

FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC BURNOUT AND JOB PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF MARRIED WORKING WOMEN IN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT

Retaining and managing talented employees are extremely meaningful efforts for organizations to ensure their competitive advantage. In Vietnam, more and more women have been holding important roles in national and foreign companies. However, Vietnamese women must also balance the quality of their roles as wives and mothers. This creates psychological pressure and causes difficulties for married working women. This paper aims to examine the factors affecting academic burnout and job performance of married working women. Using data collected from 343 respondents, we found that academic burnout was inversely related to core self-evaluation and positively related with work-family conflict (and family-work conflict), whereas job performance was directly proportional to core self-evaluation and inversely proportional to work-family conflict (and family-work conflict). The findings suggested that married working women need an optimistic self-view to deal with conflicts between job and family more easily, and to reduce academic burnout, and improve job performance.

Keywords: core self-evaluation, academic burnout, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, job performance

TÓM TẮT

**Các nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến hội chứng kiệt sức trong việc học và hiệu suất công việc:
Nghiên cứu trường hợp phụ nữ đã lập gia đình tại Việt Nam**

Việc giữ chân và quản lý những nhân viên tài năng là một việc làm vô cùng quan trọng nhằm đảm bảo lợi thế cạnh tranh của tổ chức. Tại Việt Nam, ngày càng có nhiều phụ nữ giữ vai trò cao trong các công ty trong và ngoài nước. Tuy nhiên, phụ nữ Việt Nam vẫn còn bị đóng khung trong vai trò làm vợ và làm mẹ trong gia đình. Điều này tạo nên áp lực tâm lý, gây nhiều khó khăn đối với phụ nữ đã lập gia đình. Vì vậy, mục đích của bài nghiên cứu là xem xét các nhân tố ảnh hưởng hội chứng kiệt sức trong việc học và hiệu suất công việc đối với phụ nữ đã lập gia đình. Dữ liệu nghiên cứu được thu thập từ 343 phụ nữ đã lập gia đình vừa làm vừa học. Nghiên cứu chỉ ra rằng hội chứng kiệt sức trong việc học có quan hệ trái chiều với việc tự đánh giá bản thân và quan hệ cùng chiều với xung đột giữa công việc và gia đình. Trong khi đó, hiệu suất công việc thì ngược lại, quan hệ cùng chiều với sự tự đánh giá bản thân và trái chiều với xung đột giữa công việc và gia đình. Từ kết quả của bài nghiên cứu, tác giả đưa ra đề xuất những phụ nữ đã lập gia đình nên biết đánh giá bản thân một cách lạc quan để dễ dàng giải quyết sự xung đột giữa công việc và gia đình, từ đó sẽ giảm được hội chứng kiệt sức trong việc học và nâng cao hiệu suất trong công việc.

Từ khóa: sự tự đánh giá bản thân, sự kiệt sức trong việc học, xung đột công việc và gia đình, hiệu suất công việc

1. Introduction

Enhancing job performance is an important issue in the survival and development of companies. Karatepe (2013) indicated that employees with stress can experience negative effect on their job performance. Finding solutions to reduce employee burnout and improve employee performance remains a difficult task. On the other hand, globalization reached its peak at the beginning of the twentieth century, and heated up the markets, especially the growing ones of the Third World. To creative competitive advantage in a highly competitive global market, the demand in firms to develop knowledge, skills, and a global mindset for each individual is expected to increase significantly (Dobre, 2012).

Vietnam is known as a developing country and it faced opportunities and risks when taking part in Asian Economic Community in 2015. Human resource management is now conceded to be an anxious problem for Vietnamese firms. Qualified Vietnamese workers have wide opportunities to work in multinational groups or large Vietnamese firms having more resources for recruiting qualified managers. These employees face challenges to improve themselves by achieving more skills and higher degrees lest they be discharged. In smaller Vietnamese firms, Human Resource departments need to find solutions for developing and retaining their current talents to avoid brain drain.

According to the General Statistical Office of Vietnam, in 2017, there are more than 48 million women, 50% of the national population, and 48.15% of the workers. Moreover, women are increasingly holding important roles in government organizations, NGOs and firms. However, in contrast to other continents, Asia still underestimates the importance of women in work and life. South Korea, China and Vietnam, although publicly declaring gender equality in society, maintain the influence of ancient habits. Women are still tied to their role as wives and mothers, managing households, cooking, washing, and doing other tasks to take care of their husband and children. Young women nowadays are encouraged to develop a career, but after their

workday, they still have to do chores at home. Those who are married are expected not only to undertake responsibility for their primary family, but also for their parents and parents-in-law.

Human energy is limited, but married women endure the pressure of an 8-hour job, then continue to take care of their family, and some of them have to enhance knowledge and skills by joining training courses. As a result, they slip easily into burnout. Understanding the burnout problem of married women will be very useful for Human Resource departments to make plans and policies to manage and develop married female staff who are taking increasingly significant positions in companies.

In the literature, many world-wide scholars have researched the influence of core self-evaluation on job performance, the influence of core self-evaluation on academic burnout, and the relationship between work-family (and family-work) conflict and job performance and burnout. Few studies examine the relationships of core self-evaluation and work-family conflict on academic burnout and job performance in the domain of women and married women in Vietnam. This study examines the role of core self-evaluation to academic burnout and job performance, mediated by the work-family conflict (and family-work conflict) of married working women in Vietnam.

2. Literature review

Conservation of Resource Theory

The research was developed based on the conservation of resource theory which was implemented by Hobfoll in 1989 (Haines et al., 2013). Hobfoll (1989, cited in Karam, 2011) indicates that resources are limited, resources cited as being objects (e.g. possessing an apartment, a car), conditions (e.g. being employed, being part of a group), personal resources (e.g. having necessary knowledge, skills and abilities), and energy resources (e.g. level of engagement), and that the limitations motivate employees to try to gain, preserve, and assure their resources. When conflicts occur, people face the threat of loss, or realized loss, of resources.

Pheko (2013) supposes that conservation of

resource theory is rightly used as an appropriate foundation to comprehend the two interfaces of work and family. The model offers a stable conceptual foundation that could explain stress issuing from intra-role conflict and inter-role conflict. Researchers have applied it to strongly determine the relationship between these two domains and illustrate how these conflicts affect the performance of organizations.

Model of Core self-evaluations, work-family conflict, and burnout

Based on conservation of resource theory, Haines et al. (2013) apply to human resources management a way to investigate the effect of work-family conflicts (and family-work conflicts) on burnout, and draw this model of core self-evaluations, work-family conflict, and burnout as shown in Figure 1.

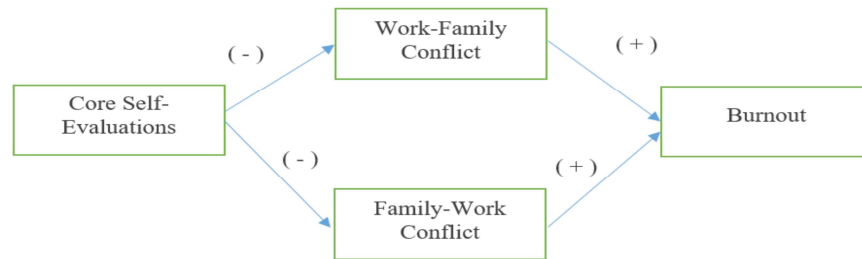


Figure 1. Core self-evaluations, work-family conflict, and job burnout (Haines et al., 2013)

The result of this paper confirms the inverse relationship between core self-evaluations and work-family (and family-work) conflict, as well as the positive relationship between work-family (and family-work) conflict and burnout. However, the paper has not studied deeper in any specific burnout yet (e.g. academic burnout, job burnout, health burnout). Moreover, the respondents in this research were police officers and civilian staff in Quebec (Canada) so its findings are not assured to generalize to employees in other workplaces.

Model of Core self-evaluations, life satisfaction, and academic burnout

With the same idea of Haines et al. (2013), Lian et al. (2014) chose core self-evaluations to be a predictor factor of burnout, but they investigated academic burnout among university stu-

dents. Based on previous findings that the main individual factors that affect academic burnout are self-efficacy, locus of control, and self-esteem, they posed that core self-evaluations can predict inversely related academic burnout. In addition, Judge et al. (2003) indicated that core self-evaluations can also predict the degree of satisfaction. Hence, they proposed a secondary hypothesis that core self-evaluations influence academic burnout by mediating life satisfaction. The result proves both hypotheses with significant emphasis on core self-evaluation as a predictor of burnout and affirm that students with a positive self-view can be more interested in their life and feel more satisfaction. This leads to reduce students' awareness of the pressure of learning.

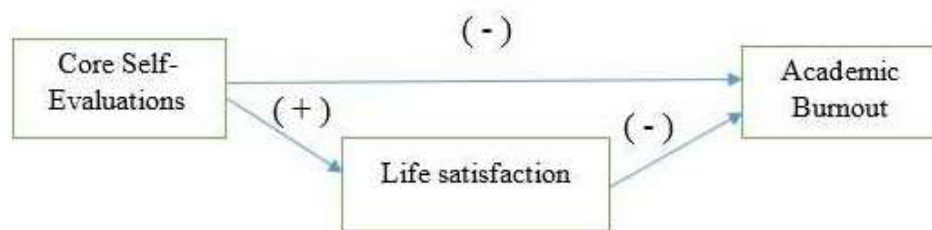


Figure 2. Core self-evaluations, life satisfaction, and burnout (Lian et al., 2014)

3. Model and Hypotheses

Core self-evaluations

Judge et al. (2003) defined this term Core Self-Evaluation as “an individual's most fundamental evaluation of his own ability and value” (cited in Zhou et al., 2014). The interpretation of core self-evaluations is also understood to reflect internal personality factors like belief in one's capability, control and competency (Lian et al., 2014). It is also perceived to be a broadly latent construct, including four personality traits, self-esteem as evaluation of self-worth, locus of control as evaluation of one's control over one's environment, self-efficacy as evaluation of one's capability and competence to be successful, and emotional stability as evaluation of one's emotional adjustment (Judge et al., 2003). In general, core self-evaluations are concerned with the ability of an individual to assess their own competences through the personality traits of self-esteem, locus of control, self-efficacy, and emotional stability.

Work-family conflict

Work and family are the inseparable two sides of the lives of many adults, but these two domains are discovered to conflict with each other because of simultaneous demands of the role between their work and family (Mihelic et al., 2014). Work-family conflict is considered a vital factor causing work stress (Radzali et al., 2013). This may be because the pressure that employees have when they cannot balance their work-life leads them to not concentrate on work-related activities, manifesting work stress. In general, work-family conflict occurs when an individual cannot play a satisfactory role in the family since he focuses much more on his job.

Family-work conflict

On the other hand, family-work conflict appears when people spend too much time worrying about their family than about work (Mihelic et al., 2014). For example, a woman may have to request days off to look after her sick s cause she has no support from her family. In this case, this female employee may be sacrificing her job for her family.

Academic burnout

The word “burnout” used to refer to work-related stress in studying the factors affecting employee outcomes (Kim et al., 2011). Nowadays, according to Lian et al. (2014), academic burnout is known as an extension of the original job burnout in the education environment because students also have to perform many activities which are the same as work, such as the responsibility to complete assigned work in a given time, cooperation among colleagues, presentation, and updating new information. Anuradha et al. (2014) define student academic burnout as the stress which at its peak affects student academic performance. They suppose that it appears when students have no interest in studying, are annoyed with lecturers' expectations, and are tired of studying. Being burnt out not only affects their education and its results but ultimately threatens other workers due to their underperformance (Kizilci et al., 2012). Thus, it becomes an important problem and is examined by many modern scholars.

Job performance

As job performance is a vital factor in both organizational psychology and human resource management (Campbell, 1990, as cited in Gary, 2011), there are many definitions of job performance. While Campbell et al. (1993, cited in Parker, 2007) stated that job performance covered all behaviors that were controlled by employees themselves to achieve company goals, Silvester et al. (2003) concluded more specifically that in the arena of sales, sales performance comprised daily efforts of salesmen to attract customers, serve customer service and achieve sales targets. Thus, depending on the context, job performance is comprehended differently. However, in general, it could be concluded that job performance is the aggregate of an employee's daily work activities of in a firm, and employees are periodically assessed by someone in a higher position for their level of achieving the firm's objectives.

Relationships of core self-evaluations and work-family and family-work conflicts

Many recent documents have proposed that positive core self-evaluations lead to reduce

work-family conflict (and family-work conflict) (Haines et al., 2013; Lian et al., 2014). One may reason that when someone perceives their competency in controlling their life, they have a powerful motivation to complete both work related and family-related activities by any means possible.

For married Vietnamese women, the conflict between their traditional housewife duties and their career duties causes them to live stressful and exhausted lives. An optimistic self-view could help them to feel more confident in balancing their life. Positive thinking about their own capacities could help them calmly handle the conflicts of their responsibilities at work and at home. This leads to proposing the first and second hypotheses.

H1: There is an inverse relationship between core self-evaluation and work-family conflict.

H2: There is an inverse relationship between core self-evaluation and family-work conflict.

Relationships of work-family and family-work conflicts and academic burnout

Family and work may be two inseparable aspects of the modern woman's life, but with limited resources, married working women can not easily manage both roles simultaneously and well. Work-family conflict occurs when women are dedicated to developing their career and so reduce their concern about family matters. On the other hand, family-work conflict happens when women value their family life more than their work life, and inadequately focus on their job. Conflicts arising in both cases cause married working women stress.

In addition, women with career promotion ambitions tend to take training courses. However, they can hardly arrange enough time to concentrate on their study. Exacerbating this essential lack, when married female students do not feel satisfied with their performance at home and work, they cannot focus adequately on their learning. Worse yet, when their children are sick, or their boss requests them to work time, they may be absent from class, or fail to do homework. They are easily led to feel depressed and disappointed by themselves when they face

homework and examination deadlines. Two more hypotheses can be offered.

H3: There is a direct relationship between work-family conflict and academic burnout.

H4: There is a direct relationship between family-work conflict and academic burnout.

Relationships of work-family and family-work conflicts and job performance

As mentioned above, the level of work-life balance has represented employees' attitude, behavior and outcomes. Eby et al. (2005, cited in Baral et al., 2010) said that incompatibility between work and family cause declines in health and organizational performance.

Married female employees who prefer working to family, they seem to have effective job outcomes. However, over time, due to their lessness in taking care of children or household, the tension among family members will cause extreme stress. Due to this situation, their performance at work can reduce significantly. The inverse correlation between family-work conflict and job performance is shown more obviously. Employees who tend to be absent too much to solve their family problems cause lots of mistakes in work and suffer low assessments of job performance. Two hypotheses are suggested:

H5: There is an inverse relationship between work-family conflict and job performance

H6: There is an inverse relationship between family-work conflict and job performance

Relationships of core self-evaluations, job performance and academic burnout

Following the idea of Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2009) that positive core self-evaluations are expected to reduce stressors suggests that core self-evaluations and burnout have an inverse relationship. Karatepe (2011) confirms that exhaustion is inversely related to job performance, suggesting that core self-evaluations have a positive relationship with job performance and inverse direction with burnout. Furthermore, core self-evaluations could directly influence academic burnout (Yang et al., 2005, cited in Lian et al., 2014). Applied to the situation of married working women, those who have a high core self-evaluation, are likely to find solutions to re

duce stress arising from their job or study. Therefore, the two last proposed hypotheses could be stated so:

H7: There is a positive relationship between core self-evaluation and job performance.

H8: There is an inverse relationship between core self-evaluation and academic burnout.

From the arguments of eight hypotheses, the conceptual model of the paper is drawn as shown in Figure 3, the Proposed Research model.

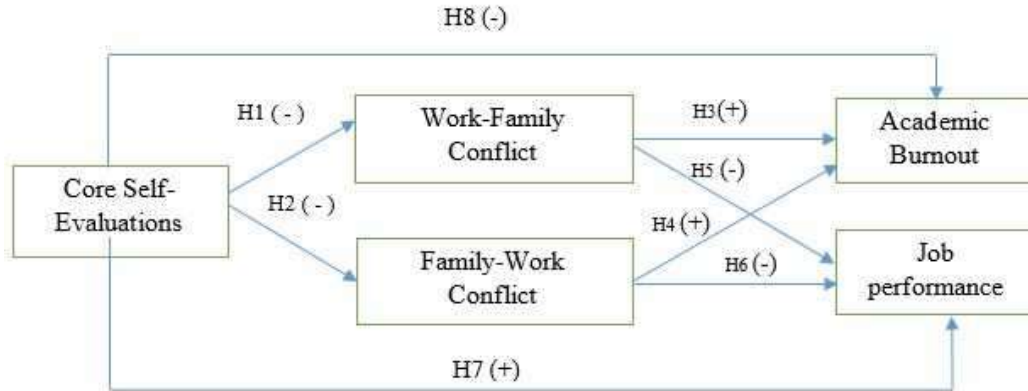


Figure 3. Proposed Research model

Sampling and analytical method

The study included two phases, preliminary research and main research, conducted in Ho Chi Minh City. The preliminary research was carried out by a qualitative study consisting of in-depth interviews with six married working female students and their supervisors to modify and refine the scale items from translated scales. The in-depth interview helped to choose and adjust which items were appropriate for married working female students in the Vietnamese context. Interviewee feedback helped to make statements clearer and more understandable. A quantitative main research was executed with a sample of 343 married working female students from work-study programs, pathway programs, post graduate programs and soft-skill training short courses by face-to-face interview with a structural questionnaire. The methods of data analysis included testing Cronbach's alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using SPSS version 20, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) test using AMOS software version 20. Bootstrapping with $N = 500$ re-samples was also used to assess the path significance.

Measurement

After modifying, the scale of core self-eval-

uation consisted of 5 items adapted from Judge et al. (2003). Scales of work-family conflict and family-conflict included 10 items adapted from Netemeyer et al. (1996). The scale of academic burnout included 7 items modified from the scale used by Schaufeli et al. (2002). The scale of job performance consisted of 5 items adapted from Becker et al. (1996). These scale items were translated into Vietnamese and presented as five-point Likert type responses.

5. Results and Discussion

Demography of respondent

Data divided interviewees into three age groups, under 25 years old, 25 to 35 years old, and over 35 years old. Regarding the training program, a majority of interviewees were studying in Masters or PhD programs (54.8%) while one quarter were learning short courses (25.4%). They were nearly equally divided among manager or team leader positions and officer positions (45.5% and 46.1% respectively). A tiny minority of respondents were teachers or lecturers and other. More than half of the interviewees earned less than 10 million VND per month (55.7%); 37.3% of them disclosed that they earned from 10 to 20 million VND, and 7% reported receiving more than 20 million VND a month.

Scale Validation

The resulting Cronbach’s alpha values of all items ranged from .828 to .871, which was acceptable. Results of EFA using principal axis factoring method with promax rotation showed that five factors were extracted; factor loadings of four observed variables including AB21, AB16, JP24 and FW15 were less than .5. After eliminating improper variables, five factors having eigenvalues of 5.637, 2.876, 2.430, 2.124, and 1.817 were extracted as expected of the research. The total extracted variance for the five factors was 55.576% which showed that these extracted factors could explain 55.576% variation of the data.

CFA methods were used for all the constructs in the research model. CFA results of the final measurement model were fitted with data market. The Chi-square value of this model was 306.879 with 160 degree of freedom, chi-square normalized by degree of freedom (χ^2/df) was 1.918 with p value = .000. GFI = .919, TLI = .942 and CFI = .951, all indices were more than .9; RMSEA value was .052, less than .08. The factor loadings for all items higher than .5, ranged from .639 to .905. With these results, it could be concluded that all observed variables were fit to the convergent validity requirement (Fig.4).

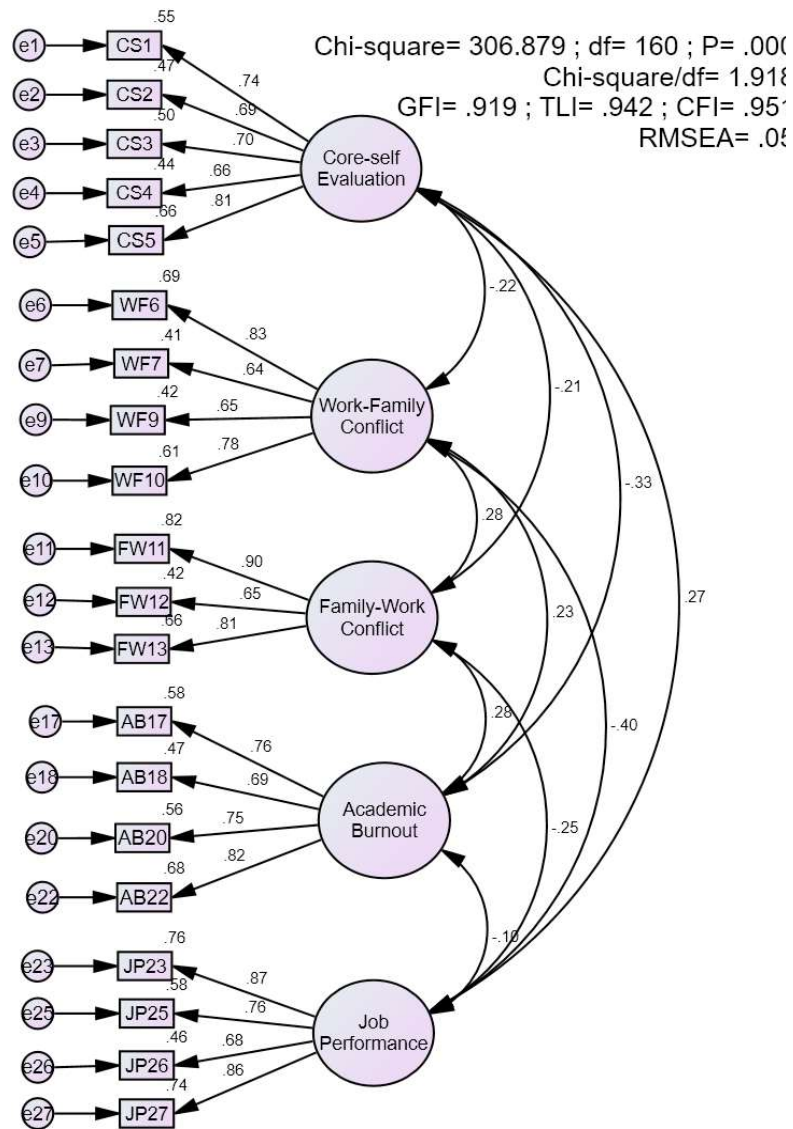


Figure 4. CFA results

In addition, since the correlations among items were absent any error, these scales achieved uni-dimensionality.

Composite reliability values of Core self-evaluation, Work – Family Conflict, Family-work Conflict, Academic Burnout and Job Performance were greater than 0.8, and AVE values for all constructs were above the recommended level of 0.50. Compared to the condition of composite reliability which was above 0.7 and average variance extracted which was above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2009), the model had convergent validity.

As P-values were all less than 0.05, the mod-

el met the Discriminant validity.

Overall, the fit indices, factor correlations, and factor loadings suggest that the five constructs were acceptable fits for the Structural Model. The measurement model satisfied with the reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Model Fit

After checking the validity, hypotheses of this study were tested with the structural equation model (SEM). Figure 5 shows the results of the structural model, including the paths and their standardized regression estimates.

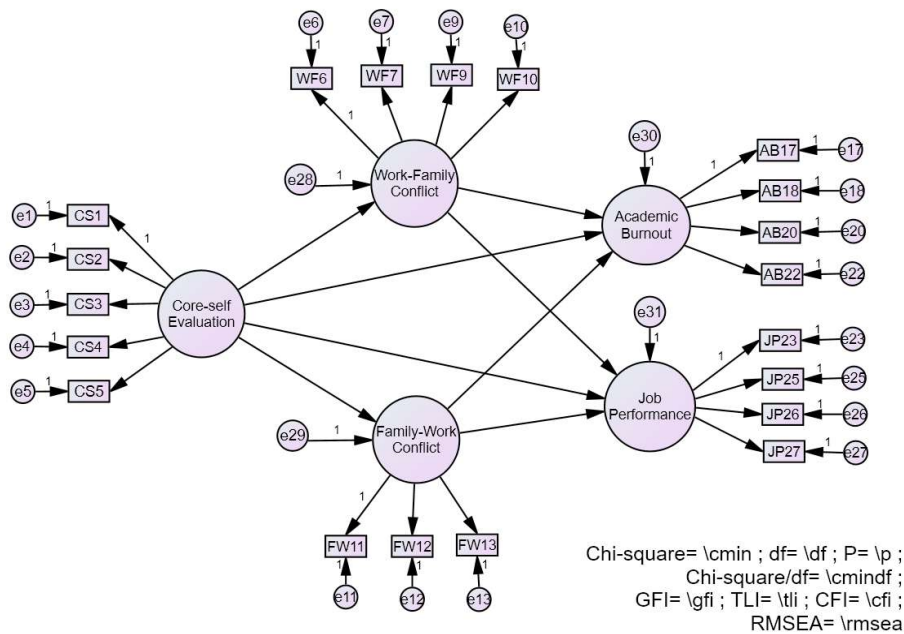


Figure 5. SEM results

In general, the standard of SEM test was the same with CFA test. The compatibility with data market was quite well. It indicated that these variables had strong relationships in reality. In above Figure 5, the fit indices of measurement model were presented as followed: Chi-square/df = 1.994, GFI= .915, TLI= .937, CFI= .947, RMSEA= .054. Based on these results, it could be proved that the measurement in this study received acceptable fit to the data.

The Standardized Regression Weights (Table 1) found that Core self-evaluation has an inverse

relationship with Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, and Academic Burnout while positively affect on Job Performance. There were also positive relationships of the conflicts between Work and Family and Academic Burnout whereas the relationships were inversely related between these conflicts and Job Performance. The indicators in Estimate column presented the strength of these correlations. They all were lower than 0.4 which implied the weak correlations among factors.

Table 1. Standardized regression weights

Parameters		Estimate	
WF	<---	CS	-0.229
FW	<---	CS	-0.213
AB	<---	CS	-0.265
JP	<---	CS	0.167
AB	<---	WF	0.121
AB	<---	FW	0.196
JP	<---	WF	-0.332
JP	<---	FW	-0.136

The bootstrap method with 500 of bootstrap samples was used to estimate the parameter of model. Hence, this method was implemented to find approximate standard errors, which were used to measure the reliability of the param

eter estimates. Table 2 indicated that the variations between Bias and SE-Bias were small and critical ratios were suitable ($|t| \leq 2$). Therefore, it could be concluded that estimated results in the research model can be representative overall.

Table 2. Bootstrap estimate result with N = 500

Parameter			SE	SE-SE	Mean	Bias	SE-Bias	CR
WF	<---	CS	0.071	0.002	-0.228	0.001	0.003	0.333333
FW	<---	CS	0.07	0.002	-0.213	0	0.003	
AB	<---	CS	0.063	0.002	-0.262	0.003	0.003	1
JP	<---	CS	0.063	0.002	0.167	0	0.003	0
AB	<---	WF	0.061	0.002	0.116	-0.005	0.003	-1.66667
AB	<---	FW	0.066	0.002	0.197	0.001	0.003	0.333333
JP	<---	WF	0.068	0.002	-0.329	0.004	0.003	1.333333
JP	<---	FW	0.068	0.002	-0.135	0.001	0.003	0.333333

6. Conclusions

Drawing from previous research, the author constructed a research model to investigate the correlation of core-self evaluation to the ability to resolve work and family conflicts, and then studied the impact of three factors on acad

ic burnout and job performance of Vietnamese married working women.

Based on results from data analysis, eight hypotheses were found to be consistent with previous studies (Haines et al., 2013; Lian et al., 2014). The paper shows that people who are

highly aware of themselves, have ability to balance between work and family life. Moreover, the survey results confirm positive relationships of work-family conflict (and family-work conflict) and academic burnout. When the conflicts between work and family life become felt more strongly, stress, anxiety, and depression become correspondingly higher, and vice versa.

On the other hand, job performance is the opposite of burnout. While burnout expresses exhaustion and loss of interest, job performance expresses efficiency, enthusiasm, and success in work. Here too, the survey results remain consistent. Work-family conflict (and family-work conflict) have positive relationships with burnout and inverse relationships with job performance.

The research results also confirm the direct relationship between core self-evaluation and job performance. Accordingly, married working women who have higher self-awareness of their capabilities should have higher proficiency in their work. High core self-evaluation indicates reduced academic burnout, and vice versa. This indicates the importance of raising awareness of core self-evaluations for married working women.

From findings in the study, to improve job performance for married working women, the managers should find a way to help them reduce work stress. Human resource management should understand the difficulties of married working female and provide more benefits or supports for them. Firms could establish funds that are used to congratulate outstanding women, allow more annual leaves for those who have worked for long periods, and provide health care policies for the whole family. These policies will help married working women reduce their stress and balance their work life and family life. When work-family conflict is decreased, they should also get higher results from their study and apply the knowledge gained to obtain more efficient job performance.

The survey was conducted in Ho Chi Minh City with a focus on married working female students who studied in evening and week-

end economics classes. Thus, the sample may not represent the more general case of married working women.

Secondly, due to limited resources, the study has not collected enough data of single working women to make a comparison between married working women and single working women to find out whether there are differences in research results between these two groups.

Finally, this paper has mainly considered core self-evaluation as the vital factor affecting academic burnout and job performance, but there may be other aspects that should be addressed by future research.

Conflicts of Interest:

The author declare no conflict of interest

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