

Person-job fit and work-life balance of female nurses with cultural competence as a mediator: evidence from Nigeria



Original article

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Abstract: **Objective:** This study investigated the mediating effect of cultural competence in the relationship between person-job (P-J) fit and work-life balance among female nurses.

Methods: Participants included 216 (mean age = 31.12; SD = 9.16) female nurses that were conveniently selected from two Federal Teaching hospitals in Nigeria. Three questionnaires via the perceived fit scale, cultural competence scale, and work-life balance scale were utilized for data collection. Data were analyzed using both the Pearson Product Moment Correlation and PROCESS macro statistical tools.

Results: Results revealed that both P-J fit and cultural competence positively and significantly associated with work-life balance. Also, cultural competence partially mediated the relationship between P-J fit and work-life balance of nurses.

Conclusions: The cultural competence enhances the capacity of nurses to balance work and family roles. Therefore, cultural competence training that enhances nurses' capabilities to handle cultural diversities of patients is essential.

Keywords: *Cultural competence • nurses • person-job fit • work-life balance*

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1. Introduction

The attainment of a satisfactory balance between work and life among nurses has continued to be of a significant concern to practitioners and researchers as well. It is because maintaining work-life balance among nurses is essential for the well-being of health-care workforce and even patients alike.¹ However, for most individuals, it is often a struggle to achieve a balance between these two important domains.¹ Increasing workloads which is occasioned by high number of patients and inadequate nurses on duty² often result

to insufficient time for family and recreational activities among female nurses.³

In agreement with previous scholars, we define work-life balance as the ability of an individual to attain a state of equilibrium between his work and his personal life.⁴ The ability to balance work and life expectations may be linked to both personal and environmental factors. Past study affirmed that utilization of personal knowledge and resources enhance adequate balance between work and life roles.¹ Factors such as resilience⁵

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and personality⁶ were some of the personal factors that relate to work-life balance. Social support^{7,8} had been reported to be an environmental factor related to work-life balance. It is pertinent to establish that work-life balance has been found to have an indirect relationship with burnout and intention to leave.⁹ The merger of individual ability and the requirement of the job is important for a proper balance. This is often captured in person-job (P-J) fit.

P-J fit, which refers to the relationship between the characteristics of an individual and the job or tasks expected of them to perform at work.¹⁰ There are two basic conceptualizations of the construct of P-J fit. These are demand-abilities fit, which describes a situation when employees' knowledge, skills and abilities are adequate enough to meet the requirement of the organizations that they work for.¹⁰ The second is needs-supplies fit, which reflects a situation whereby the needs and desires of employees are met by their jobs. The link between demand-abilities fit and behavioral outcomes such as work engagement,¹¹ improved job performances¹² and organizational citizenship behavior¹³ had been established. When employees find a good environment to utilize their skills and abilities, they display positive work attitudes in return. We therefore infer that this may extend to work behaviors such as work-life balance and thus proposes that P-J fit will predict work-life balance.

Cultural competence is a factor that may play possibly an important role in the P-J fit-work-life balance relationship. It is one of the core competencies in nursing that describes the ability to deliver nursing services in meeting the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of patients. It is often considered a resource that should cushion the effect of pressure at work. However, the mediating role of cultural competence in the link between P-J fit and work-life balance is scarce. Culturally competent

nurses have been reported to have the ability to provide inclusive health care services, facilitate patients' satisfaction,¹⁴⁻¹⁶ and attain personal job satisfaction.¹⁷ We therefore hypothesized that culturally competent nurses will have capacity to balance work and life roles. Also, proposed an indirect effect of cultural competence on the relationship between P-E fit and work-life balance among female nurses.

As previous studies concentrated on the necessity for the inclusion of cultural competence in nurses' training while its relationship with work-life balance is limited, this study aimed at investigating the indirect effect of cultural competence on the relationship between P-J fit and work-life balance. Specifically, the following hypotheses were formulated for this study as represented in Figure 1.

- (i) P-J fit will significantly predict work-life balance.
- (ii) P-J fit will significantly predict cultural competence.
- (iii) Cultural competence will significantly work-life balance.
- (iv) Cultural competence will mediate the link between P-J fit and work-life balance.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants and procedures

Permission to conduct the study was granted by the Academic and Research Committee of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. The Director of Nursing Services of the two selected Federal teaching hospitals served as the gatekeepers. Nurses who indicated their interest to participate in the study were requested to sign the consent form. Anonymity and

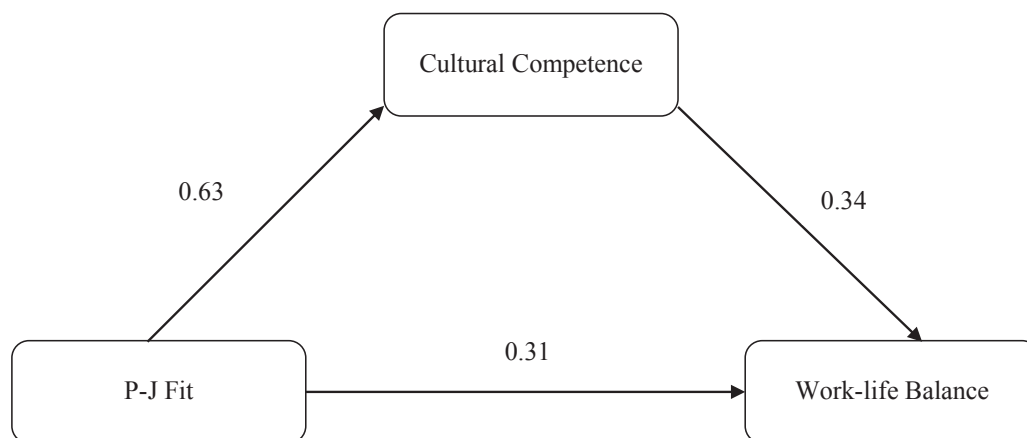


Figure 1. Hypothesized Model of the Mediating effect on the P-J fit-Work-life balance link.

confidentiality were assured and were allowed to complete the survey at the end of their shift. Note that 216 female nurses who were conveniently recruited from two Federal Teaching hospitals in Southwest Nigeria completed the survey. Of the 250 copies of questionnaire that were administered, 216 (86.4% response-rate) returned survey were usable. The average age of respondents was 31.12 years ($SD = 9.16$). Majority of the respondents were married (148, 68.5%), while 65 (30.1%) were single, 2 (0.9%), and 1 (0.5%) respondent were separated and divorced, respectively. The average length of service was 8.3 years ($SD = 6.05$). Data collection was completed in 2 weeks and it took 25 min for a participant to complete a questionnaire.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Work-life balance

This was measured using with a 5-item scale, which assessed information on respondents' ability to balance work and life roles. It has 7-point Likert response format that ranged from strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 7. Sample items include "I feel that the job and other activities are currently balanced," and "I am able to balance between time at work and time at other activities." The Cronbach alpha internal consistency for the scale was 0.91.

2.2.2. P-J fit

Information on participants' ability to fit into their job was measured with the 4-items Person-Job fit Scale from the original Multidimensional Instrument of Person-Environment Fit developed by Chuang, Shen, and Judge.¹⁸ It has a 7-point response format that ranges from not match at all (1) to completely match (7). It has a reliability score of 0.84 and with a largely supported discriminant and criterion-related validity, with a reasonable model fit. A Cronbach alpha internal consistency of 0.79 was also established for the current study.

2.2.3. Cultural competence

Nurses' ability to relate with people of different cultural background was assessed through a questionnaire that was purposely developed for the study. The items were generated from literature. Sample items include "I see myself as someone who is friendly and able to associate freely with people of other culture or tribe," "I see myself as someone who can easily understand the norms governing people behavior in other culture or tribe." It was developed to generate 7-point Likert response format that range from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The Cronbach alpha for the current study was 0.86.

2.3. Data Analysis

Data were first screened for skewness and kurtosis to establish their distribution. It was established that data on the variables in the study did not substantially deviate from normality (skewness and Kurtosi > 2). The descriptive analyses of the variables in the study were presented in the zero-order correlation while the mediation analyses were conducted using Hayes and Preacher¹⁹ PROCESS Macro. Specifically, Model 4 was utilized.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive analyses

Table 1 presents the zero-order correlations, mean, and standard deviation of the variables analyzed in the study.

Results revealed a significantly positive relationship between P-J fit and cultural competence ($r = 0.705$, $p < 0.05$). It also revealed that P-J fit to be significant and positively related to work-life balance ($r = 0.186$, $p < 0.05$). Interestingly, age was found to relate positively to job tenure ($r = 0.637$, $p < 0.05$), P-J fit ($r = 0.276$, $p < 0.05$), cultural competence ($r = 0.228$, $p < 0.05$), and work-life balance ($r = 0.175$, $p < 0.05$) among nurses. In addition, results from the Table 1 revealed a positive

Variables	M	SD	Age	Job Tenure	PJ Fit	Cul. Compe	WLB
Age	31.11	9.16	1				
Job Tenure	8.39	6.05	0.637**	1			
P-J fit	4.14	1.18	0.276**	0.008	1		
Cul. Compet	3.96	1.06	0.228**	0.006	0.705**	1	
WLB	4.40	1.29	0.175*	0.148*	0.288**	0.186**	1

Note: Gender (M = 1, F = 0), Job tenure (1 = 1–10 years, 0 = 11–20 years).

**Significant at 0.05% (two-tailed). P-J Fit, Person-Job Fit; Cul. Compe, Cultural Competence; WLB, Work-Life Balance.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix.

relationship between job tenure and work-life balance ($r = 0.146$, $p < 0.05$).

3.2. Mediation analyses

The mediation analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Process macro by Hayes and Preacher.¹⁸ Process Macro has gained significant popularity among researchers in estimation mediation model.²⁰ Furthermore, SPSS Process Macro uses bootstrapping approach in estimating model coefficient with confidence interval.

Results showed that the total effect of P-J on work-life balance was statistically significant ($\beta = 0.314$, $t = 4.396$, $p < 0.05$) and explained 8.3% variation in work-life balance. It was also observed that P-J fit positively related to the mediator variable, and cultural competence ($\beta = 0.633$, $t = 14.53$, $p < 0.05$), it explained 49.7% variation in work-life balance. Results further revealed that cultural competence had significant positive effect on nurses' work-life balance ($\beta = 0.340$, $t = 3.371$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that cultural competence tends to enhance the capacity to balance work and live demands and needs.

In terms of mediation analysis, the results listed in Table 2 indicate that cultural competence partially mediates the relationship between P-J fit and work-life balance ($\beta = 0.026$, C.I. $(-179, 123)$). The results support the postulation of the fourth hypothesis, which states that there will be significant indirect effect of cultural competence on the relationship between perceived P-J

fit and work-life balance among female nurses. However, the mediation effect is observed to be partial in nature as the independent variable still has effect on dependent variable after inclusion of mediator into the model.

4. Discussion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the indirect effect of cultural competence on the link between P-J fit and work-life balance among female nurses in Federal teaching hospitals. Findings from the study revealed that P-J fit predicted work-life balance. This is not unrelated to assertion from previous studies that a proper fit between the abilities of an employee and the requirements of the job could improve work outcomes like job performance.¹² This implies that when nurses who find a conducive work environment that supports the utilization of their knowledge, skills, and abilities, they tend to experience reasonable balance between work and life roles.

In agreement with our proposition, we also found that cultural competence predicted work-life balance. That suggests that when nurses are capable of providing nursing services which cater for the "social, cultural and linguistic needs" of their patients; they may be able to balance work and life roles. Furthermore, the study revealed that cultural competence had an indirect effect on the relationship between P-J fit and work-life balance among nurses. This implies that when nurses are culturally competent, their capacity to achieve work-life

Variables	Constant	P-J Fit	Cul. Compet	F	p	r	R ²
<i>Mediator model</i>				$F(1,214) = 21.12$	<0.001	0.705	0.497
β	1.345	0.633	-				
t	7.182	14.53	-				
p	0.001	0.001	-				
<i>Total effect</i>				$F(1,214) = 19.32$	<0.001	0.288	0.083
β	3.097	0.314	-				
t	10.08	4.396	-				
p	0.001	0.001	-				
<i>Direct effect</i>				$F(2,213) = 9.69$	<0.001	0.289	0.083
β	3.152	0.34	-0.041				
t	0.343	3.371	-0.368				
p	0.001	0.001	0.023				
<i>IE (95% Boot CI)</i>							
β	-	-	0.026				
LL	-	-	-0.179				
LU	-	-	0.123				

Note: IE, indirect effect; CI, confidence interval; Boot, bootstrapping.

Table 2. Simple mediation model of person-environment fit, cultural competence, and work-life balance.

balance through accurate fit between the personal characteristics and job need supplies increases. This is possible because cultural competence produces satisfaction in patients¹⁶ and nurses themselves.¹⁶ Thus, it follows that when nurses are satisfied with the way their patients are treated, they feel their skills have met the requirement of the job and further have a sense of attaining equilibrium between their work and personal life.⁴

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study suggested that nursing management should ensure a conducive working environment for effective discharge of nursing services. This will encourage adequate fit between personal characteristics and job demands among nurses. Since cultural competence mediates the link between P-J fit and work-life balance in this study, regular refresher course should be organized for nurses on cultural competence skills. This training will enable them to be abreast of new approaches to handling culturally diverse patients. It will

also assist nurses themselves to evaluate their knowledge of who a culturally competent nurse should be.

However, this study is not without limitations. We would like to state that findings from this study must be considered with caution due to the cross-sectional nature of the data. In addition, as participants were drawn from Teaching hospitals with referrals from other private hospitals, further studies may need to consider the inclusion of nurses in other public and private hospitals to expand the scope of the relevance of cultural competence in nursing profession. Also, the benefits of cultural competence to health workers in the areas of their quality of life, mental health, and wellbeing could be considered in future studies.

Ethical approval

Ethical issues are not involved in this paper.

Conflicts of interest

All contributing authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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