s (1999) self-concordance model.

The lack of significant relationship between fostering relationship with family and WLB was contrary to the assumptions made by Sturges (2012), based on the findings of her qualitative study. It seems like relational strategies does not directly result in WLB. However, fostering a relationship with family has a direct significant moderate positive relationship with SWB. This finding is consistent with the increasing literature on the fundamental role of warm, trusting, and supportive interpersonal relationships on well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Individuals who have more intimate and higher-quality relationships are inclined to have a higher SWB (e.g. Carstensen, 1998; Kasser and Ryan, 1999; Nezlek, 2000). Kitayama and Markus (2000) suggested that SWB is not just personal happiness, but comprises an individual’s relations with others.

Findings of this study reflect the diverse combinations of proactive behaviors used by employees coming from different industries and age groups. Although previous studies (e.g. Haddon and Hede, 2009; McDowall and Lindsay, 2014; Sturges, 2012) were able to list proactive behaviors used by employees to achieve WLB, this study was able to empirically test and determine the relevant behaviors that significantly relates with WLB, which is the assumed goal of WLB crafting behaviors, and further related it to well-being.

The present findings can be enriched in several ways. First, due to the correlational nature of this study, future research may use experimental designs to examine causality on the studied relationships. Second, there was an uneven distribution of employees with children and young unattached employees among the participants in the qualitative online survey, exploring differences in WLB crafting behaviors across life cycle stages may be the focus of future research. Third, the data used were cross-sectional. A longitudinal study may be used in the future to effectively collect data on the studied constructs and to test other possible constructs such as life circumstances (i.e. life cycle stage change or objective health status; Sheldon and Elliot, 1999). Fourth, some constructs of the self-concordance model, such as goal self-concordance and need satisfying experiences, can be examined together with the variables in the present study to get a more holistic view of WLB using the continuum of goal approach in the context of self-concordance model. Finally, given the proposal of Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) to include individual and organizational strategies in achieving WLB, future studies may focus on identifying and measuring specific organizational strategies and determine how these and WLB crafting behaviors complementarily function as multi-level initiatives that significantly influence WLB and the eventual well-being of employees.

It is important to acknowledge the physical crafting behaviors on taking control of the temporal aspect of work and non-work domains, specifically protecting private time and working efficiently behaviors. Based on the results of this study, they are vital means of employees to achieve WLB, which then affect their well-being. These proactive behaviors that aligned employee goals (i.e. WLB) with organizational goals (i.e. employee well-being) will require efforts from both employees and organization. Crafting will involve a series of practice in which employees will adjust or transform task and relational boundaries. Organizations should consider the level of support or flexibility they can provide to employees to facilitate
boundary and time management behaviors on and off work and initiate dialogs that will promote the alignment of organizational goals with individual needs such as WLB. Programs that encourage socialization, productivity, and time management would benefit from recognizing that these set of behaviors are what significantly relate to WLB and SWB. The enhanced self-efficacy of employees to attain WLB, as suggested in previous studies (e.g. Dex and Scheibl, 1999), leads to better recruitment and retention, lower rates of absenteeism, and a more engaged and satisfied workforce.

In summary, this study aimed to identify WLB crafting behaviors used by individual employees, empirically tested which of these behaviors significantly affect WLB, and examined the relationship between the identified WLB crafting behaviors, WLB, and SWB. Results point to the significant relationships of protecting private time and working efficiently behaviors with WLB and WLB’s mediating role in the relationship between these aforementioned WLB crafting behaviors and SWB. Findings also suggest a significant direct relationship between fostering relationship family behaviors and SWB. These findings validate the importance of proactive behaviors of individuals in attaining WLB and SWB.

References


WLB crafting behaviors


802


About the authors
Luz Nario Gravador, MA, is currently a Senior HR Services Associate and a New Employee Orientation Facilitator in IBM Business Services Inc. She is passionate in training and development as well as continuous process improvement using Lean Six Sigma. Luz Nario Gravador is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: luz.gravador@obf.ateneo.edu

Mendiola Teng-Calleja, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Psychology Department of the Ateneo de Manila University. She is also the Director for Organization Development at the Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development. Her research areas include human resources management, employee relations and engagement, organization development, and humanitarian work psychology.

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com