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Role conflict and turnover intention among middle managers: Testing emotional exhaustion as mediator and perceived support as moderator

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This master thesis is written as a final product of the Master of Science program in Leadership and Organizational Psychology at the Norwegian Business School, BI. The investigation and topic of this study is role conflict among middle managers and its relation to turnover intention, emotional exhaustion, and perceived support. Our inspiration behind this field comes from reading an article studying middle managers positioned in the "sandwich middle." The process has been educational and inspiring, as well as challenging at times. It has been exciting to reflect and compare existing research with our own results.

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Maria Elisabeth Rossland and Ada Alice Alveid

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship of role conflict among middle managers on emotional exhaustion and turnover intention and how perceived support moderates this relationship. A sample of 115 was received, through a survey approach, from a municipality in Norway. Research by Floyd and Lane (2000) states that middle managers are more likely to experience role conflict due to the position between pressure from above (leader) and from below (subordinates). This study investigates how this has any relationship with emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. Additionally, the moderation of perceived support in these relationships is investigated. The results indicate that role conflict has a significant positive correlation with middle managers' turnover intention. The mediation of emotional exhaustion in the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention is also supported. Unexpectedly, the moderation effect of perceived support is not supported. Possible implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research are discussed. This study contributes to middle managers' research, particularly in the context of employees working in the public sector in Norway.

Key words: middle managers, role conflict, turnover intention, emotional exhaustion, perceived support

Introduction

Organizations must maintain and pay attention to their employees' well-being to accomplish organizational goals. In this regard, employees are an essential resource for organizations (Avey, Luthans, Smith, & Palmer, 2010). More importantly, they must keep well-qualified employees, so their employees do not prefer to leave because the organization fails to pay attention (Soelton, Lestari, Arief, & Putra, 2020). Therefore, organizations that are apprehensive about financial investments should comprehend that human capital loss is expensive due to its significant consequences (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). In this regard, organizations must consider stress factors such as role conflict as research has shown that employees who experience this problematic and conflicting situation can trigger their intention to leave the organization (Lok, Ling, Ponnampalam, & Chen, 2019). Based on this, our study investigates the relationship between middle managers' experienced role conflict and turnover intention as conflicting demands are positively correlated with an increased level of stress and turnover intention (Van Sell, Brief, & Schuler, 1981). Additionally, this study investigates role conflict and its relation to emotional exhaustion as a consequence among middle managers and how perceived support moderates this relationship.

Stress is a "process by which workplace psychological experiences and demands (stressors) produce both short-term (strains) and long-term changes in mental and physical health" (Ganster & Rosen, 2013, p. 1088). Further, they emphasize that typical stressors in the work environment can include role conflict which, again can create strains such as emotional exhaustion. As role conflict can be perceived as a "role stress," this suggests that role conflict is an experience both individuals and organizations will avoid.

Role conflict is a critical consequence and problem demanding substantial attention from managers and researchers. While most role conflict studies have mainly focused on individual and top management levels and outcomes, limited attention has been appointed to the middle manager level and its consequences, such as turnover intention and emotional exhaustion. Thereby, we found a literature gap regarding the consequences of the relationship between middle managers and role conflict and wanted to investigate this further. Additionally, after reading a study by Gjerde and Alveson (2020) studying middle managers' identity in the position of

role conflict, and the sandwich middle, emphasizing protecting subordinates from damaging information and initiatives from top management, we found it interesting to write about role conflict.

Research by Floyd and Lane (2000) suggests that middle managers are more likely to experience role conflict, which occurs when "the various social roles one is expected to perform provide incompatible behavioral prescriptions" (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017, p. 664), than employees at other levels. This also underlines the reason for the chosen topic of this study. Shi, Markoczy, and Dess (2009) propose that this is grounded in that middle managers often play multiple roles (e.g., subordinate, leader) simultaneously in organizations. They are positioned squint in the middle, between expectations from both the top management and the subordinates. They continuously feel the pressure and may struggle to meet conflicting demands than other types of managers (O'Brien & Linehan, 2014).

In this regard, we will refer to the conservation of resources theory (COR) by Hobfoll (1989) as it provides a thorough understanding of individuals' behavior in stressful situations such as in role conflicts. COR theory explains that the interaction between individuals and their situation is underlined, and that coping with these situations are decided by the fit of available resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Resources refer to "those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a means for the attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies" (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 516). According to COR theory, individuals attempt to build, protect, and retain resources and experience stress when they feel that their resources are threatened or when they encounter an actual loss of resources, or when resources are not obtained following an investment of resources (Hobfoll, 1989).

Further, as role conflict is causing an imbalance for individuals as they are under high pressure, this often causes stress. Hobfoll (1989), states that a possible outcome of stress as a result of role conflict can be emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is a feeling of worn-out as a result of high job demands in combination with stress. Emotional exhaustion is, together with cynicism (or depersonalization), considered as the core dimensions of burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2003). Therefore, we will use the term burnout in some connections throughout the thesis. Employees in middle power positions could experience being unable to control and reduce demands, resulting in depleted energy Hobfoll (1989). This underlines why COR theory is highly relevant for our study and a

useful theory for explaining the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion.

Further, emotional exhaustion does not only reflect a personal issue; it also creates issues for organizations as it is positively related to turnover intention (Blackstock, Harlos, Macleod, & Hardy, 2015). Besides, research by Montgomery (2012) states that employee turnover intention can be a result of role conflict and a drop in employee well-being, which can affect the presence of emotional exhaustion. When employees face two or more conflicting requests at work at once, they find it problematic to meet the level of requirements in each action needed to be accomplished. If they do not have available resources to handle these demands, they will often experience that the role conflict they are facing inspire and increase their intention to leave the organization (Lok et al., 2019)

In this regard, this study investigates how perceived support alters the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion and the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention. Perceived support in our study involves perceived supervisor support, perceived colleague support, and perceived organizational support. This will be outlined further. Previous research emphasizes that support decreases employees' turnover intention (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), and could help middle managers deal with job demands (Jawahar, Stone, & Kisamore, 2007). Meral, Yildiz, and Karabay (2018) state that supervisors who support employees in coping with job demands, such as emotional exhaustion, are a valuable resource for the organization, influencing employees' withdrawal behavior. COR theory states that individuals endeavor to maintain resources to create well-being and that stress symptoms emerge when individuals experience a loss in resources or incapable of gaining resources (Hobfoll, 2002). Therefore, our reasoning in this study is that perceived support helps reducing employees' impression of resource loss. Based on the presented topics, our developed research question for this study is:

How does middle managers' experience of role conflict relate to their turnover intention? And does emotional exhaustion mediate, and perceived support moderate this relationship?

Literature Review

To answer the outlined research question for our study, we will present literature of middle managers' role, role conflict as a middle manager, the concepts of turnover intention, emotional exhaustion, and perceived support.

Middle Managers Role

Middle managers occupy an essential part in organizational hierarchies as they are positioned "between the operating core and the apex" (Mintzberg, 1989, p. 98). Several researchers have investigated what middle managers should do, actually do and what skills are required for this managerial role (Harding, Lee, & Ford, 2014). Further, studies of middle managers often consider them as one demarcated social group, and topics used to be relatively general. Other middle-management studies present identity struggles concerning values, leadership, self-definition, professionalism issues, and subjectivity about management and organizational discourses concerning strategy (Down & Reveley, 2009; Musson and Duberley, 2007). These general topics do not consider how life in the middle is. Despite all previous research on middle management (Tengblad & Vie, 2012), few studies investigate the middle manager role separated from top managers and subordinates. Few studies show a deeper understanding of how middle managers perceive themselves being positioned in the middle, how they relate specifically to their double role as both leader and subordinate (Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020), and how role conflict as a result of this dual role can create negative consequences for them. Some of the researchers that do have investigated the theme are Sims (2003), and Gjerde and Alvesson (2020), which are explaining this middle levelness and middle managers squeezed in the "sandwiched middle." Sims (2003) state that "middle managers are facing both ways, having to put together a convincing story about what they are doing for the benefit of their seniors and also an (often conflicting) story for their juniors" (Sims, 2003, p. 201). Sims's (2003) study highlights the demanding experience of being a middle manager as their subordinates and managers may undermine their located position in the middle.

Steering the middle can be intricate. This hierarchical middle and contradictions of the middle-level indicate a relevant challenge, middle managers may experience. According to a citation of Mintzberg (1973), a middle manager can

be described as the information "disseminator," both obtaining and spreading information to subordinates. Researchers who have investigated middle managers' lives state that the equivocal position they are located between managers and subordinates may create vulnerability and destructive uncertainty (Sims, 2003). In this regard, this study addresses role conflict among middle managers and investigate its relationship to emotional exhaustion, turnover intention, and perceived support.

Middle managers are painted to work as the bridge between the top management and lower operational levels (Tengblad & Vie, 2012). When the expression "middle managers" is practiced, the purpose is often to distinguish between top managers and non-managers (Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020). Consequently, the variety of middle managers extends from small team leaders to senior managers in both small and large organizations (Mintzberg, 2009).

Further, as middle managers may work as a channel of communication in organizations, this often provides better coordination between them. However, inconsistency in thoughts about how things should be handled can cause challenges for those in the middle, as they need to benefit their leaders while listening to their subordinates on a lower level. Floyd and Lane (2000) claim that this results in that middle managers are more likely to experience role conflict than employees at other levels because they are confronted with a complex set of expectations. They explain the situation in the middle of a hierarchical position as challenging to fulfill sometimes, meaning that middle managers often experience various requirements from different directions and levels of the organization. This is usually because they have the responsibility of performing two roles simultaneously. Also, a lack of formalization and a clear definition of roles or tasks can create these conflicting role situations (Floyd & Lane 2000).

Further, Sims (2003) emphasizes how middle managers experience that both manager and subordinates can undermine their position as managers. Gjerde and Alvesson (2020) found that one can divide middle-managers' experience of their role in three main roles; performance driver, impotent manager, and umbrella-protector. Each position is based on the direction of their identification, up, down, or with neither, how the managers experience their influence in their position, demands, and pressure (Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020). Nevertheless, there are agreements on that middle managers experience inconsistencies, and bewilderment independent of the roles and positions (Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020).

Role Conflict and Middle Managers

According to Fisher (2001), role conflict is one of the most highlighted organizational tensions within organizations, especially among middle managers (Floyd & Lane, 2000). However, research has not investigated the consequences of being a middle manager in role conflict situations in which this study contributes. This is consistent with Roethlisberger's (1965) argument stating that middle managers regularly experience role conflict, compared with top managers where role conflict situations are more temporary. This is because top managers are not positioned in the middle between conflicting demands from subordinates and managers as middle managers are. Role conflict among middle managers is often a result of stress which arises in the interplay between them and their environments of pressure and conflicting demands. The terms "stress" and "stressors" are frequently used interchangeably within research (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). In this study, we refer to the description of LePine, Podsakoff, and LePine (2005), saying "stressors are conditions that cause strains" (p. 764). Individuals evaluate stressors to verify their well-being and then measure available resources to deal with the perceived stressors. As mentioned, stressors in the work environment include role conflict, which can create strains such as emotional exhaustion.

According to Olk and Friedlander (1992), role conflict is defined as when individuals experience different expectations that need behaviors which is mutually competing or opposing. Role conflict may arise when middle managers' expectations contradict the expectations of their leader (Ladany & Friedlander, 2016).

It can also occur from personal, interpersonal, and organizational elements that influence middle managers' perceptions of their role while attaining their responsibilities. Further, role conflict is identified when several requirements or role outputs occur simultaneously so that the accomplishment of one of them makes the other more demanding (Sims 2003). Fisher (2001) also stresses this idea by describing it as the impossibility of not fulfilling one of the requirements. According to Kim and Lee (2010) and King and King (1990), these expectations and requirements may be perceived as competing demands or pressure in a position as humans' aspiration to make success may cause conflicts in the role. This can be compared with what Sims (2003) and Gjerde and Alvesson (2020) explain as the

sandwich middle for middle managers in middle power positions as they may find themselves dragged in different directions while attempting to reply to the many statuses they hold. Thereby, performing competing requirements with dissimilar roles may lead to a growth in role conflicts (e.g., Jackson & Schuler, 1985). This is consistent with Floyd and Lane's (2000) theory that middle managers are more likely to face role conflicts as they often experience and are confronted with requirements and expectations to adopt several and conflicting roles (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017).

According to the framework of Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964), there are four types of role conflict. Intrasender conflict arises when a single role sender transmits incompatible expectations. Intersender conflict refers to when incompatible expectations from two or more role senders are received. Thirdly, the person-role conflict exists when Focal's role expectations disagree with the expectations of one or more role senders. Lastly, interrole conflict occurs when the behavior of an individual in one role is inconsistent with the behavior required in another role. A common component for all four types of role conflict is the "simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other" (Kahn et al., 1964, p. 19). In this study, role conflict will be perceived as the intersender conflict as we emphasized earlier that when employees face two or more conflicting requests at work at once, they find it problematic to meet the requirements in each action needed to be accomplished.

According to role theory and organization theory, each position in formal organizations should include specific responsibilities, role requirements, and a defined set of tasks. These identifications of obligations provide the management with direction and guidance to their subordinates and make the subordinates responsible for specific performance (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). If employees do not know their responsibilities and what achievements are expected, they will delay their decision-making and rely on error approaches in handling the managers' expectations of their specific position (Rizzo et al., 1970).

It is known that role conflict, stress, and emotional exhaustion are variables with various effects of organizational practices on both corporate and individual levels (Rizzo et al., 1970). Additionally, role conflict is linked with similar strain consequences used as dependent variables in stress analysis. Among them are emotional exhaustion (Jackson, 1984), and turnover intention (reviewed by Fisher

& Gitelson, 1983). However, few studies investigate the relationship between these concepts on middle managers. Therefore, one of the main objectives of this study is to investigate how role conflict is correlated with middle managers' turnover intention.

Turnover Intention

From the perspective of COR theory, role conflict provides threats to an employee's resources. Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) emphasize that role conflict creates a depletion of resources as employees find it hard to meet the numerous work demands. Employees have limited resources that can be replenished or deplete. If depletion finds place, this may aggravate even more as stress occurred from the primary depletion, often decrease employees' function to secure future new resources or replenish the lost resources (Innstrand, Langballe, Espnes, Falkum, & Aasland, 2008). Eventually, this stress may cause a decrease or even diminishing organizational commitment and job satisfaction, both precursors to turnover intention (Nohe & Sonntag, 2014). Treuren and Fein (2018) argue that this process arises regardless of the origin of the role conflict source. Thereby, the scope of stress affecting turnover intention is because of employees' capacity to gain new resources, replenish lost resources, and the level of depletion.

This is consistent with Montgomery's (2012) 's research, stating that employee turnover intention can be a result of the presence of role conflict. Literature divide turnover intention and turnover. Turnover intention can be defined as the intention to leave an organization (e.g. Mobley, 1982), which is very similar to Kuvaas' (2006, p. 509) definition "... the behavioral intent to leave an organization". It can also be viewed as the final step in the decision-making process before an employee actually leaves the organization (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Turnover, on the other hand, refers to an employees' actual exit from an organization (Soelton et al., 2020). However, turnover intention is a good predictor of actual turnover (Pradhan, Jena, & Mohapatra, 2018) and the variable we will investigate in this study.

Turnover intention is dependent on factors such as mobility cognitions, the perceived chances of finding another job (primarily due to the economic condition), the individuals' difference in search behavior, and the employability and labor market conditions (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Mobley (1982) points out that turnover

is costly and has several negative consequences for any organization. Many organizations and managers are particularly concerned about high turnover (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006). First and foremost, one loses competence from the organization, which will always be a loss. This can threaten the quality, stability, and consistency of the service offered by the organization (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008). Besides, it is expensive to recruit and train new employees (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Given the enormous consequences of high turnover in an organization, it is natural that this is something that organizations and leaders are aware of (e.g., Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000).

Several researchers have investigated and developed models to interpret turnover intention and its connected constructs. The most protuberant model may be the job resource-demands model (JD-R) by Demerouti and Bakker (2006). This model contributes to credible explanations of reasons why individuals want to leave an organization. Further, one of the aspects of the JD-R model is that job demands can cause burnout and further lead to turnover intention.

Yap, Ling, Ponnampalam, and Chen (2019) found a positive relationship between role conflict and turnover intention. This is consistent with the research of Wen, Zhou, Hu, and Zhang (2020), who found a significant positive correlation between role stress and turnover intention. They argue that role stress consists of role conflict, role overload, and role ambiguity (Wen et al., 2020). In the workplace, role conflict is negatively correlated with job commitment, job involvement, participation in decision-making, and satisfaction with compensation, coworkers, and supervision (Van Sell et al., 1981). In light of the presented literature, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1: Role conflict has a positive relationship with turnover intention

Emotional Exhaustion

As stated, middle managers are at high risk of experiencing conflicting demands, which is defined as role conflict, which could lead to emotional exhaustion. According to Boles, Johnston, and Hair (1997, p. 19), emotional exhaustion is "a state caused by psychological and emotional demands made by people." It occurs when an individual experiences immense job demands on her or his energy and time combined with low job resources. When individuals feel emotionally exhausted,

they are unable to control and reduce toxin handling demands. Cordes and Dougherty (1993) explain that this could make middle managers feel they lack energy and feel that their emotional resources are fully depleted. On the other hand, when the resources are high, emotional exhaustion can potentially be avoided even if the job demands are high (Bakker et al., 2003; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Emotional exhaustion is, together with cynicism (or depersonalization), considered as the core dimensions of burnout (Bakker et al., 2003). This means that when an individual experience burnout, they also experience emotional exhaustion.

In terms of COR theory by Hobfoll (1989) and the stressor-strain relationship, negative situations deplete valued resources. This depletion of resources hinders individuals' capacity to cope with future stressful events, leading to emotional exhaustion (Arshadi & Shahbazi, 2013). Sometimes, employees face conflicting situations where the solutions are not visible and cannot be easily obstructed by other available resources. Role conflict can be such a negative situation, and if this persists over time, employees can deplete valuable resources to handle this situation. The experience of role conflict has been associated with adverse health, psychological, social, and work-related outcomes. It can increase both the frustration and stress of employees in such circumstances, which could lead to potential sources and risks of emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). This is consistent with Gann's (1979) study, which emphasizes that work environment stressors such as high work demands are related to emotional exhaustion. Additionally, when employees become emotionally exhausted, organizations are at high risk as it often affects the quality of the employees' work. It also becomes a visible factor in low morale and absenteeism (Freudenberger, 1974).

The event of burnout and work-related well-being can also be perceived through the conservation of resources theory. COR theory emphasizes that employees attempt to obtain, protect, and retain valued resources, reducing threats and potential loss of resources. These threats and losses of resources are often understood within role demands besides the effort and energy that an individual put down to meet these demands. Employees invest their available resources in meeting job demands with the assumption of receiving positive work outputs (e.g., rewards) in return. They try to keep their available resources by considering what resources may be accommodating at any given situation they face. On the other hand, when

valued resources cannot be recaptured, a decrease in well-being will occur and potentially lead to emotional exhaustion (Hobfoll, 1989).

In a study by Demerouti and Bakker (2006), results show that energy depletion is motivated and driven by high job demands, which leads to emotional exhaustion. High job demands can be conflicting job demands middle managers are experiencing as role conflict. Along with this, previous research by Bakker et al. (2003) conveyed that sufficient resources increase engagement, whereas both unsatisfactory resources and demands increase burnout.

According to Freudenberger (1974), emotional exhaustion affects the quality of employees' work, and it becomes a visible factor in low morale, absenteeism, and turnover intention. Further, Gann (1979) emphasizes that different work environment stressors and high work demands are related to emotional exhaustion. Previous research by Mor, Nissly, and Levin (2001) has underlined the positive correlation between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. Furthermore, employees experiencing depletion by work are less satisfied and less disposed to stay in the organization (Arshadi & Shahbazi, 2013). This relationship is consistent with a meta-analysis on the emotional exhaustion dimensions of burnout, which contributes excellent support to turnover intentions (Arshadi & Shahbazi, 2013). Concerning role conflict, Boles et al. (1997) argue in his study that there is a direct, positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and role conflict. Based on the presented literature, hypothesis 2 is outlined:

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between role conflict and turnover intention is mediated by emotional exhaustion.

Perceived Support

Perceived support in our study involves perceived supervisor support, perceived colleague support, and perceived organizational support. This is a broader understanding of how employees view their support by the organization. The importance of influence by others in conjunction with POS was emphasized already in 1986 by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986).

Several studies have presented a significant relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and essential outcomes (e.g., Allen, Shore, & Griffeth 2003; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). POS is defined

as the extent to which employees understand that their organization values their contributions and that the organization cares about their well-being (Jawahar et al., 2007). Studies by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) show that POS often develops through several interactions over time between employers and their employees.

Employees' social exchanges of supportive resources at work are found to be embedded in stable social relationships at work with one's colleagues (e.g., Coleman, 1988; Granovetter, 1985; Uzzi, 1999). Being embedded in a network in the organization with reciprocated exchange relationships with your colleagues contributes to POS because employees identify the network with the organization (Hayton, Carnabuci, & Eisenberger, 2012). The organization is responsible for the culture and the objectives that either inhibit or promote a supportive relationship among the colleagues in the organization (Ouchi, 1980). The support employees experience and receive from their colleagues can be attributed to the organization itself (Eisenberg et al., 1986).

Additionally, researchers propose (e.g., Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002; Carlson & Perrewé, 1999) that supervisor support can make employees work situation less stressful by providing emotional support, and help one to get greater control over the situations. Supervisors can help in reducing the effects of job stress by reducing the emotional distress one is experiencing. Several studies (e.g., Chen, Siu, Lu, Cooper & Phillips, 2009; Noblet, Rodwell, & Allisey, 2009; Wong and Cheuk, 2005) have treated supervisor support as a moderator due to the buffering adverse impact of job stress. Wickramasinghe (2012) argues that the impact of supervisor support works as a moderator as an informal support recourse in reducing the adverse effects of job stress. Besides, it also considers how employees comprehend that the organization they work in is committed to them.

Employees who experience support from their organizations have proven to have several positive effects. Potentially this can increase positive mood at work and could cause positive emotional associations with the organization itself, which can increase organizational commitment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and decrease turnover intention (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Employees who experience a high level of POS will generally report less psychological strain or distress. Support will help employees to cope with stress (e.g., Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). Hobfoll (1989) suggest that POS could buffer the adverse effects of role stress and also directly reduce role stress. Jawahar et al. (2007) propose an explanation of why organizations with high levels of POS may have a lower range of role stress.

Organizations that care about their employees' well-being may decrease the perception of role stress because such organizations are more likely to reduce unnecessary work complications and distractions for their workers, such as conflicting job requirements. Employees who reported high POS in their organization felt that the organization was interested in their well-being and had a lower probability of experiencing burnout (Jawahar et al., 2007). According to Jawahar et al.'s (2007) research, POS moderates the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion as a buffer reducing the effects of the stressors on the outcomes or strain. POS's relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion can be moderated due to the buffer effect of the stressors or psychological strain (Brotheridge, 2001). It is conceivable that POS could decrease employees' general level of stress at both high and low exposure to stressors (Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999).

Fundamentally, COR theory argues that individuals endeavor to maintain resources to create well-being and that stress symptoms emerge when individuals experience a loss in resources or when they are not capable of gaining resources (Hobfoll, 2002). Based on the presented literature, our reasoning in this study is that perceived support helps reducing employees' impression of resource loss. Therefore, our third hypothesis is as follow:

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion is moderated by perceived support. Specifically, this relationship is weaker for high POS and stronger for low perceived support.

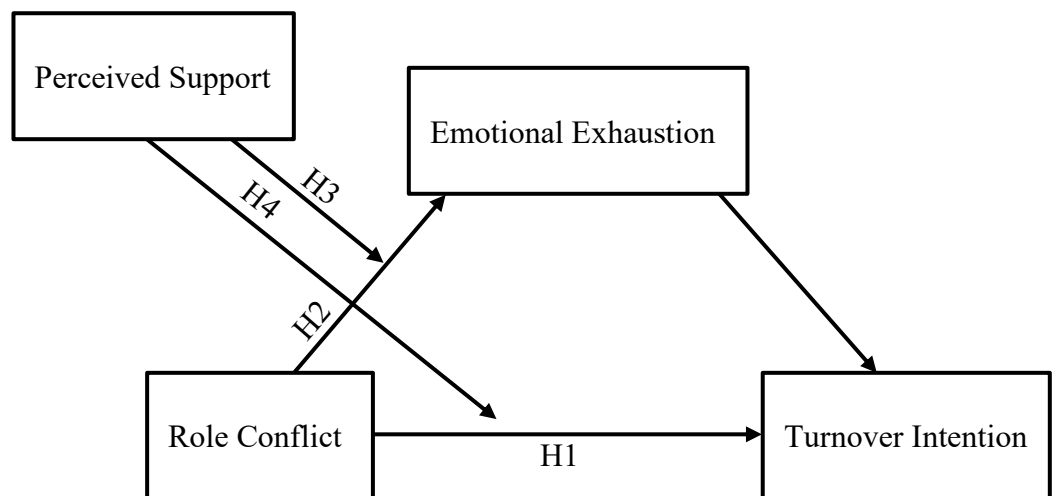
Furthermore, understanding the antecedents of turnover intentions is of evident importance to both organizations and research within the organizational psychology (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). Research by Meral et al. (2018) state that supervisors who support employees in coping with job demands, are valuable resources for the organization, and have an influence on the withdrawal behavior of employees. Rhoades and Eisenberg (2002) also found a mean corrected correlation of -.51 between perceived support and turnover intention, which means that employees who experience perceived support have a lower chance of experiencing turnover intention. POS results in higher engagement due to the social exchange view between employees and organization relationships. Compared to incentives such as payroll and other perks, organizational support can be a more profitable

investment (Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, & Allen, 2007). However, these organizations are also likely to be good at specifying job commitments to their employees and being clear on their job duties (Jawahar et al., 2007). Regardless, POS studies have found that high POS is associated with an increased commitment to the organization (Treglown, Zivkov, Zarola, & Furnham, 2018). According to Eisenberg et al. (1886), POS should increase employees' commitment to an organization by fulfilling socioemotional needs as affiliation and emotional support. These fulfillments result in a strong sense of belonging to the organization; employees feel membership and role status into their social identity. This leads to higher organizational commitment and reduces turnover intention (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). Based on this, our fourth hypothesis is outlined:

Hypothesis 4: The relationship between role conflict and turnover intention is moderated by perceived support. Specifically, this relationship is weaker for high POS and stronger for low perceived support.

To sum up, we will test whether there is a relationship between role conflict and turnover intention and whether emotional exhaustion mediates it. Further, we will test the moderation of perceived support in the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention and the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion. All hypotheses in this study are outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual model



Methodology

Sample

A non-probability sample design was outlined to collect data for this study. Essentially, this implies that some units in the population were more likely to be selected than others (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018). For this research, data were collected from middle managers. The questionnaire was sent to 214 middle managers located in five different departments. Based on this, our sample is described as a convenience sample, and the findings are not generalizable.

Procedures and Sample

The research methodology used in this study is a quantitative approach. According to Bell et al. (2019), research through a quantitative approach is both efficient and feasible for the study's purpose. Additionally, a questionnaire survey facilitates reaching a large number of respondents and is proficient in collecting and analyzing data.

Data was collected through an online questionnaire employing Qualtrics Inc. Before the data collection, the study was notified to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). To ensure that the respondents received information about the objectives and how the data would be used and presented in the thesis, we included this information in the emails sent with the questionnaire. See Appendix C for the email. This was sent out by email on March 6, 2020, and data were collected until March 24. Of 214 possible respondents, we received N=115 respondents. The respondents were divided between 77 women (67.5%) and 37 men (32.5%). This represents the sample very well, as our sample was divided between 65 percent women and 35 percent men. The respondents' age was distributed as follows: 0.9 percent younger than 25, 5.2 percent were between 26-35 years, 27.8 were between 36-45 years, 40 percent between "46-55 years", and 25.2 percent "over 56". Regarding position tenure, 55 respondents (47.8%) had been in the middle manager position for more than five years, and 32 (27.8%) for more than ten years. 97 respondents (84.4%) had been in the organization for more than five years, and 86 (74.8%) had been in the organization for more than ten years. The respondents were kept anonymous throughout the whole process.

In this study, we developed one questionnaire, including all needed variables to be measured. We were interested in causality and started with an ambition to measure the variables in two or three times with some time interval. We would have started with the first survey to measure the independent and the control variables, the second to measure mediator and moderator, and the third survey to measure the dependent variable. This would have been an action to increase causality in our research, which means considering all possible causes of relations between the variables. Then we could assume more accuracy about the cause-effect between role conflict, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intention. However, causality requires at least three months between each survey. In this context, the time frame was not long enough due to the thesis process (approximately six months).

However, we did randomize the question in the survey in order not to make the relationship obvious for the respondents. This means that this study does not report a causal relationship, but indicates the relationship between the included variables. We used back-translation for the questionnaire (Edunov, Ott, Auli, & Grangier, 2018). See Appendix A and B for the survey in both English and Norwegian.

Measures

In this study, four variables were measured on individuals scales. Items for role conflict, emotional exhaustion, and perceived support were measured on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Turnover intention was also measured on a seven-point Likert scale, but it varied between three different scales. The three scales were as follows; from 1 (not at all) to 7 (to a very large extent), from 1 (never) to 7 (very often), and from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely).

Independent Variable

Role conflict was tested using an 11-item scale, developed by Rizzo et al., (1970). Examples of items included in this scale are "I work under incompatible policies and guidelines" and "I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently."

Moderator

Perceived support was operationalized and measured with 13-item by Hayton et al. (2012). The scale distinguishes three dimensions; supervisor support, coworkers support, and organizational support. This measure did not converge as three dimensional in the original study (Hayton et al., 2012). However, we will treat it as a single measure in this study. Examples of items used are: "My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values," "My coworkers really care about my well-being" and "The organization strongly considers my goals and values."

Mediator

To measure emotional exhaustion, we used "The measurement of experienced burnout" by Maslach and Jackson (1981). Here we used the 9-item validated to measure emotional exhaustion. Two examples of statements from this scale are, "I feel emotionally drained from my work" and "I feel I'm working too hard on my job" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p. 102).

Dependent Variable

To measure turnover intention, we used a 15-item scale developed by Roodt (2004). We included 13 of the items in our study. The reason why two items were removed was that we considered that the translation into Norwegian did not work in the same way as when the question was asked in English. Some examples of the items used are, "How frequently do you scan the newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?" and "To what extent does the fear of the unknown," prevent you from quitting?".

Control Variables

Included control variables were year in the position, year in the organization, age, and gender. Year in position and year in the organization was divided into five levels; "less than one year" coded 1, then we have five years in between for the next three categories before we have "longer than 20 years" coded as 5. Age was also divided into five levels; "younger than 25" coded as 1, then ten years intervals, before "over 56" coded as 5. Gender was measured as a dichotomous variable coded "0" for males and "1" for females. See Appendix A and B for the complete questionnaire.

Results

In this chapter, we will present the results of our study. We will start by presenting how we did the analysis. Further, we will present descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and answer the outlined hypotheses of this study.

Analysis

To test our four hypotheses, we used an extension pack to SPSS, PROCESS, by Hayes (2013). To test hypothesis 1, the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention and, hypothesis 2, the mediation of emotional exhaustion between this relationship, we used model 4. Year in position, year in the organization, gender and, age was included as control variables. To test the moderating effect of perceived support in the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion, hypothesis 3, and in the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention, hypothesis 4 used model 8, with the same control variables.

Descriptive Statistics

Before we started transforming variables of our data and did further analysis, Cronbach alpha was computed to all the measures to check the internal reliability. The lowest tolerance value accepted was .70. This study consists of four different multi-item measures, using a 7-point Likert scale. The result of the reliability analysis was as follow: role conflict ($\alpha = .83$), emotional exhaustion ($\alpha = .87$), turnover intention ($\alpha = .80$), perceived support ($\alpha = .75$).

Table 1 reports descriptive statistics, the bivariate correlation between the variables. Here we can see that there is a significant bivariate correlation between all the four variables in the study. Further, the data indicates that year in position and year in the organization have a significant positive correlation to perceived support. This means that middle managers who have been longer in the position or/and longer in the organization have a higher chance of experiencing perceived support. The results also reveal that women have a higher chance of experiencing perceived support. This correlation matrix only indicates the relationship between every two variables in our research. To test our hypotheses, we used multiple regression with PROCESS (Hayes, 2013).

Table 1: Bivariate Correlation Matrix

	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1.Role Conflict	40.05	10.67	-							
2.Turnover Intention	51.73	10.26	.48***	-						
3.Emotional Exhaustion	38.58	10.19	.53***	.70***	-					
4.Percieved Support	33.00	7.90	-.21*	-.22*	-	-				
5.Year in position	2.75	1.19	-.01	.08	-.04	.20*	-			
6.Year in organization	4.04	1.14	-.06	-.08	-.07	.18*	.47***	-		
7. Gender	1.32	.47	-.15	.06	.03	.24**	.14	-.06	-	
8. Age	3.84	.90	-.01	.19	.16	.08	.44***	.55***	.02	-

Note: **, correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. *, correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. Female = 1, Male = 2 (N = 115)

Hypothesis Testing

In our first hypothesis, we propose that role conflict has a positive relationship with turnover intention. To test this hypothesis (Hypothesis 1), we used model 4 in PROCESS. The results of model 4 are reported in Table 2. Role conflict was significantly related to turnover intention ($b = .46, p < .001$). Based on this result, middle managers who experienced role conflict were more likely to express turnover intention. Our second hypothesis proposed that the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention is mediated by emotional exhaustion. These results are reported in Table 2. This relationship was also supported (indirect effect, $b = .28$, and direct effect was $b = .18, p < .005$, total effect $b = .46, p < .001$). The mediation is also significant, as the indirect effect's confidence intervals do not include zero (CI 95%, LLCI = .1736, ULCI = .4210). This means that emotional exhaustion is a variable that can explain the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention. This result suggests that middle managers who are emotionally exhausted were more likely to experience turnover intention.

Table 2: Linear regression analysis (Process model 4)

	Emotional Exhaustion	Turnover Intention	Turnover Intention (total)
	b	b	b
Year in Position	.43	.12	.37
Year in Organization	-1.81*	-.95	-1.10*
Gender	1.23	1.5	2.23
Age	2.85**	1.7	3.31*
Role Conflict	.49***	.18*	.46***
Emotional Exhaustion	-	.58***	-
Constant	-12.36*	17.53**	24.71*

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05. (N = 115)

Table 3: Linear regression analysis (Process model 8)

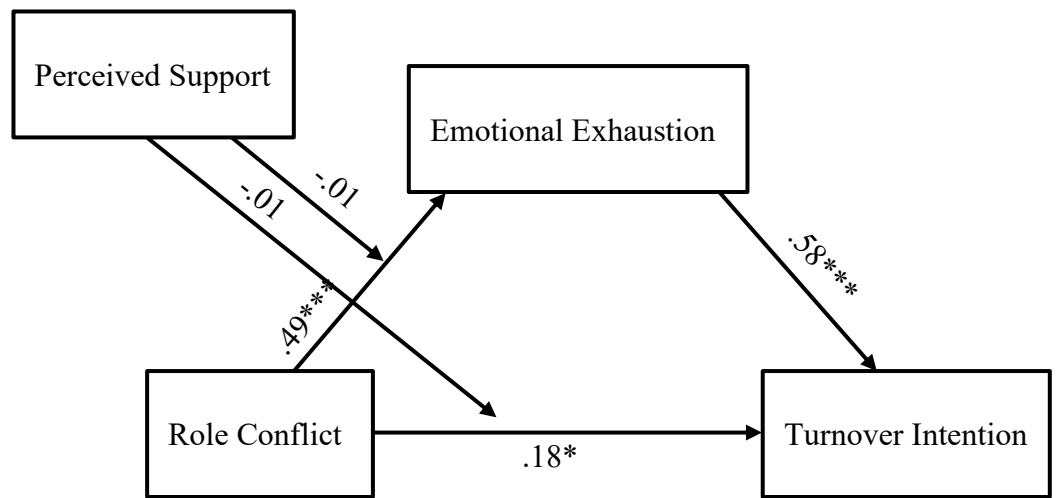
	Emotional Exhaustion	Turnover Intention
	b	b
Year in Position	.65	.12
Year in Organization	-1.5	-.80
Gender	2.66	1.26
Age	2.5**	1.78
Role Conflict	.46**	.15
Perceived support	-.36**	.02
Emotional Exhaustion	-	.60**
Perceived Support x Role Conflict	-.01	-.01

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05. (N = 115)

In our third hypothesis, we wanted to test if perceived support moderates in the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion. To test this hypothesis, we used model 8 in PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). We did not get support for hypothesis 3; the interaction was not significant ($b = -.01, p > .05$). In our fourth hypothesis, we propose that the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention is moderated by perceived support. We did not get a significant result for this fourth hypothesis ($b = -.01, p > .05$). These results are reported in Table 3.

In sum, our findings indicate that we got support for hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2, the positive relationship between role conflict and turnover intention, and emotional exhaustion as a mediation between the relationship. However, we did not get support for the moderation of perceived support. Our main findings are summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Results from testing our conceptual model



Note: Coefficients for indirect effects of role conflict upon middle managers turnover intention through emotional exhaustion (n = 115). $p > .05 = *$, $p < .05 = **$, $p < .01 = ***$, $p < .001$.

Discussion

This study posited four hypotheses to examine how role conflict among middle managers has a relation to emotional exhaustion and turnover intention, and if perceived support moderates this relationship. The results show support for the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention and emotional exhaustion. We did not find support for the moderation of perceived support in the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion, neither in the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention.

Our findings highlight the importance of precise role distribution and expectations clarification, which can prevent middle managers' role conflict. Some researchers (e.g., Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020; Sims 2003; Floyd & Lane, 2000) state that middle managers experience role conflict. However, there is little research about how middle managers experience role conflict. Therefore, we argue that our study provides a unique contribution to middle managers and shed light on the possible outcomes of middle managers experiencing role conflict.

The significant relationship between role conflict and turnover intention is in line with previous findings. It indicates that employee's turnover intention can be a result of presence role conflict (Montgomery, 2012; Chen, 2019), and found to be negatively correlated with job commitment, job involvement and intentions to leave the organization (Van Sell et al., 1981); thus hypothesis (H1) is supported. The intention to leave the organization is the best predictor of actual turnover, which means that if an organization wants to investigate and reduce turnover, this is one of the strongest determinants of actual turnover (Pradhan et al., 2018).

In line with previous research (Kulik et al., 2009), emotional exhaustion mediation of the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention was supported. Our findings are consistent with Kulik et al. (2009), arguing that emotional exhaustion can affect middle managers if they do not have available resources to handle the job demands; thus, hypothesis (H2) is supported. Research by Demerouti and Bakker (2006) referred to the JD-R model, which shows that job demands cause burnout and lead to turnover intention. These are factors that can explain why middle managers who experience emotional exhaustion because of role conflict, are more likely to have an intention to leave the organization.

Unexpectedly, the moderation of perceived support was not supported. This is not coherent with previous research. We received neither support for hypothesis 3 or 4; perceived support as a moderator in the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion, and the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention. Perceived organizational support is previously found to be a buffer in this relationship by reducing stressors and psychological strain (Brotheridge, 2001; Viswesvaran et al., 1999). We speculate that one explanation of our conflicting findings regarding hypothesis 3 and 4 compared to previous research may be that the sample used in the studies we refer to differs in that they include a mix of subordinates and leaders. In contrast, only middle managers were included in our study. We assume that this may have caused different outcomes compared to previous research. Additionally, we see from the results that perceived support has a standard deviation of 7.9 and a mean score of 33.00. This indicates that the respondents answer very similar, which causes skewed and not normal distributed data on perceived support. This can also explain why we do not find the moderator effect.

Concerning COR theory, Hobfoll (1989) proposes that individuals try to build and retain resources to create well-being and that stress symptoms occur when they experience a loss in resources. Based on this, we hoped our findings showed that perceived support from colleagues, supervisors, and the organization helped meet job demands and reduce employees' impression of resource loss. However, we did not get support for this. An explanation can be that role conflict is a negative situation which depletes valued resources (Hobfoll, 1989). This depletion of resources hinders individuals' capacity to cope with future stressful events, which can lead to emotional exhaustion. Role conflict can be such a negative situation, and if this persists over time, employees can deplete valuable resources to handle this situation. In other words, we speculate that support is not enough. This may explain of the absent moderation of perceived support in these relationships (H3 and H4).

Another possible explanation of why organizational support may not moderate these two relationships is the exceptional squeeze middle managers are positioned in, which is a factor of role conflict. By this, we mean when a middle manager receives support for an action, one part can still disagree with the decision. This could be exemplified as if a middle manager makes his leader satisfied and gets support; he even experiences role conflict if his subordinates do not agree with

the decision. Furthermore, this also explains why the description "sandwich middle" by Gjerde and Alvesson (2020) is such an appropriate description of the middle managers' role. Here we touch upon some of the research where Gjerde and Alvesson (2020) discuss the middle manager's identity with three leading roles; performance driver, impotent manager, and umbrella-protector. Each position is based on the direction of their identification, up, down, or with neither. They focus on the influence the middle managers have; however, this can also be transformed into how middle managers are dependent on support to deal with job demands and role conflict. This can depend on the identity of the middle manager.

In this study, we test perceived support in a broad sense. This is maybe not the best in order to check perceived support in context with role conflict. We speculate that in the role conflict context, it depends where the support comes from. We might have received a moderator effect if we included variables of different support in the study concerning middle managers experiencing role conflict.

Practical Implications

Despite the limitation of our study, which will be discussed later, our findings give great insights into a new perspective, namely the middle manager perspective. Our findings indicate that role conflict is positively associated with middle managers' turnover intention. This relationship is also mediated by emotional exhaustion. In order to retain the middle managers, we suggest that role conflict must be considered by organizations. According to Rizzo et al. (1970), actions associated with lower role conflict are an emphasis on formalization, coordination of workflow, adequacy of communication, horizontal communication, planning, adequacy of authority, adaptability to change, and personal development.

To navigate the intricate middle, we propose they need a clarification of the corporate roles, goals, and rules, together with actions to arrange direction and meaning for their coding of role and identity. By focusing on these actions, middle managers will get assistance in dealing with dilemmas, such as dealing with both subordinates and leaders. Sims (2003) stated this is problematic, simultaneously as they may feel that their role expectations are congruent with their perceptions (Gjerde & Alvesson, 2020). Thereby, we suggest that top managers motivate middle managers to participate in team-building programs to develop a good relationship with other employees to ask for help, seek support from others, learn how to

increase job resources, and discuss role expectations. Additionally, we suggest that supervision, such as counseling, can be a cost-effective and time-efficient way for organizations to provide attention and feedback to middle managers, and address role conflict (Moore, 2020). In this regard, we propose that organizations need to invest in their employees, maintain and develop human resource assets (Soelton et al., 2020).

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. One of them is how the data were collected. To have a better chance to say something about causality in this relationship, we should have sent out the survey in two or three rounds with a time interval. Here we would have started with the first survey to measure the independent and the control variables, the second to measure mediator and moderator, and the third survey to measure the dependent variable.

We also believe that the sample itself and its size may be a limitation as we only received responses from 115 middle managers. However, our respondents reflect the sample well in regard to gender distribution. The sample was distributed between 65 percent of women and 35 percent of men, and our respondents are distributed between 67,5 percent of women and 32,5 percent of men. We wanted to contribute by investigating the middle manager perspective to an already well-researched field. In this regard, our study is limited to middle managers in our sample, and the results may have been different if we escalated it to a larger sample, for example, in both the public- and private sectors. However, we believe this study provides significant insights into a new perspective, namely the middle manager perspective. For future research, it would be interesting to investigate the same hypotheses to a bigger sample. This could give a more generalizable insight into the topic.

We know that the authority and the leadership style a leader perform in an organization vary in different cultures. Additionally, in some cultures, it may not be the same challenge to be in the middle, due to the respect you have from your subordinates as their leader. In this regard, we believe the culture can be of consideration. On the other hand, within organizations characterized by a flat structure, we speculate that this may cause a higher chance of role conflict. This can be explained as when individuals are more or less "at the same level," we assume that a middle manager can have less authority in the manager position itself. In our

study, cultures are not taken into account. Nevertheless, we do not believe this is a significant limitation. However, we still think it could be relevant to reflect on according to the middle manager role in different cultures. Based on this, we suggest this as a possible direction for future research.

Further, it could be interesting to investigate how a middle manager's formal authority in the role itself may influence their need for support, as one may question whether support is more critical for a subordinate than a leader. We do not reveal the difference between experienced leader support and subordinate support in this study. Can it be more important for a middle manager to receive support from their leader than from their subordinates? Or is it the other way around? We propose that this is an interesting aspect of the middle manager perspective.

Lastly, an interesting perspective would be to divide the variable perceived support into three forms; supervisor support, colleague support, and organizational support. Then, investigate how this has any effect on turnover intention and emotional exhaustion when middle managers experience role conflict. Future research can investigate whether there are any differences in experienced role conflict, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intention depending on where middle managers get support.

Concluding Remarks

In summary, our main findings indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between middle managers who experienced role conflict and turnover intention, where this relationship is also influenced significantly positive by emotional exhaustion as a mediator. We also test if perceived support moderates the relationship between role conflict and emotional exhaustion, and the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention. Our findings indicate that perceived support is not supported as a moderator.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Survey English

Role Conflict

Role conflict in complex organizations (Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970):

1. I have to do things that should be done differently.
2. Lack of policies and guidelines to help me.
3. I work under incompatible policies and guidelines.
4. I receive an assignment without the manpower to complete it.
5. I have to buck a rule or policy in order to carry out an assignment.
6. I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.
7. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.
8. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.
9. I receive an assignment without adequate resources and materials to execute it.
10. I work on unnecessary things.
11. I have to work under vague directives or orders

Emotional exhaustion

The measurement of experienced burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981):

1. I feel emotionally drained from my work
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday
3. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job
4. Working with people all day is really a strain for me
5. I feel burned out from my work
6. I feel frustrated by my job
7. I feel I'm working too hard on my job
8. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me
9. I feel that I'm the end of my rope

Support

Perceived organizational support. (Hayton, Carnabuci, and Eisenberger, 2012):

Perceived supervisor support

1. My supervisor really cares about my well-being
2. My supervisor shows very little concern for me
3. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values
4. My supervisor is willing to help me when I need a special favor
5. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work

Perceived coworker support

1. My coworkers strongly consider my goals and values
2. My coworkers take pride in my accomplishments at work
3. My coworkers really care about my well-being
4. My coworkers value my contribution to their well-being

Perceived organizational support

1. The organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor
2. The organization shows very little concern for me
3. The organization values my contribution to its well-being
4. The organization strongly considers my goals and values

Turnover intention

Turnover intention scale (Roodt, 2004):

1. How often have you considered leaving your job?
2. How frequently do you scan the newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?
3. How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs?
4. How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?
5. How often are your personal values at work compromised?

6. How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?
7. How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?
8. How often do you look forward to another day at work?
9. How often do you think about starting your own business?
10. To what extent do responsibilities prevent you from quitting your job?
11. To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job prevent you from quitting your job?
12. How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?
13. To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?
14. To what extent does the "fear of the unknown", prevent you from quitting?
15. How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?

Control variables:

Years in position

- less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- over 20 years

Year in organization

- less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- over 20 years

Gender

Male/female/other

Alder

- Under 25 år
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- over 56

Appendix B: Survey Norwegian

Rollekonflikt

Role conflict in complex organizations (Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970):

1. Jeg må gjøre ting som burde ha blitt gjort på en annen måte
2. Det er mangel på prosedyrer og retningslinjer for å hjelpe meg i arbeidet mitt
3. Jeg jobber under motstridende retningslinjer og prosedyrer
4. Jeg får et oppdrag/prosjekt uten arbeidskraften til å utføre det
5. Jeg må innimellom bukke med en regel eller prosedyre for å utføre et oppdrag
6. Jeg jobber og forholder meg til to eller flere grupper som arbeider veldig ulikt fra hverandre
7. Jeg mottar motstridende forespørsler fra to eller flere personer
8. Jeg gjør ting som blir akseptert av en person og ikke akseptert av andre
9. Jeg får en oppgave uten tilstrekkelige ressurser og materiell til å utføre det
10. Jeg jobber med unødvendige ting
11. Jeg må jobbe under vage bestillinger

Følelsesmessig utmattethet

The measurement of experienced burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981):

1. Jeg føler meg følelsesmessig tappet av arbeidet på jobben min
2. Jeg føler meg oppbrukt på slutten av arbeidsdagen
3. Jeg føler meg utmattet når jeg står opp om morgenen og må møte en ny dag på jobben
4. Å jobbe med mennesker hele dagen er virkelig en belastning for meg
5. Jeg føler meg utbrent fra arbeidet mitt
6. Jeg føler meg frustrert av jobben min
7. Jeg føler at jeg jobber for hardt på jobben min
8. Å jobbe med mennesker legger for mye stress på meg
9. Jeg føler at jeg har tøyd strikken til det ytterste, når det gjelder min arbeidskapasitet

Støtte

Perceived organizational support. (Hayton, Carnabuci, and Eisenberger, 2012):

Opplevd veileder støtte

1. Lederen min bryr seg om trivselen min
2. Lederen min viser veldig liten bekymring for meg
3. Lederen min respekterer mine mål og verdier i stor grad
4. Lederen min er villig til å hjelpe meg når jeg trenger det
5. Lederen min er stolt av mine prestasjoner på jobben

Opplevd kollegastøtte

1. Mine kollegaer respekterer mine mål og verdiene i stor grad
2. Mine kollegaer setter sin ære i mine prestasjoner på jobben
3. Mine kollegaer bryr seg om min trivsel på arbeidsplassen
4. Mine kollegaer verdsetter mitt bidrag for at de skal trives på jobben

Opplevd organisasjonsstøtte

1. Organisasjonen er villig til å hjelpe meg når jeg trenger noe
2. Organisasjonen viser veldig liten bekymring for meg
3. Organisasjonen verdsetter mitt bidrag til trivsel på arbeidsplassen
4. Organisasjonen respekterer mine mål og verdiene i stor grad

Turnoverintensjon

Turnover intention scale (Roodt, 2004):

1. Hvor ofte har du vurdert å bytte jobb?
2. Hvor ofte skanner du avisene på jakt etter alternative jobbmuligheter?
3. Hvor tilfredsstillende er jobben din med å oppfylle dine personlige behov?
4. Hvor ofte blir du frustrert når du ikke får muligheten på jobb til å oppnå dine personlige arbeidsrelaterte mål?
5. Hvor ofte blir dine personlige verdier på jobb kompromittert?
6. Hvor ofte drømmer du om å få en annen jobb som vil passe bedre til dine personlige behov?

7. Hvor sannsynlig er det at du godtar en annen jobb på samme lønnsvilkår, hvis den skulle bli tilbudt deg?
8. Hvor ofte ser du frem til en ny dag på jobb?
9. Hvor ofte tenker du på å starte din egen virksomhet?
10. I hvilken grad hindrer ansvaret deg i å si opp jobben din?
11. I hvilken grad hindrer fordelene knyttet til din nåværende jobb deg fra å si opp jobben din?
12. Hvor ofte blir du følelsesladet når du kommer hjem etter jobb?
13. I hvilken grad påvirker din nåværende jobb din personlige velvære negativt?
14. I hvilken grad hindrer "frykten for det ukjente" deg fra å slutte?
15. Hvor ofte skanner du internett på jakt etter alternative jobbmuligheter?

Kontrollvariabler:

År i stilling

- mindre enn 1 år
- 1-5 år
- 6-10 år
- 11-20 år
- over 20 år

År i organisasjonen

- mindre enn 1 år
- 1-5 år
- 6-10 år
- 11-20 år
- over 20 år

Kjønn

- Mann / kvinne / annet

Alder

- Under 25 år
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- over 56

Appendix C: Email

Hei,

Vedlagt er en undersøkelse som omhandler i hvilken grad dere som ledere opplever rollekonflikt i deres arbeidshverdag.

Personer med personalansvar anses å være posisjonert i en skvis mellom forventninger, både fra toppledelsen og underordnede. Dette kan gjøre det utfordrende å møte motstridende krav og rollekonflikt kan oppstå. I takt med utviklingen av HR-rollen og alle de HR oppgavene som i den forbindelse legges til ledere, er det avgjørende å forstå hvordan ledere som utfører oppgavene takler disse kravene. Vi tror at ledere med personalansvar takler motstridende krav på ulike måter og vil derfor undersøke dette nærmere.

Dataene i undersøkelsen vil bli brukt i min masteroppgave i organisasjonspsykologi som jeg denne våren skriver ved siden av jobben som XXX. Undersøkelsen er anonym og vil ikke bli knyttet til deres e-postadresser. Dataene vil også presenteres anonymt i oppgaven som «ledere i offentlig sektor».

Denne undersøkelsen er verdifull for å kunne kartlegge om rollekonflikt er en utbredt utfordring hos lederne i kommunen. For at vi i størst mulig grad kan få brukt undersøkelsen internt er vi avhengig av at en større andel av dere svarer. Utfordringene dere peker på i undersøkelsen vil bli drøftet for å utarbeide hvilke tiltak som kan gjøre situasjonen bedre.

Kikk på lenken for å komme til undersøkelsen:

XXX

Svarfrist: tirsdag 17. mars