From Conciliation To Work–Family Enrichment In Educational Institutions

Olga L. Pardo Vargas*, Socorro Perafán Gómez and Claudia L. Silva Ortíza

Abstract

Business organizations are going deeply into the relationship between work and family, in order to identify the contribution in terms of competences that occurs when people perform job and family roles which are complementary. This relationship refers to what is currently being called "work-family enrichment." This becomes relevant in educational institutions because, by their company name, they are the first convened to facilitate the experience of work-family enrichment with their employees. Therefore, we want to know whether in educational institutions the relationship of work-family enrichment occurs in a natural way or if it is necessary to adjust the management in their policies, leadership and culture.

Keywords: conciliation; work – family enrichment

1. Main text

When we talk about conciliation, first of all this term refers to the possible existence of a conflict. Because historically the word conciliation has the primary aim in all fields of “serve as a remedy to conflict situations” (Junco, 2007, p.1). For this purpose, in Psychology this term has been used to “appease the consciences and the passions and achieve interpersonal and social balance, in order to the conflicts can be solved by the people who are involved in them” (Junco, 2007, p.1). On the other hand, the term enrichment refers to the “Process by which something is provided with greater wealth, quality or value to improve its properties and characteristics.” (http://es.thefreedictionary.com/enriquecimiento). The term enrichment in the work-family

* Olga L. Pardo Vargas Tel:+1-432-432-432
E-mail address: olga.pardo@unisabana.edu.co
interface is described in the following lines. With the entrance of women in working life, about the middle of the 20th century, the paradigm of conflict between work and family strengthens, because the woman who until then had mainly job-related family life, passes to combine it with working life which leads sometimes that the business work takes priority over the family. Idrovo (2006), about this subject notes that in the 20th century the company undergoes a series of socio-demographic changes. “Perhaps the most important took place in the second half of the 20th century, but especially in the last two decades and it is the massive introduction of women into the workplace.” (p.4). Focusing more in business organization, Paladino (2004) makes the following question: “Which is the responsibility of the company to society?” (p.39). Until the mid-20th century what mattered in the great majority of companies was only profitability, without much concern about the welfare or needs of the worker. It can be said that the companies had a more utilitarian approach and also the perception of that the person who remained more time in the workplace was the most productive, so some women neglected their family responsibilities since they should remain at least at work, 8 hours per day. Therefore, it can be understood in a better way, the term conflict were the most commonly used when talking about the relationship between work and family. The reason why the evolution of the concept from conciliation to enrichment is innovative comes from the assumptions took on the 70s about that the family and work were considered opposites. However, research on the subject revealed that both work and family are interdependent, sometimes positively, negatively in other (Greenhaus, 2008). From the industrial revolution, companies began to have a greater commitment to society, which has led to an improvement in relations between the company and society. This is how in the last twenty years, “the increase in social demands -environmental care, respect for human rights and development of employees, among others- seems to require the attention of companies on new fields of work” (Paladino, 2004, p.39). Jiménez, Acevedo, Salgado and Moyano (2009) claim that the work, family and society interaction is presented in parallel in accordance with factors such as social policies of the countries to support the family, that in each case be present or absent according to each region. In other words, the State performs an important role in the interaction of the variables mentioned above, because if there are no policies to protect the family that transcend organizational settings and really impact in its dynamic, there will be no points of support in the transformation to family-friendly companies. If the State does not support these protection policies, families appeal to individual solutions such as: the reduction of the number of children desired, recourse to domestic workers, often underpaid and until precarious solutions as letting younger children under the care of the elderly ones, leave them unattended or take them to work. One consequence that alerts the International Labour Organization (ILO) is the increase in child labor and hence the decline in schooling for children. Policies that companies implement to reconcile work and family seek to create greater employee engagement on organizational performance, reduce the rate of absenteeism, staff turnover, reduce stress experienced by employees to not achieve balance between their personal and work life, among others. This is known as family-friendly company (FFC) or corporate family responsibility (CFR). Idrovo (2006) claims that the existence of policies pointing to this conciliation not guarantee that the company is really FFC, since it has been shown that if there isn’t a communication strategy of the policies, the commitment of the leaders of the company in achieving its compliance and motivate employees to achieve work-family balance through flexible working strategies, among others, would not be possible to reach this ideal. Other studies such as Cardona, Chinchilla and García-Lombardía, (2001) give value to inherent characteristics of the person that are developed both in the family and at work called competences. The most valued according to the study by (Cardona et al., 2001) are: service, leadership, honesty, initiative, teamwork, communication, decision making, among others.

However, after reviewing the aspects of work-family conciliation, it is necessary to know the definition of enrichment work-family integration, subject that becomes effective day by day internationally, since it is considered one of the most significant dimensions of conciliation by Jijena & Jijena (2011). The work-family enrichment refers to the way in which work and family benefit each other bidirectionally. There is a lot of literature that talks about the work-family conflict and its negative consequences on the health and the declining productivity of employees. Nevertheless, recently have done some research on the positive impact of work-family integration called enrichment, by Greenhaus and Powell (2006). However, it is worth noting that there is not enough literature on this new hypothesis.

The work-family enrichment by Greenhaus and Powell (2006), is defined as the grade to which experiences in one role or function improves the quality of life in the other role or function. Enrichment occurs when the benefits gained in the role A (work), allowing improved performance or individual affection in the role B (family). In other words, enrichment occurs when in a role are obtained both physical, psychological, social capital, materials, skills, perspectives and flexibility, allowing improved performance in the other role. This improvement or growth, can be directly called instrumental route, or indirectly, through the influence of positive affect, called affective route. In the theory of enrichment, by Greenhaus and Powell (2006), the work and family roles are allies rather than enemies.

It should be noted that the instrumental route refers to what family life has taught to a worker to interact with colleagues or to
multitask at work. The same way, the worker can develop the ability to conflict resolution in the workplace, allowing he or she to more effectively resolve conflicts that may arise in home, in relationships with couple, with children or other family members as parents, siblings, etc. Likewise, the interaction with the children promotes the development of patience, which facilitates the relationship with people at work. Moreover, the affective route indicates that a mood in a role, is directly involved in the other role, through affection. For example, an employee who feels comfortable and with good mood at work, likely may have a positive attitude with the family which will be an asset in his personal and family environment, with improved performance as spouse, parent, son, brother, etc. Greenhaus and Powell, (2006), also suggest the probability of self-esteem improves performance at work because it stimulates motivation, effort, persistence and aims setting. It is important to note that the supervisors are a model for collaborators. Therefore, they are the first responsible for assimilating and experience the policies in the institution, promoting the enrichment and conciliation between work and family. Thus, they act as leaders and catalysts of the process. In turn Chinchilla and Moragas (2009), talk about the mutual enrichment of the roles performed by a person in the family, at work and in society. They say it is important that companies take into account that their center, which are the people, operate between two areas, family and work and the competences they develop in their familiar task enrich their professional work. Thus, as families with stable marriages benefit the sustainability of the economic systems of the world, because it is easier for them because they have more emotional stability develop in a healthy environment. The good family health benefits companies, because they do not produce “integrity and motivated people by transcendent motives; these characteristics of employees, as assessed by managers today, although it can be reinforced in the formal education system, only can fully modeled within family” (Cruz, 2012, p.17). Cardona, et al (2001) refer to four managerial competences that according to a study by the Business School of the University of Navarra (IESE) are the highest valuation worldwide in companies, which are obtained in the first instance within the family such as customer orientation, leadership, honesty and initiative. Also they mention three competencies that refer to the capacity of managers and allowing self-improvement; these are, learning, decision-making and credibility. Thus, the way people operate in companies responds to their motivations, which if they are harmonized with the business aims, enable the achievement of goals. Extrinsic motivations are those of a material nature from the environment which seeks to reward; intrinsic motivations seek personal satisfaction, mostly lead to new knowledge and transcendent motivations seeking the benefit of others “satisfaction comes from which is provided to the other” (Debeljuk & Destéfano, 2013). Preliminary studies from IESE and from the International Center for Work and Family (ICWF) in Colombia and in the world, with a sample of 270 Colombian workers and 15,913 economically active people from 22 countries in Europe, Asia, America and Africa result that in companies with policies, leadership and culture CFR, employees work more by intrinsic, extrinsic and transcendent motivations. Studies show that in the world the 88% work for intrinsic motivations, while in Colombia, this percentage rises to 100%. However, this same motivation in companies who do not live in the CFR presented results of 36% for the world and 38% for Colombia. 68% of respondents in the world, work for extrinsic motivation in companies CFR, while in Colombia, the figure is 52%. In contrast to companies that are not CFR, where the results are 48% worldwide and 40% in Colombia. However, 87% of the population of workers of the world surveyed moves for transcendent motivations, compared with 80% of Colombian workers in companies CFR, while 65% of the sample taken for the world and 63% in Colombia, works by these motivations in companies that are not CFR. Which leads to the conclusion that the CFR favor companies and their workers, a condition that results in welfare of family relationship, because as we have seen this is not necessarily a conflict, but an opportunity for growth and development of interdependent competences that contribute to both the job and the family role. Among these competences are highlighted service, honesty, teamwork and communication, which in the first instance are developed in the family, but at the same time, reinforcing at work where they are valued for their impact on productivity, job satisfaction and working environment.

In addition, in working life, attitudes such as customer service, strengthen prudence and kindness in the family; administrative and financial management promote home economics; teamwork develops the domestic partnership and collaboration in the work of the home as well as delegating roles of father and mother to children. Competences such as order and organization of work, help harmonize time and space at home, leading to be more effective and efficient in time management.

In reference to educational institutions, corporate family responsibility becomes relevant, because, by their company name, they are the first convened to facilitate the experience of work-family enrichment with their employees. However, until now research were conducted on this topic in Business Schools as INALDE in Colombia and IESE in Spain and Universities as La Sabana in Colombia and Navarra in Spain.
References


