

# Effects of Perceived Discrimination on Work-Family Conflict for Military Personnel

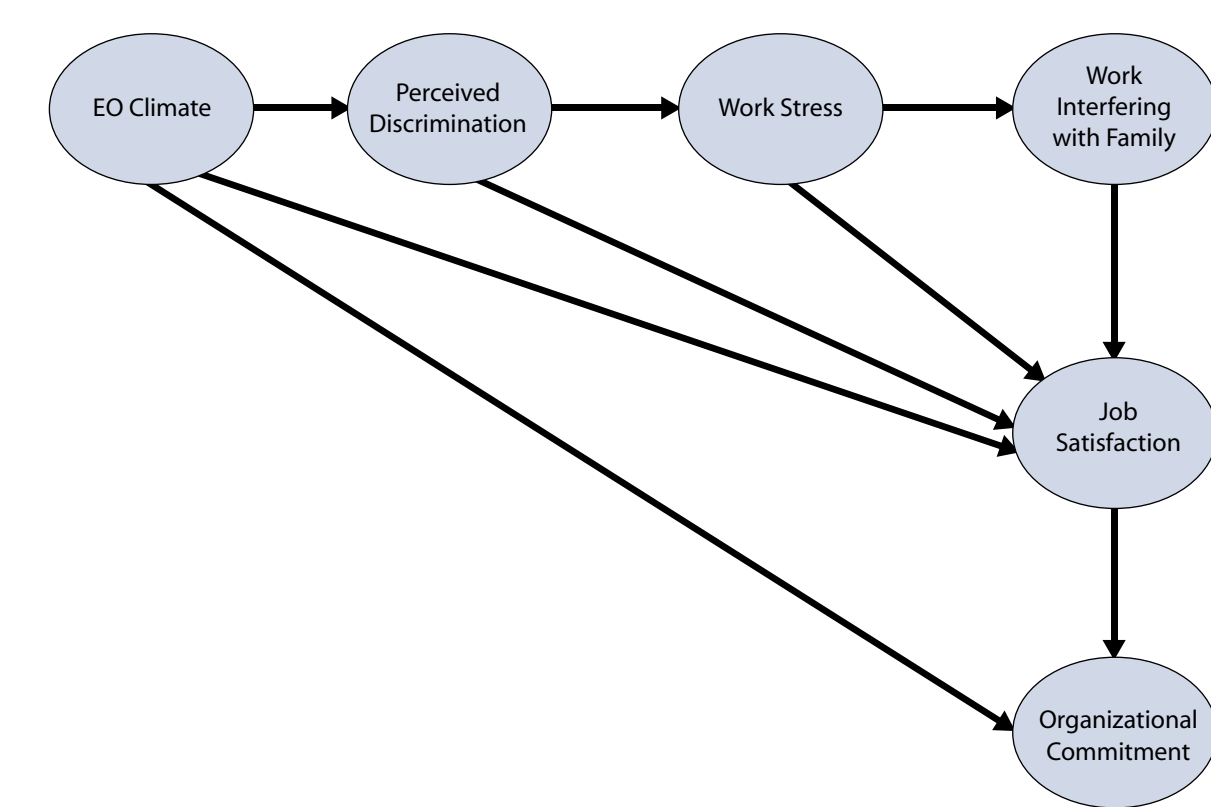
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## Introduction/Background

- Discrimination is still a big problem in the military
- A link between Equal Opportunity (EO) climate and perceptions of discrimination has been established (e.g. Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand and Magley, 1997; Harned, Ormerod, Palmieri, Collinsworth, & Reed, 2002)
- Perceived discrimination has many negative job-related outcomes such as decreased job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Sanchez & Brock, 1996)
- Work stress is one established outcome of perceived discrimination (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Harned et al., 2002; Wated & Sanchez, 2006)
- One outcome of perceived discrimination that has not previously been considered is work interfering with family (WIF)
- The purpose of the current study was to examine the mediated relationship between perceived discrimination and work interfering with family
- Impact of employee attitudes on job satisfaction and organizational commitment was also examined



Hypothesized Structural Model.

## Methodology

- Participants
  - 1,079 respondents; all non-deployed military personnel
  - Mostly White (58.8%) and Non-Hispanic (89.2%) (e.g.
  - Avg. age between 22 and 40 years (76.8%)
  - Mostly enlisted (74.4%)
- Procedure
  - Respondents to Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS)
  - Additional items added to end of DEOCS
- Measures
  - DEOCS
    - 24 items measuring EO climate
    - 2 items measuring perceived discrimination
    - 5 items measuring job satisfaction
    - 5 items measuring organizational commitment
  - 3 additional perceived discrimination items (adapted from Sanchez & Brock, 1996)
  - 4 work stress items (from Parker & DeCotiis, 1983)
  - 5 WIF items (from Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996)

## Results

Descriptive Statistics, for Consistency Scores ( $\alpha$ ), and Correlations

Variable	M	SD	$\alpha$	EOC	PD	WS	WIF	JS	OC
EOC	106.55	11.62	.90	--					
PD	5.97	3.04	.86	-.402	--				
WS	10.82	4.56	.87	-3.44	.371	--			
WIF	15.76	6.18	.96	-.221	.204	.612	--		
JS	19.12	4.31	.84	.349	-.263	-.442	-.307	--	
OC	17.11	5.04	.85	.490	-.350	-.481	-.333	.613	--

Note. EOC= Equal Opportunity Climate. PD= Perceived Discrimination. WS= Work Stress. WIF= Work Interfering with Family. JS= Job Satisfaction. OC= Organizational Commitment.

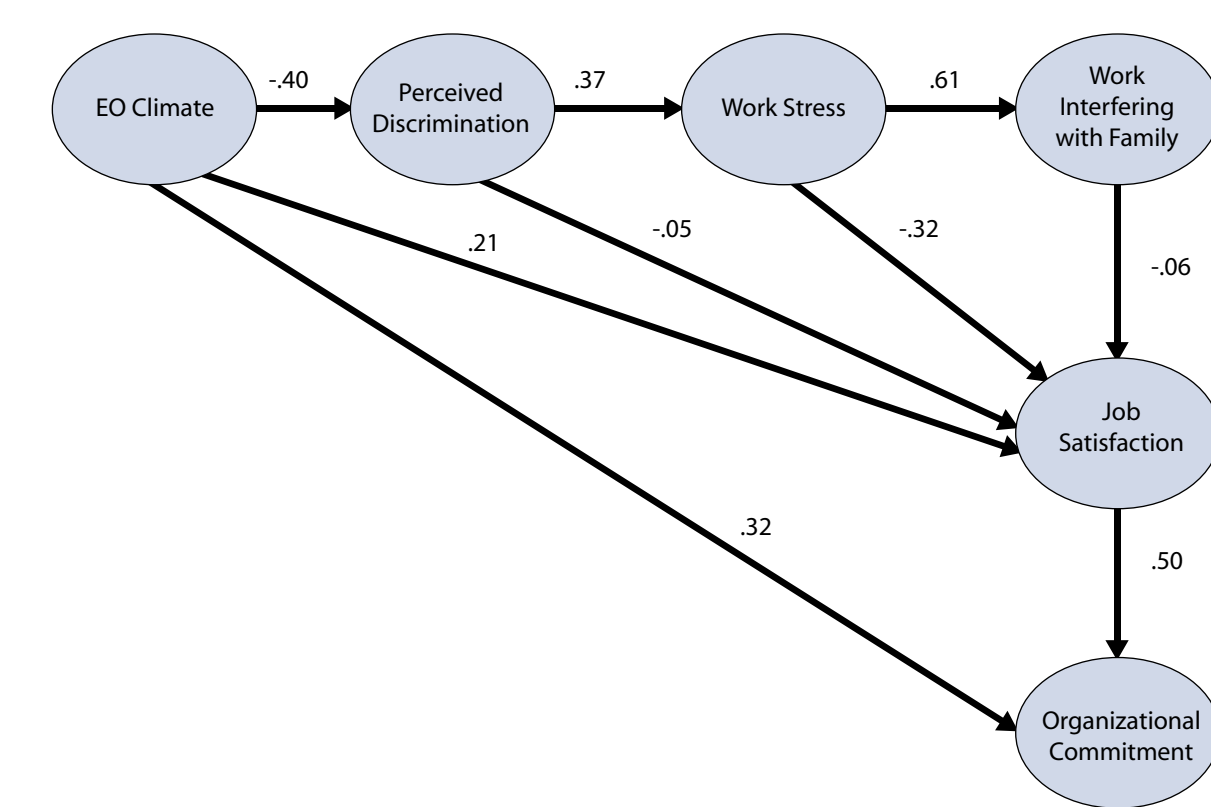
All values are significant at  $p < .01$  (2-tailed).

## Results

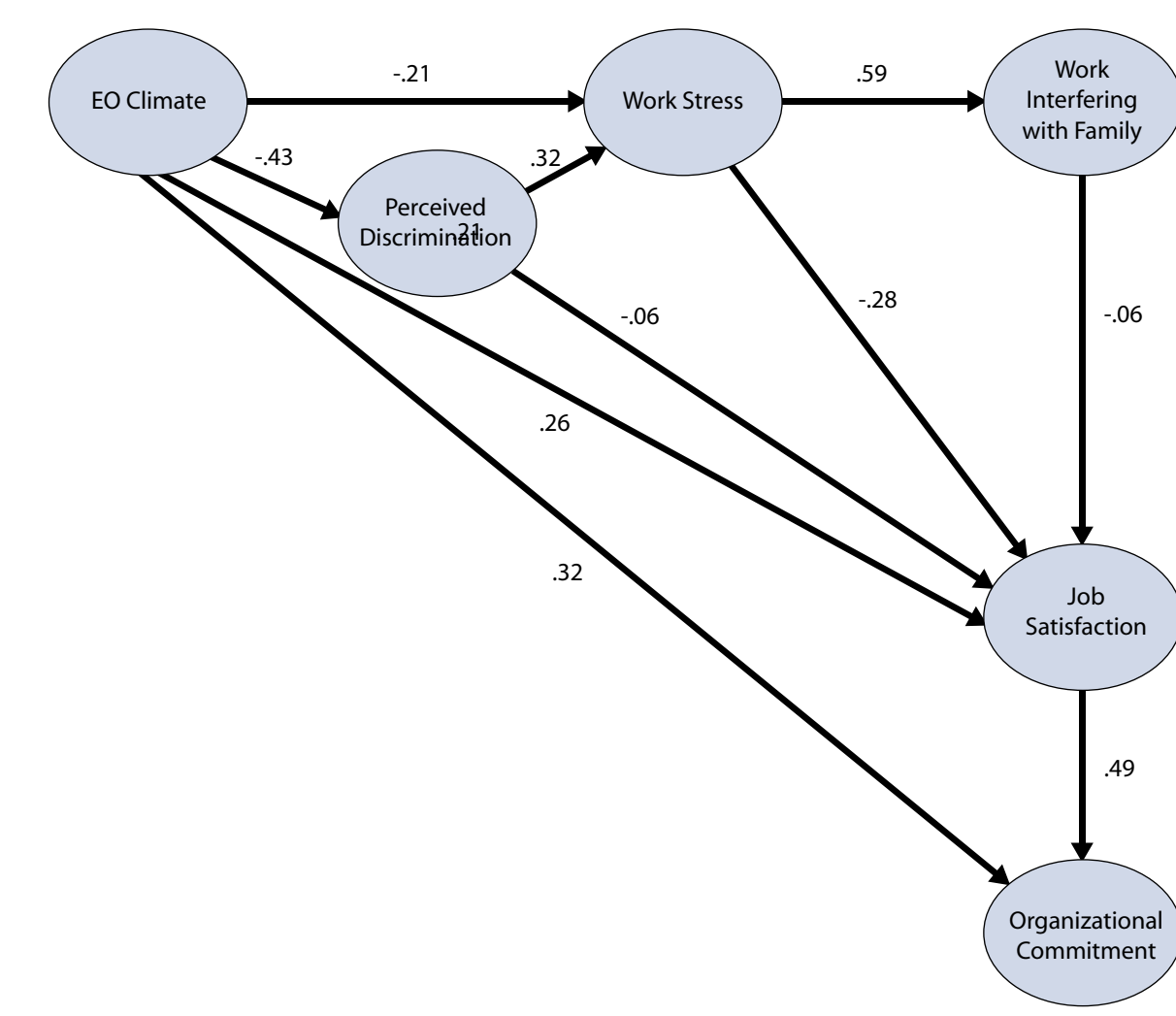
Fit Statistics for Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Hypothesized Structural Model

Model	$\chi^2$	df	RMR	RMSEA	NNFI	CFI	GFI	PGFI
CFA	190.88	75	.02	.04	.99	.99	.98	.61
Hypothesized Structural Model	120.34	6	.09	.13	.88	.95	.96	.28
Alt Model	70.31	5	.05	.11	.92	.97	.98	.23

- Measurement model fit the data well, demonstrating strong construct validity
- Hypothesized structural model fit the data well
- Alternative model opened the path between EO climate and work stress
  - Additional path significantly improved model fit ( $\chi^2$  difference:  $\chi^2(1) = 50.03$ ;  $p < .01$ )
- Multiple group comparisons showed no significant differences for model fit between demographic groups



Hypothesized Structural Model with Standardized Parameter Estimates.



Alternative Model with Standardized Parameter Estimates.

## Discussion/Implications

- Main purpose of study:
  - Examine the relationship between perceived discrimination and WIF as mediated by work stress
- Measurement model strongly supported
- Hypothesized structural model was supported
- All mediated/partially mediated relationships were significant except one (WIF did not partially mediate relationship between work stress and job satisfaction)
- Alternative model fit significantly better than hypothesized model, indicating direct effects of EO climate on work stress
- Multiple group comparisons showed no significant differences between demographic groups, indicating the effects of EO climate and perceived discrimination are not exclusive to females and minorities

## Discussion/Implications

- Individuals in units with an unfavorable EO climate have higher levels of perceived discrimination
- Perceived discrimination demonstrated negative effects (both direct and indirect) including increased levels of work stress and higher WIF
- Improving EO climate may decrease levels of perceived discrimination and work stress, thereby:
  - Reducing negative outcomes such as low job satisfaction and low organizational commitment
  - Increasing recruitment, retention, and readiness
- Negative effects of poor EO climate and perceptions of discrimination on readiness such as work-family conflict, low job satisfaction, and low organizational commitment may be decreased, leading to a safer, more efficient, and more effective force

## Recommendations for Future Research

- Sample consisted of only military personnel and therefore cannot be generalized to entire population; relationships should be examined within civilian population
- Only responses from non-deployed individuals were examined; future research may examine responses of deployed individuals
- Further examine relationship between EO climate and work stress
- WIF was not a significant mediator between work stress and job satisfaction; future research may look at WIF as moderator

