



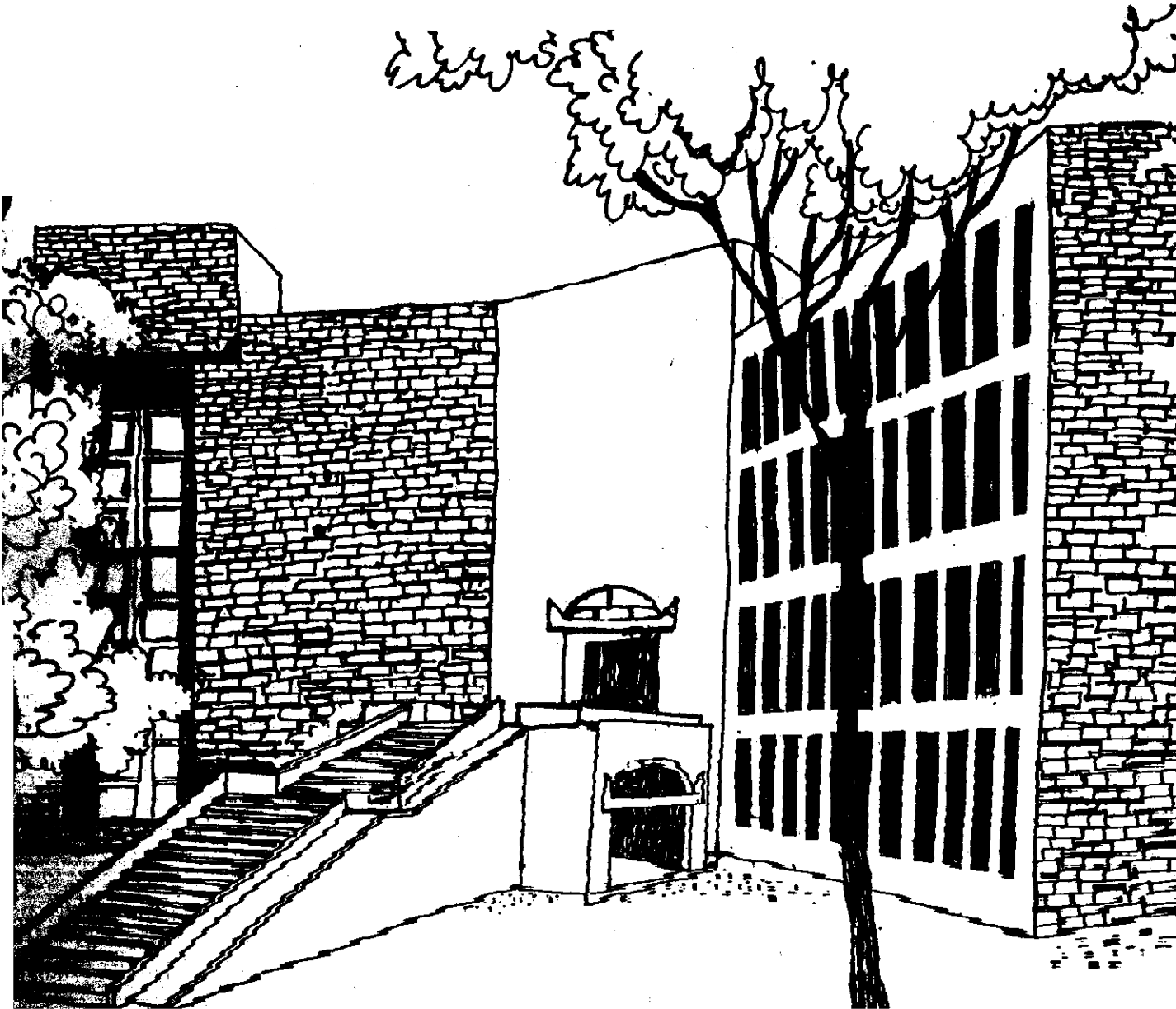
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Working Paper



THE DEFINITION ^{AND} ~~OF~~ MEASUREMENT OF
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

By

Sasi B. Misra

Ratna Ghosh

&

Rabindra N. Kanungo

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
AHMEDABAD-380 015
INDIA

The Definition and Measurement of Family Involvement

Sasi Misra
Indian Institute of Management
Ahmedabad, India

Ratna Ghosh
Faculty of Education
McGill University, Canada

and

Rabindra N. Kanungo
Faculty of Management
McGill University, Canada

Running Head: Family Involvement

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The Definition and Measurement of Family Involvement

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the development of a new and standardized measure of family involvement. The family involvement construct is operationalized on the basis of the motivational formulation of involvement and alienation (Kanungo, 1979) and studied in a binational setting. Data collected and analyzed from heterogeneous samples of 269 Indian and 168 Canadian employees reveal that the eight-item family involvement scale has satisfactory psychometric properties. The scale passes the tests of internal consistency, unidimensionality, and construct validity in samples from both the countries. The utility of the scale for research and professional work are discussed.

The Definition and Measurement of Family Involvement

Job is the central focus of one's life. Work is the bedrock of a culture. Such beliefs which permeate the Western societies has presumably led most researchers to study the phenomena of involvement and alienation largely in the context of work (see e.g. Kanungo, 1982a; Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977). Side by side, the Marxian dictum that alienation from work is the "core of all alienation" might have given further fillip for empirical research in this particular context. More recently however, Kanungo (1979) using existing motivational constructs has proposed an integrative, hypothesis generating framework for studying the phenomena of involvement and alienation at the individual level and in life contexts beyond the work context, such as family context and the context of community. Prima facie, personal involvement in the family sphere of life or alienation from it appears to be significant in the conduct of human affairs for various reasons.

Contemporary societies are undergoing far reaching changes. As a result of the rising number of dual career families, rising proportions of working women, part time and casual workers in the work force, falling number of work hours new patterns of involvement in work and family life are emerging. For instance, many social scientists are concerned these days about the unremitting decline of the family as a social institution (see. e.g. Kanter, 1977). Spiralling rates of divorce and remarriage, and rising number of emotionally disturbed children arising from inadequate and negligent parenting are often attributed to the individual's growing alienation from the family.

In the work sphere of life several social scientists express the view that work in terms of its psychological importance to one's life has taken the backseat (Maccoby & Terzi, 1981). It has even taken a negative connotation (Terkel, 1974). Some empirical evidence support the contention that work

through important may no longer be the be all and the end all of life. For instance, Dubin and Goldman (1972) and Goldman (1973), in their widely cited studies found that the central life interests of a majority of employees focussed principally on nonwork activities. There is also a wealth of empirical work dealing with the conflicts between occupational and familial roles (Edgell, 1970) and consequent alienation from one or both contexts. Changes in the patterns of work and family spheres of life similar to those noted above are also surfacing, albeit slowly, in the industrializing nonwestern societies.

For the reasons listed above, we considered family involvement to be a fruitful area of empirical inquiry. However, an operational definition of the family involvement construct and an adequate instrument to measure it are basic to such research pursuits. These essentially, were the objectives of the research reported here. The motivational formulation of involvement and alienation constructs (Kanungo, 1979) formed the conceptual basis of our efforts to develop a family involvement measure. The empirical properties of this measure were examined in two culturally diverse settings namely, Canada and India, in order to ascertain its construct validity, generalizability, and usefulness as a research tool.

Motivational Formulation of Family Involvement Concept

According to the motivational approach (Kanungo, 1979), an individual can show varying degrees of personal involvement in distinctly different life contexts such as work, family and community. Involvement in any given life context represents an unidimensional cognitive or belief state of psychological identification with the context. Alienation is considered as the opposite state of involvement and therefore, represents a cognitive or belief state of psychological separation from the context. Thus family involvement may be defined as an unidimensional cognitive or belief state of psychological

identification with family context. Conversely, family alienation represents a cognitive or belief state of psychological separation from family context. An individual's psychological identification with the family context, depends on the saliency of the person's needs and expectations about the need satisfying potential of the context. Furthermore, it is posited that the extent of involvement in or alienation from family context is determined by two sets of events: historical and contemporaneous. The former refers to past cultural conditioning and socialization influences on one's beliefs about the value of family in one's life. The latter refers to more current environmental and situational influences on one's beliefs about the potentiality of the family context to satisfy one's needs.

Using the motivational approach, Kanungo (1982b) has developed standardized measures of work involvement. The pan-cultural validity and generalizability of these new measures and predictions derived from the motivational framework have been empirically supported (Misra, Kanungo, von Rosenstiel, & Stuhler, 1985). However, no such instrument exists for measurement of involvement or alienation in the family context. This paper reports on the development of a standardized measure of family involvement in a binational study. The study also examined several other interrelated issues pertaining to involvement and alienation phenomena in both work and family contexts. The following six hypotheses were tested, in order to ascertain the construct and pan-cultural validity of the measure. The motivational formulation of involvement (Kanungo, 1979) suggested that the perceived potential of a given life context for need satisfaction, be it work or family, shall determine the degree of involvement in that context. Therefore, it was specifically hypothesized: (1) perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the family context will be positively correlated with involvement in the family context; (2) perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the work context will be positively correlated with involvement

in the work context. As corollaries of the above hypotheses, it is expected that (3) perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the family context will be unrelated to involvement in the work context. Likewise, (4) perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the work context will be unrelated to involvement in the family context. In order to test for parallel form test validity of the measures, it was further hypothesized that (5) scores of respondents on a measure of Protestant Ethic will be positively correlated with scores on work involvement but unrelated to scores on family involvement. As a corollary of the fifth hypothesis one would expect that (6) the correlation between work involvement and Protestant Ethic measures would be greater than the correlation between work involvement and family involvement measures. The last two hypotheses are based on the notion that work involvement operationalizes Protestant Ethic (Bass & Barrett, 1972; Lodahl, 1964). It would seem that a person would be work involved to the extent he/she endorses Protestant Ethic (as measured by the scale developed by Blood, 1969). No such relationship between Protestant Ethic and family involvement is expected.

Finally, all the six hypotheses are expected to hold true for both Canadian and Indian samples. Essentially, tests of these hypotheses are purported to be tests of criterion-related concurrent as well as cross-cultural validities of the family involvement scale.

METHOD

The Questionnaire

The study employed a five part questionnaire, but only four parts are relevant for this report. The four parts consisted of separate measures of perceived potential of the family and work contexts for need satisfaction, involvement in the family and work contexts, Protestant Ethic, and demographic information.

Measures of need satisfaction potential of the context. A total of nine items were used in each of the measures of need satisfaction potential of the family and work contexts. The specific items of the satisfaction potential in the family context were: "The amount of respect and recognition I expect from the family"; "The opportunity for maintaining a comfortable standard of living given by the family"; "The opportunity given by the family for receiving and expressing love and solidarity"; "The opportunity for independent thought and action given by the family"; "The opportunity for good interpersonal relationships offered by the family"; "The opportunity to assume greater personal responsibility allowed by the family"; the feeling of security gained from the family"; "The opportunity for growth and self-fulfillment by using unique abilities and potentials, given by the family"; "The opportunity for feeling a greater personal achievement given by the family". With respect to the nine items aimed at measuring need satisfaction potential of the work context the word "work" was substituted for "family". The nine items represented the entire spectrum of human need categories (existential, belonging and growth needs) suggested by various need theorists (Alderfer, 1972; Maslow 1954). Each respondent was instructed to indicate on a 7-point ordinal scale (1 = minimum to 7 = maximum) the amount of need satisfaction he or she expected with respect to each of the aspects listed above in each (family and work) context.

Measures of involvement. A total of eight items each were used as measures of work involvement and family involvement, respectively. Six involvement items were in the form of a questionnaire and two were graphic items. The six questionnaire items for family involvement are listed below: (1) "The most important thing that happens in life involves the family"; (2) "People should get involved in the family"; (3) "The family should be a large part of one's life"; (4) "The family should be considered central to life"; (5) "An

individual's life goals should be mainly family oriented"; (6) "Life is worth living when people get totally absorbed in family life". Two graphic items were added to these questionnaire items. In one graphic item (item 7), two circles representing family and self respectively were presented with varying degrees of overlap (no overlap representing total alienation to complete overlap representing total involvement). In the other item (item 8), involvement in the family context was portrayed with a human figure (representing self) and a house (representing family) with varying distances between them. In this item, the degrees of proximity represented degrees of involvement. These items as well as the two graphic items were adopted from the work involvement scale (Kanungo, 1982a,b). For the work context, the items from the original questionnaire and graphic work involvement scales (Kanungo, 1982a,b) were used. Thus the scale included six questionnaire items as listed above with the word 'work' replacing the word family. In the graphic item where two overlapping circles were used, the two circles represented work and self respectively. The other graphic item portrayed a human figure (representing self) and an office desk (representing work) with varying distances between them. The two sets of eight involvement items for family and work contexts used a seven point response format. It may be noted that these items, in consonance with our definitions of involvement, purported to reflect varying levels of a person's cognitive state of psychological identification with a given context (family or work). As mentioned earlier, the reliability and pan-cultural validity of the work involvement measure have been established recently (Misra, Kanungo, von Rosenstiel, & Stuhler, 1985).

Protestant ethic measure. The eight item measure of work values espoused by the Protestant Work Ethic (Blood, 1969) was used as a parallel measure in order to test the convergent and discriminant validity of work and family

involvement constructs in the present study.

The questionnaire¹ was prepared in both English and French following the translation - retranslation procedure (Brislin, Lonner, & Thorndike, 1973). The English version was used in India. Both English and French versions were used appropriately for the Anglophone and the Francophone respondents from Quebec, Canada.

Sample and Procedure

Indian. The questionnaire written in English was administered to middle and senior level executives from a wide variety of the public and private sector organizations during their participation in various short duration executive development programs. In addition, several organizations, through a form letter addressed to divisional heads in some cases and the chief executives in others, were approached to aid and cooperate in the study. Those who acceded to our request solicited the cooperation of their organizational colleagues at various levels and put one of us in direct touch with persons willing to participate in the study. Each participant was requested to respond to each item in the questionnaire freely and frankly and return the same to one of us anonymously. A total of 269 completed questionnaires were finally returned.

Canadian. The questionnaire written in both English and French was administered to French-and-English speaking lower to middle level management personnel enrolled in various evening courses in three different universities in Montreal. These personnel belonged to various industrial and governmental organizations in and around Montreal. The questionnaire was completed during a class hour in groups of varying sizes. The final count revealed that 168 completed questionnaires were returned.

It should be noted that all respondents in India as well as in Canada received an explanation through a form letter that this was a cross-national study and the general conclusions rather than individual results were the

primary concern of this research. In addition, it was emphasized that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary and that they could be assured of the confidentiality of the data.

RESULTS

Demographic Data

Both the Indian and the Canadian samples were heterogeneous in composition in that the respondents were employed in managerial and supervisory positions in a wide variety of organizations of varying size in different sectors of each nation's economy. The average age of the Indian sample was 35 years. In the Indian sample, there were 73.6% male and 26.4% female respondents. Sixty-one percent of respondents came from the public sector and 38% from the private sector organizations. Three-fourths (75.4%) of Indian respondents were married and most of them (95.3%) had children. The mean organizational job tenures for the Indian respondents were 10.29 and 4.46 years, respectively. Sixty five percent of Indian respondents were employees of large organizations; the balance came from medium and small sized organizations with less than 700 employees.

In the Canadian sample the average age was 30 years. Male respondents constituted 51.8% of the sample and the rest 48.2% were females. Forty percent of respondents came from the public sector and 60% from the private sector organizations. Half (50.6%) of Canadian respondents were married. Of these, 39% had no children. The mean organizational and job tenures for Canadian respondents were 3.85 and 2.86 years, respectively. Forty two percent of Canadian respondents were employees of large organizations; the balance came from medium and small sized organizations.

It may be noted that though the demographic characteristics of Indian and Canadian samples differ, these are not atypical with respect to each country. In India for instance, the public sector occupies the commanding heights of the

economy and these organizations are typically large. Likewise, a large proportion of employees with an average organizational tenure of 10 years are likely to be married persons with children. The proportion of females in the white collar labor force is substantially lower than that of males. In Canada, on the contrary, the private sector plays the major role in the economic activities of the country. Rising proportion of females in the labor force, late marriages, dropping proportion of parenthood are reflected in the demographic compositions of the Canadian sample. Considering such differences in the two samples, it was decided to treat the data obtained in the two countries separately for all subsequent analysis.

Empirical Properties of the Involvement Scales

The median item-total correlations for the 8-item Family Involvement Scale were .63(range = .50 to .76) and .64(range = .53 to .79) for the Indian and the Canadian samples, respectively. For the 8-item Work Involvement Scale, these correlations were .59(range = .51 to .77) for the Indian sample and .60(range = .48 to .69) for the Canadian Sample. The means and standard deviations for each of the involvement scales, need satisfaction potential scales, and the Protestant Ethic Scale are presented in Table 1. The maximum possible ranges of Involvement Scales were from 8 to 56; of need satisfaction potential scales, 9 to 63; the Protestant Ethic Scale, from 8 to 48. Higher scores represented

 Insert Table 1 about here

higher involvement in the given context, higher expectation of need satisfaction potential of the context, and greater belief in work values espoused by the Protestant Ethic, respectively.

Dimensionality of the scales. The scores on eight items in each of the family involvement and work involvement scales were factor analyzed separately for each of the two samples. Factor solutions were arrived at by using the

principal components analysis followed by a varimax rotation. Table 2 presents itemwise rotated factor loadings on involvement scale items for Indian and Canadian samples. Separate analysis for each sample yielded the same two clear interpretable factors. Factor 1 in each sample represented family involvement. The item loadings on this factor ranged from .44 to .85 in the case of the

 Insert Table 2 about here

Indian sample and from .50 to .87 in the case of the Canadian sample. The loadings of this factor on the work involvement items ranged from .02 to .16 and .02 to .18 for the Indian and the Canadian sample, respectively. Factor 2 in each sample represented work involvement. The item loadings on this factor ranged from .41 to .83 in the case of the Indian sample and from .41 to .82 in the case of the Canadian sample. The loadings of this factor on the family involvement items ranged from .05 to .16 and .06 to .16 for the Indian and the Canadian sample, respectively. These two factors coincidentally, accounted for 53.2% of the total variance in the case of each sample. The common variance explained by these two factors were more than 85% in the case of the Indian sample and over 88% in the case of the Canadian sample. These results clearly suggest distinctiveness and unidimensionality of the family involvement construct across the two-nation samples and reaffirms the same for the work involvement construct reported earlier (Kanungo, 1982b; Misra, Kanungo, von Rosenstiel, & Stuhler, 1985).

Reliabilities of the scales. The internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) coefficients of each scale for each sample are presented parenthetically in Table 3.

 Insert Table 3 about here

It can be readily observed that each of the two involvement scales and the two need satisfaction potential scales are nearly equally and highly reliable across samples derived from the two nations. However, the internal consistency coefficient obtained for the Protestant Ethic Scale is somewhat lower for the Canadian sample and considerably lower for the Indian sample.

Criterion-related concurrent validity of the scales. The work involvement scale (Kanungo, 1982b), the Protestant Ethic Scale (Blood, 1969) and the need satisfaction potential scales were used to test the concurrent validity of the family involvement. Six specific hypotheses derived from Kanungo's motivational framework were tested. Tests of these hypotheses in the two samples from India and Canada provided the basis for the cross-cultural validity of the scale. The results are presented in Table 3 which contains intercorrelations among measures of involvement, need satisfaction potential and Protestant Ethic. The first hypothesis that perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the family context would be positively correlated with involvement in the family context was supported in the case of both Indian and Canadian samples ($r_s = .33$ and $.46$, respectively). The second hypothesis that perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the work context would be positively correlated with involvement in the work context was also supported in the case of both samples ($r_s = .28$ and $.35$, respectively). The third hypothesis that perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the family context would be unrelated to involvement in the work context was clearly supported in the case of Canadian sample ($r = -.01$). However, in the case of Indian sample the correlation was found to be low but significant ($r = .18$). This correlation was significantly lower than the correlation between need satisfaction potential of family context and family involvement ($r = .33$, $t = 2.10$, $p < .01$, one tailed test). The fourth hypothesis which predicted that the perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the work context would be unrelated to involvement in the family context was, once again,

perfectly supported Canadian sample ($r = 0$). For the Indian sample the correlation was again low but significant ($r = .16$). This correlation was significantly lower than the correlation between need satisfaction potential of work context and work involvement ($r = .28$, $t = 1.14$, $p < .05$, one tailed test). The fifth hypothesis that scores of respondents on Protestant Ethic measure would be positively correlated with work involvement scores but unrelated to family involvement scores was strongly supported in the case of Indian ($r_s = .39$ vs. $.04$) as well as Canadian samples ($r_s = .33$ vs. $-.05$). The sixth hypothesis predicting greater correlation between work involvement and Protestant Ethic than between work involvement and family involvement was also supported in both the Indian ($r_s = .39$ vs. $.23$, $t = 1.93$, $p < .05$ one tailed test) and the Canadian ($r_s = .33$ vs. $.10$, $t = 2.14$, $p < .01$, one tailed test) samples.

DISCUSSION

The research reported here had the goal of defining the family involvement construct parsimoniously and measuring it adequately. In pursuit of this goal, we drew upon the motivational formulation of involvement concepts (Kanungo, 1979) to define family involvement as an unidimensional cognitive or belief state of psychological identification with family context. The empirical properties of our family involvement scale were measured in two culturally diverse settings for its generalizability beyond north America.

The results reveal that the eight-item family involvement scale has satisfactory psychometric properties. In terms of internal consistency, it is highly reliable across heterogeneous samples of respondents obtained from India and Canada. The scale also passes the test of unidimensionality of the family involvement construct in both samples.

The criterion-related concurrent validity of the family involvement scale was examined by relating family involvement scores to the measures of work

involvement, need satisfaction potential of family and work contexts, and Protestant Ethic. The scale seems to have reasonable levels of both convergent and discriminant validity in both Indian and Canadian samples. Convergent validity of the scale is demonstrated by the positive correlation of family involvement with measure of need satisfaction potential of the family context. Discriminant validity of the scale is demonstrated by the low correlations of family involvement with measures of need satisfaction potential of the work context as well as the measures of work involvement and Protestant Ethic.

All the six hypotheses derived from the motivational framework proposed by Kanungo (1979) received strong support in the Canadian sample. However, in the Indian sample all but two hypotheses received strong support. Hypotheses 3 and 4 predicted that perceived expectation of need satisfaction in family context would be unrelated to work involvement, and perceived expectation of need satisfaction in the work context would be unrelated to family involvement. In the Indian sample, low but significant positive correlations were obtained in both cases. However, these correlations were significantly lower than the correlations between need satisfaction potential of the family context and family involvement and between need satisfaction potential of work context and work involvement, respectively. These results, therefore, are clearly in the predicted direction. Weak support for hypothesis 3 and 4 in the Indian sample may have resulted from perceived overlap of work and family roles. Indian employees coming from a more traditional society when red with Canadians are less inclined to perceive a clear out separation between family and work contexts. Such overlap of work and family roles in the Indian sample may also account for the low but significant positive correlation between work and family involvement scores ($r = .23$, $p < .05$). In the Canadian sample, the corresponding correlation was insignificant ($r = .10$).

There are some supplementary findings of this study which merit mentioning. The study reaffirms the distinctiveness of the work involvement construct (Kanungo, 1982b) and the reported cross-cultural generalizability of the work involvement scale (Misra, Kanungo, von Rosenstiel, & Stuhler, 1985). Another noteworthy finding is the comparatively low reliability coefficient ($r = .28$) of the Protestant Ethic scale (Blood, 1969) for the Indian sample. The work involvement scale however, is highly reliable and stable across cultures ($r_s = .86$ and $.85$). The relative weakness of the Protestant Ethic scale in the cross-cultural context presumably stems from the fact that the scale items reflect a built-in bias in favor of intrinsic motivation as the basis of involvement (Kanungo, 1982b). In situations, where extrinsic need satisfaction forms the basis of work involvement, the scale may not perform adequately as a diagnostic tool. The results therefore, further reinforce Kanungo's (1982ab) contention that a persons' intrinsic motivation at work for fulfilling self-esteem needs should be clearly distinguished from his/her work involvement. The latter is determined by the satisfaction of salient needs at work, be they intrinsic or extrinsic.

In sum, the study provides a standardized, reliable, and valid measure of family involvement in two culturally diverse countries. Several purposes are expected to be served by this measure. An illustrative few may be mentioned here. As Kanter (1977) observed, most adults spend their lives as both family members and workers, and "the family is one of the critical links in the capitalist economy, as it both produces 'labor power' and consumes goods and services" (p. 2). Theory, research, and policy concerning dynamic intersections of work and family is therefore, a developing social science frontier, especially in North America. Such concerns, as noted by social scientists and commentators, derive from contemporary social changes affecting the quality of life. The family involvement in conjunction with the work involvement measure

would aid both monocultural and comparative empirical inquiries into work-family linkages, e.g., the ways people develop and manage their multiple involvements in domestic and organizational lives (Super, 1982). Additionally, the scale would be useful as a diagnostic tool in the applied fields of organization development and family counselling or therapy. OD practitioners with an open systems perspective (see Katz & Kahn, 1966) who are concerned with integrating social and technical aspects of work may use the scale to identify the problems of involvement in personal and organizational lives of employees. Likewise, family therapists and career counsellors are likely to find the scale useful in their professional work.

TABLE 1

Mean and SD of Need Satisfaction Potential,
Involvement and Protestant Ethic Scale Scores

	Indian (N=269)		Canadian (N=168)	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Family Involvement	41.80	8.29	41.46	7.21
Work Involvement	40.81	7.66	36.81	6.76
Need Satisfaction Potential of Family	50.49	9.80	49.40	8.30
Need Satisfaction Potential of Work	43.93	9.61	44.17	8.86
Protestant Ethic	31.57	4.31	31.28	4.82

TABLE 2

Rotated Factor Loadings on Involvement Scale Items

		<u>Indian (N = 269)</u>			<u>Canadian (N = 168)</u>		
Family Involvement Items	1	.66	.09	-.02	.69	-.12	.03
	2	.77	.05	.04	.78	.08	-.01
	3	.85	.11	.02	.84	.07	-.04
	4	.84	.11	.12	.87	.06	.04
	5	.72	.10	.11	.81	-.10	.22
	6	.75	.11	.26	.50	-.07	.72
	7	.50	-.07	.65	.68	.16	.07
	8	.44	-.16	.63	.64	.15	-.16
Work Involvement Items	1	-.02	.69	.04	-.09	.76	.03
	2	.07	.71	.06	.15	.73	-.04
	3	.12	.83	.15	.12	.82	.03
	4	.16	.80	.07	.18	.78	.13
	5	.11	.71	.02	.02	.67	.23
	6	.11	.77	.10	-.13	.41	.63
	7	-.05	.50	.67	-.08	.50	.47
	8	-.06	.41	.74	-.06	.59	.45
Eigenvalue		5.24	3.27	1.43	4.74	3.77	1.14
% Variance Explained		32.7%	20.4%	8.9%	29.7%	23.6%	7.1%

Family Involvement

TABLE 3
Reliability Coefficients of and Intercorrelations
Among Different Scales

	Indian (N = 269)					Canadian (N = 168)				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Family Involvement	(.87)	.23*	.33*	.16*	.04	(.88)	.10	.46*	.00	-.05
2. Work Involvement		(.86)	.18*	.28*	.39*		(.85)	-.01	.35*	.33*
3. Need Satisfaction Potential of Family			(.90)	.25*	.13*			(.85)	.05	-.02
4. Need Satisfaction Potential of Work				(.87)	.06				(.86)	.17*
5. Protestant Ethic					(.28)					(.43)

*p < .05

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FOOTNOTE

1. Complete questionnaire is available upon request from R.N. Kamungo.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

SASI MISRA is Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India. Currently, he is a Visiting Professor at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. A biographical note on him has appeared in an earlier issue of Human Relations (Vol. 34, 1981).

RATNA GHOSH is Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies and Research, Faculty of Education, McGill University, Montreal, Canada. Her research interests are in the areas of comparative education and women studies.

RABINDRA N. KANUNGO is Professor of Psychology and Management at McGill University and a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association. A biographic note on him has appeared in an earlier issue of Human Relation (Vol. 38, 1985).