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Doing corporate volunteering besides  
performing regular work activities and  
employees' role conflict, role overload,  
job satisfaction, and intention to leave:  
An experimental study

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## **Abstract**

This study focuses on doing corporate volunteering work besides regular work activities and its effects on role conflict, role overload, job satisfaction, and intention to leave. This study tried to explain the effect of corporate volunteering to employees from role strain perspective. A total of 111 university students (N = 111) participated in a laboratory-based experiment with 2 (corporate volunteering activity/informal workload: high vs. moderate) x 2 (formal workload: high vs. moderate) between-subjects factorial design to examine the effect of formal and informal workload on employees' role overload and role conflict. The Analysis of Variance showed that increased in formal and informal workload contribute to role overload and role conflict. Univariate GLM showed that informal workload moderates (i.e., strengthens) the positive effect of formal workload on role overload and role conflict. Finally, multiple regression analysis showed that increased formal and informal workload affects job satisfaction and this effect is fully mediated by the role overload. This has implication for the organization in implementing corporate volunteering. Organizations need to pay attention to employees' formal and informal workload in order to prevent the potential risk of role overload, role conflict, and a decrease in job satisfaction.

Key words: corporate social responsibility, corporate volunteering, role conflict, role overload, job satisfaction, intention to leave

## **INTRODUCTION**

To behave according to ethical business conduct and socially responsible manner is getting to be more and more critical issues for business. This may be the reason behind the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs in organizations. The concept of CSR is built on the premise that organizations need to justify their existence by making a contribution to the community and environment rather than merely looking for profit (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008). In general, the concept of CSR implies that organizations care and want to do good things for the society and environment (Holmqvist, 2009). But moreover CSR programs also plays a role as a source of organizational competitive advantage (Ellemers et al., 2011). For instance, companies could gain increased

rewards from the market because the consumers and stakeholders perceive them to be more willing to exert effort for the good cause (Peloza, Hudson, Hassay, 2008).

There has been plentiful research on the definition and measurement of volunteer activity (Hotchkiss, Unruh, & Fottler, 2014), the antecedents and outcomes of volunteer activity (Wilson, 2000), even the motivation behind volunteer activity (Vecina & Fernando, 2013), and how to attract people to engage in volunteer activity (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008). However, there is still limited research that focuses on employees involved in the CSR program. Whereas, the record from Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy reveals that no less than 90% of the companies now support and implement the practices of CSR programs (Rodell et al., 2016). We think that the growing practices of CSR programs in organizations needs to be followed by research about employee volunteering.

CSR program can be applied in wide range of actions. One of them is through corporate volunteering (Samuel, Wolf, & Schiling, 2013). Corporate volunteering refers to employee's volunteering activity conducted through company initiative (Rodell et al., 2016). It also refers to any formal support from the company that allows employees to devote their time and skill to some type of volunteering activity (Robledo, Aran, & Porras, 2015). This support includes organizing the willingness to perform voluntary work among employees, assembling them in a spontaneous and non-compulsory way, and stimulating their involvement in the cause of collective interest (Do Paco & Nave, 2013). It is also important to note that participation in corporate volunteering means employees voluntarily engage in specific tasks and activity above and beyond their regular work activities (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2013).

Unlike the traditional form of volunteering activity defined as 'any activity that is given freely to benefit another person, group, or cause and being performed during individual's own personal time (Wilson, 2000)', corporate volunteering is performed through

one's work, as part of a company's initiatives (Rodell et al., 2016). Although these definitions may look similar upon first glimpse, they may differ on a variety of aspects. For instance, the motivation for engaging in volunteering, the presumed benefit one's can gain from engaging in volunteering, and how it might effect individual's health and well-being. As a result, current insights based on the existing research on volunteerism in general can not fully portray the psychological mechanism behind corporate volunteering and its effect on individuals. Therefore, it is important to conduct research that is focusing on corporate volunteering to fill this gap.

Furthermore, numerous studies (Do Paco & Nave, 2013; De Gilder, Schuyt, & Breedijk, 2005; Robledo, Aran, & Porras, 2015; Rodell et al., 2016) have shown that corporate volunteering is associated with job and life satisfaction, well-being, organizational commitment, productivity, and performance. For organizations, it is important to promote the well-being of employees, as it will contribute to organizations' financial performance through increased employee productivity (Holmqvist, 2009). It has been introduced that corporate volunteering represents a new method in promoting employee's well-being. However, organizations also need to take into account under what kind of circumstances corporate volunteering could be most beneficial. For instance, organizations need to take into account components such as time-based support, financial or logistic support, employer recognition, publicity of volunteering opportunities (Rodell et al., 2016) and employee's workload (Basil et al., 2009; Schlesinger & Nagel, 2013).

Workload is chosen for this study because it appears to be a major factor that cannot be separated from employee's daily activity. A study from Basil et al. (2008) indicated that 98 of 990 company or approximately 23% of the companies across Canada perceived challenges related to the implementation of corporate volunteering. They admitted that the greatest obstacle was covering the workload of employees involved in the corporate

volunteering program. This showed that, employees are not the only one who struggle with the increasing workload caused by corporate volunteering, but organizations may also experience difficulty in covering the workload of employees that may be neglected because they are currently involved in corporate volunteering activity.

An employee has to deal with given particular set of regular workload as part of their job, and if their companies also have corporate volunteering activity then they also have to perform extra tasks besides their regular work tasks. The question of how the combination of these two responsibilities could affect employees may arise. We use the impact of multiple roles on employee's work-related outcomes, specifically investigating theoretical perspectives on multiple roles from a role strain perspective (Rozario, Morrow-Howell, & Hinterlong, 2004). Role strain perspective argues that multiple roles may cause individuals to feel overburdened, thus creating a detrimental effect on mental and physical well-being (Reid & Hardy, 1999). The present study wants to investigate how doing corporate volunteering activity while also having the responsibility for completing formal work task may affect employees' role overload and role conflict as well as affecting their job satisfaction and intention to leave via role overload and role conflict.

### **Role Perspective**

The relationship between corporate volunteering and its outcomes can be explained using the role perspective. There are two conflicting theoretical perspective of multiple roles on individual's psychological related outcomes (Rozario et al., 2004). The first one is role enhancement, this perspective suggests that by involving oneself in a productive role, such as volunteering, individual will have more resources, a larger social network, more prestige and in turn will result to better physical and mental health (Lum & Lightfoot, 2005). According to the role enhancement framework, individuals who have role accumulation or multiple roles

would experience a sense of individual's power, prestige, resources, and emotional gratification, and in turn should experience better physical and mental health (Moen, Robinson, & Dempster-McClain as cited in Rozario et al., 2004).

However, engaging in multiple roles can be both stressful and satisfying. There is an alternative perspective of multiple roles. It states that many demands placed on the individual may cause role strain. Due to a limited amount of time and energy, adjusting to multiple roles may negatively affect wellbeing (Broady as cited in Reid & Hardy, 1999). In the present study, role strain may result from the attempt to balance doing regular work tasks (formal workload) and also performing corporate volunteering activity (informal workload). As an implication, the individual has to exert more time and energy to perform corporate volunteering tasks beside their regular work tasks, and thus may experience role strain.

According to Rozario et al. (2004) role strains has two construct: (1) role overload, or the condition where people do not have enough time or resources to sufficiently fulfil their multiple roles, and (2) role conflict, or the condition where there is incongruence expectation, resulting in the situation in which it is difficult for the individual to effectively fulfil the other expectation. A study from Mui as cited in Rozario et al. (2004) has used the role strain perspective on volunteerism and well-being. This study found that role strain may happen when they experienced pressures from their volunteering activity and their work role. Another study from Plaisier et al. (2008) stated that due to insufficient time and energy, occupying in multiple social roles can be a source of stress and could result in negative mental and subjective health outcomes.

However, the studies on volunteer well-being have reported ambiguous results. Dautzenberg et al. as cited in Rozario et al. (2004) found that multiple roles had no negative effects on well-being. It is also found that African American and White women with a greater number of social roles reported less depressive symptoms (Cochran, Brown, & McGregor as

cited in Rozario et al., 2004). Furthermore, a study from Scharlach as cited in Rozario et al. (2004) concluded that the beneficial aspect of multiple roles outweighed the negative aspects. The inconsistent results between one study and the other made the relationship between volunteerism and its outcomes from the role strain perspective remains unclear.

### **Corporate volunteering, role overload, role conflict, job satisfaction, and intention to leave**

A study by Do Paco and Nave (2015) has shown that the greater employees' motivation in helping others the greater their satisfaction to the volunteering activity, and this in turn will also result in increased job satisfaction. Furthermore, organizations that motivate their employees to participate in corporate volunteering also reported lower turnover (Peloza et al., 2008). This is especially true when the employees feel closeness to the cause and the organizations also take into account the employees' opinion. Additionally, employees who perceived a high level of corporate volunteering believe that their company is caring for the well-being of others and also care for the environment. Employees often highly value working for such a company and as a result are more engaged and committed in their work because they create stronger relationships based on deeper shared values than just making money (Bauman & Skitka, 2012).

However, role overload which often studied as job stressor has proven to have negative impact on job satisfaction, levels of strain, anxiety, depression, as well as poor job performance (Chou & Robert, 2008). This framework will be better explained by first mentioning the definition of workload, which refers to the total amount of work given and the time frame in which work must be completed (Cooper et al. as cited in Hang-Yue, Foley, & Loi, 2005). Role overload may occur when employees perceive that the demands exceed their ability (i.e., they have to exert more time and effort than they actually have) in order to fulfil

their responsibility successfully. In our study, the demand of performing both regular work tasks and corporate volunteering task will cause them to have high involvement in multiple work roles, that can result in the experience of role overload and thus undermining employees' job satisfaction and triggering their intention to leave.

Additionally, a study from Hang-Yue, Foley, and Loi (2005) showed that role conflict also associated with numerous undesirable outcomes including lower job satisfaction, lower organizational commitment, and higher intention to leave. Role conflict will occur if an employee has to deal with incompatible demands, resulting in the situation in which compliance with one demand would make it difficult or impossible to effectively meet the other demand (Kahn et al. as cited in Hang-Yue et al., 2005). In the present study, role conflict may arise since the participants need to complete different kind of tasks (i.e., regular work tasks and corporate volunteering tasks) and these tasks required different expectation and demands on their time and effort. When the role expectations are conflicting and incompatible, employees may not have sufficient time and resources to fulfil these role expectation, thus resulting in role conflict and this may lower their job satisfaction and increased their intention to leave.

We also argue that the extra workload that employees need to perform as their corporate volunteering activities will moderate the effect of regular work on role overload and role conflict. In other words, we argue that the more corporate volunteering task employees have to perform the stronger the effect of regular work task on contributing to the increment of role overload and role conflict. The possible explanation behind this argumentation is that the extra workload that is placed on individual may trigger a stress response, and under conditions of stress employees tend to experience narrowed thinking and failed to perform adequately (Friedman & Mann as cited in Bruggen, 2015). As a result, it



may strengthen regular work tasks' effect in increasing role overload and role conflict among employees.

### **Present study**

This present study used role strain perspective from Rozario et al. (2004) to examine the effect of doing corporate volunteering (informal workload) besides performing regular work activities (formal workload) on individual outcomes such as role overload, role conflict, job satisfaction, and intention to leave. To address the main research question, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload (H1a) and informal workload (H1b) contribute to role overload.

Hypothesis 2: Among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload (H2a) and informal workload (H2b) contribute to role conflict.

Hypothesis 3: Among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, informal workload moderates (i.e., strengthens) the positive effect of formal workload on role overload (H3a) and role conflict (H3b).

Hypothesis 4: Among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload affects intention to leave (H4a, H4b) and job satisfaction (H4c, H4d) via role overload and role conflict.

Hypothesis 5: Among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in informal workload affects intention to leave (H5a, H5b) and job satisfaction (H5c, H5d) via role overload and role conflict.

## RESEARCH MODEL

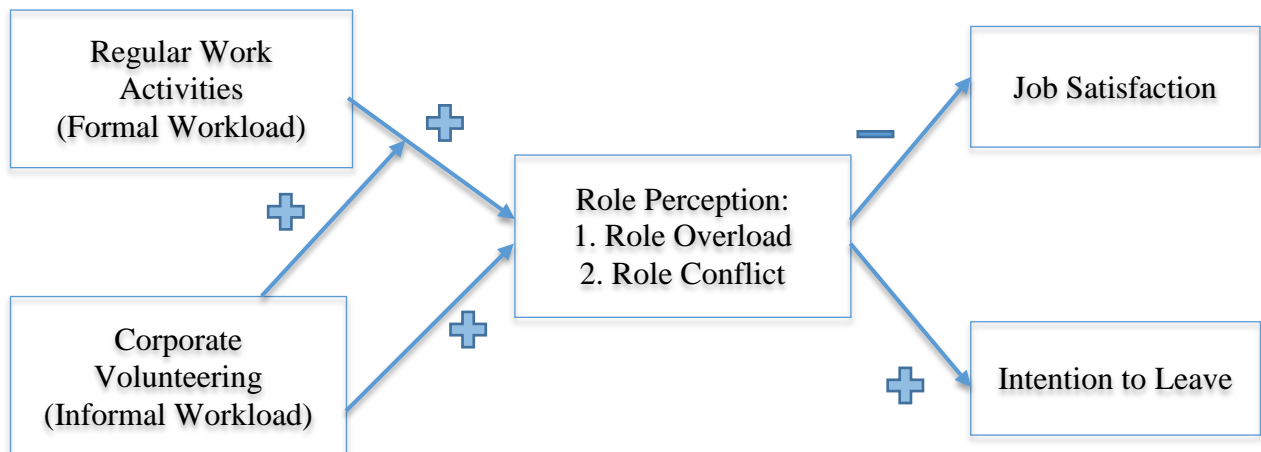


Figure 1. Research model of the present study

## METHOD

### Participants and design

A total of 100 undergraduate students at Leiden University were recruited via flyers or posters and each can choose to receive either course credit or money for their participation in the study. The present study used a 2 (corporate volunteering/informal workload: high vs. moderate) x 2 (regular work tasks/formal workload): high vs. moderate between-subjects factorial design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of these four conditions. The study participants were 111 Dutch and international students (25 Male, 86 Female). Their ages varied between 18-35 years old ( $M = 21.76$ ,  $SD = 2.88$ ). Additionally, 62.2% ( $N = 69$ ) of them also reported that currently they are having a part time job.

### Procedure

Participants were asked to complete an informed consent form, and were informed that this study aimed to examine whether students enjoy doing the typical work tasks (formal workload) for a fictitious organization and it is hoped that the result from this study could give insight for the company to recruit fresh graduate students. Then participants were placed

at separate cubicles and were given a scenario in which consists the information about a fictitious organization such as its name, location, and core business, thus the participants would grasp the idea what it is like to be an employee at that fictitious organization.

Then they were asked to finish typical work task of the organization, the work task was doing a graph calculation on housing. They were also informed that the fictitious organization has a CSR program and they as an employee were have to perform a corporate volunteering activity (informal workload) that is related to the CSR program. Before that, a detail explanation about the CSR program were given to the participants. Participants were informed that the CSR program of the fictitious organization is Foster Siblings program. Through this program people can donate by signing up as a sponsor. The sponsor will support the education and development of one (or more) underprivileged child by providing funds over a prearranged period. The donation is used to pay for educational expenses (e.g., school fees, training fees, uniforms, shoes, books) of those in needs. Currently, the fictitious organization tried to acquire more sponsors for their Foster Siblings Program. Thus, as a corporate volunteering activity the participants were asked to prepare the donation letters.

Formal workload was manipulated by asking the participants to do graph calculation on housing. The number of graphs and numerical problem they had to solve were different depending on whether the participants were in high or moderate formal workload condition. In the high formal workload condition, participants were given six graphs consists of 18 numbers of numerical problems. In the moderate formal workload condition, participants were given three graphs consists of nine numbers of numerical problems.

Informal workload or corporate volunteering activity were manipulated by asking the participants to prepare donations letters. The amount of donation letters participants had to prepare were differ depending on whether the participants were in high or moderate work condition. In high informal workload condition participants had to prepare four donation

letters, meanwhile in moderate informal workload condition participants had to prepare two donation letters. In all conditions participants were given 20 minutes to complete the numerical problem and prepare the donation letters. After the allocated 20 minutes to do the tasks, the questionnaires were administered. After completing the questionnaire, participants were fully debriefed, rewarded, and thanked for their research participations.

In addition, this study also used a counterbalanced experimental design. In the counterbalanced conditions the participants in the high formal workload condition were had to prepare four letters for acquiring new client for the fictitious organizations, and participants in the moderate formal workload condition were had to prepare two letters. Meanwhile, the participants performing high informal workload in counterbalanced condition were given six graphs consists of 18 numbers of numerical problems. In the moderate formal workload condition, participants were given three graphs consists of nine numbers of numerical problems. Participants were told that for each numerical problem they solve correctly money will be donated for the children in the Foster Sibling program.

The reason for doing this counterbalanced was because if the participants only did graph calculation as their regular work task and only prepared letter as their corporate volunteering task, we could not know for sure whether the outcomes were really caused by doing corporate volunteering besides performing regular work task or only due to the type of tasks they have to perform (e.g., some individuals may prefer doing graph calculation than preparing a letter, thus they perceived graph calculation as easy and not demanding). Counterbalancing the task type by having half of the participants doing graph calculation as their regular work task and preparing letter as their corporate volunteering task, and doing the opposite for the other half of participants may remove this potential confound.

## Materials

**Manipulation check measure.** Workload was measured by asking participants to rate the amount of work they had to perform for formal work task and informal work task. The item for measuring the amount of workload for formal work task is: “The amount of work that I had to perform for work task 1 (formal work task) was?.” and the item for measuring the amount of workload for informal work task is: “The amount of work that I had to perform for work task 1 (informal work task/corporate social responsibility) was?”. Participants were asked to rate from 1 (very low amount of work) to 5 (very high amount of work).

**Intention to leave.** Intention to leave was measured by using the scales from the Questionnaire on the Experience and Evaluation of Work (QEEW) (Van Veldhoven & Meijman, 1994). This scales had been widely used by the Dutch occupational health services. The scale consists of four items. An exemplary item from the scale includes: “I would sometimes think about seeking work outside this organization”. Participants were asked to report their report by answering 1 (yes) or 2 (no).

**Job satisfaction.** An overall measure of job satisfaction was derived from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Bowling & Hammond, 2008). This questionnaire has been commonly used in study about job satisfaction. The questionnaire consists of the following three items: (1) “Overall I am satisfied with the work for [name of the fictitious organization]”, (2) “In general, I like the work for [name of the fictitious organization]”, (3) “I like working at [name of the fictitious organization]”. Participants were asked to report their responds using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).

**Role overload.** Role overload was measured using the scales from the Questionnaire on the Experience and Evaluation of Work (QEEW) (Van Veldhoven & Meijman, 1994), which is widely used by the Dutch occupational health services. The scale consists of 11

items and example of items include: “Do you have to work very fast?”, “Do you have too much work to do?”, and “Do you have to work extra hard in order to complete something?”. All items assessing role overload were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very false) to 5 (very true).

**Role conflict.** Role conflict was measured with scales developed by Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970). The scales have been used in most of the recent studies on role perceptions. Role conflict scale consists of 5 items. Where necessary, adjustment was made to make the items more appropriate to this research context. An exemplary item for measuring role conflict is: “To complete one work task to my satisfaction I had to perform the other work task less well”. Participants were asked to report their responds using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very false) to 5 (very true).

### **Analysis of Data**

The data in this study was being analyzed by using the IBM SPSS Statistic version 22 program. First, the reliability analysis was conducted to make sure the scale consistently reflects the construct that it is measuring. We also performed factor analysis to see whether the scale overlap or not and to make sure that the items in the scale do not cluster with their own dimension. Next, we used ANOVA to investigate whether there is a difference on variables (i.e., role overload, role conflict, job satisfaction, and intention to leave) between the groups (i.e., formal work: high vs. moderate and informal work: high vs. moderate). We performed Pearson correlation and regression analysis to examine the strength of relationship between the variables. Univariate GLM was also conducted to investigate whether informal workload moderates the positive effect of formal workload on role overload and role conflict. Furthermore, a linear regression was performed to examine the mediating effect of role

overload and role conflict on the relationship between formal and informal workload with job satisfaction and intention to leave.

## RESULT

### Manipulation checks

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) demonstrated that participants in the high formal workload condition ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ) perceived that the amount of work they had to perform to be higher than the participants in the moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 2.55$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ),  $F(1,108) = 18.24$ ,  $p < .001$ . The manipulation of formal workload did not affect the level of perceived informal workload condition. Furthermore, an ANOVA indicated that the participants in the high informal workload condition ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ) perceived that the amount of corporate volunteering activity they had to perform to be higher than the participants in the moderate informal workload condition ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ),  $F(1,106) = 25.49$ ,  $p < .001$ . There is a crossover effect since the manipulation of informal workload also affected the level of perceived amount of formal workload. However, the crossover effect is smaller than the direct effect, from this we concluded that the manipulation worked as intended.

### Reliability and Factor Analysis

The role overload scale consisted of 11 items, with Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.91$ , the role conflict scale consisted of five items ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ), the job satisfaction scale consist of three items ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ), and the intention to leave scale consist of four items ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ). Thus, we can conclude that all scales appeared to be have good internal consistency. A factor analysis was also executed in the IBM SPSS Statistic version 22 confirmed that overall the scales do not overlap and the items we used to measure the constructs clustered as intended. An initial

analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor in the data. Each factor had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 67.79% of the variance.

### Correlation between averaged constructs

Table 1

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Formal workload (dummy)	-						
2. Perception of formal work <sup>a</sup>	.38**	-					
3. Informal workload (dummy)	.01	.19*	-				
4. Perception of informal work <sup>b</sup>	-.05	-.08	.44**	-			
5. Role overload	.18	.19*	.53**	.52**	-		
6. Role conflict	.25**	.20*	.40**	.36**	.76**	-	
7. Job satisfaction	.03	-.19*	-.13	-.19*	-.31**	-.21*	-
8. Intention to leave <sup>c</sup>	.03	.12	.10	.08	.20*	.26**	-.47**

Note.  $N = 111$

<sup>a</sup>  $N = 109$ , <sup>b</sup>  $N = 107$ , <sup>c</sup>  $N = 110$  due to a missing value

\*  $p < .05$ ., \*\*  $p < .01$ .



## Differences in role conflict and role overload

Hypothesis 1a stated that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload contribute to role overload. This hypothesis was supported, with an ANOVA showed that participants in the high formal work condition ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ) experienced more role overload than the participants in the moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ), and  $F(1,110) = 3.79$ ,  $p < .10$ .

Furthermore, Hypothesis 1b that stated among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in informal workload contribute to role overload was also supported. ANOVA showed that participants in the high informal workload condition ( $M = 3.93$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ) experienced more role overload than the participants in the moderate workload condition ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ), and  $F(1,110) = 42.47$ ,  $p < .001$ . This result indicated that increase amount of formal workload and informal workload both contribute to increased experience of role overload.

Also confirming our prediction (H2a), that stated among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload contribute to role conflict. An ANOVA showed that participants in the high formal workload condition ( $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ) experienced more role conflict than the participants in the moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 3.52$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ), and  $F(1,110) = 7.53$ ,  $p < .01$ .

Hypothesis 2b stated that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in informal workload contribute to role conflict was also supported. An ANOVA showed that participants in the moderate informal workload condition ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ) experienced more role conflict as an employee than the participants in the high informal workload condition ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ), and  $F(1,110) =$

17.94,  $p < .001$ . These result indicate that increased amount of formal workload and informal workload both contribute to role conflict.

### **Relationship between formal workload, informal workload, role conflict, and role overload**

Our Hypothesis 3a stated that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, informal workload moderates (i.e., strengthens) the positive effect of formal workload on role overload. This hypothesis was supported, with Univariate GLM result showed an interaction effect of formal workload and informal workload on role overload  $F(1, 107) = 3.99, p < .05$ . This interaction effect was characterized as follows. When the informal workload was high, the participants assigned to the high formal workload condition ( $M = 3.95, SD = 0.74$ ) and the moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 3.91, SD = 0.77$ ) reported high role overload (a 5-point scale was used for measuring role overload, and 5 was the highest level of role overload). However, when the informal workload was moderate, the participants assigned to the moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 2.74, SD = 0.70$ ) and the high formal workload condition ( $M = 3.32, SD = 0.60$ ) reported less role overload (i.e., around or below the midpoint of the scale). Thus, informal workload strengthens the positive effect of formal workload on role overload.

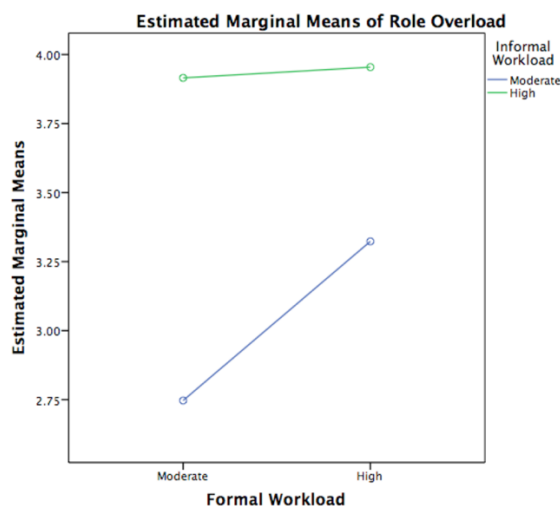


Figure 1  
Interaction Graph Between Formal Workload and Informal Workload in Predicting Role Overload

Furthermore, Hypothesis 3b that stated among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, informal workload moderates (i.e., strengthens) the positive effect of formal workload on role conflict was also supported. The result also showed an interaction effect between formal workload and informal workload on role conflict  $F(1, 107) = 3.65, p < .10$ . This interaction effect could be explained along these lines. When the informal workload was high, the participants in the high formal workload condition ( $M = 4.27, SD = 0.69$ ) and moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 4.08, SD = 0.84$ ) reported high role conflict. However, when the informal workload was moderate the participants in the moderate formal workload condition ( $M = 2.96, SD = 1.21$ ) and the high formal workload condition ( $M = 3.80, SD = 0.75$ ) reported less role conflict (i.e., around or below the midpoint of the scale). Therefore, informal workload strengthens the positive effect of formal workload on role conflict.

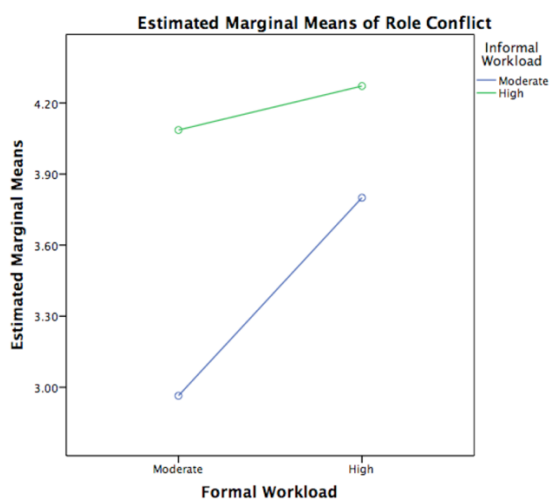


Figure 2  
Interaction Graph Between Formal Workload and  
Informal Workload in Predicting Role Conflict

### **Role conflict and role overload as mediators of job satisfaction and intention to leave**

We predicted that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload affects intention to leave via role overload (H4a) and role conflict (H4b). As for Hypothesis 4a and 4b, in line with the procedure for testing mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) these hypotheses were not further examined because the pre-conditions for this analysis were not met. That is, we found that perception of formal workload was not related to intention to leave (see also Table 1). Thus, Hypothesis 4a and 4b were rejected.

As for Hypothesis 4c we predicted that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload affects job satisfaction via role overload. After having established that the pre-conditions for testing the mediation were met, the relevant regression analyses was conducted to test Hypothesis 4c. The result showed that, the regression of formal workload on job satisfaction, ignoring the mediator was significant ( $b = -.17$ ,  $t(107) = -2.03$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The regression of the formal workload on the mediator (role overload) was also significant ( $b = .15$ ,  $t(107) = 2.02$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, the direct effect of formal workload on job satisfaction become non-significant ( $b = -.12$ ,  $t(106) = -1.49$ ,  $p = ns$ ) when role overload ( $b = -.29$ ,  $t(107) = -2.94$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was include as an additional predictor in the analysis ( $R^2 = .11$ ), indicating full mediation. We also calculated a 95% confidence interval for testing indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) and since the indirect effect is estimated to lie between  $-.1272$  and  $-.0018$ , thus zero is not in the 95% confidence interval and we can conclude that the indirect effect is indeed significant at  $p < .05$ . Therefore, Hypothesis 4c was supported.

We also predicted that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal workload affects job satisfaction via role conflict (H4d). After confirming that the pre-conditions to test the mediation were met, the

relevant regression analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 4d. The result indicated that the regression of formal workload on job satisfaction, ignoring the mediator, was significant ( $b = -.17$ ,  $t(107) = -2.03$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The regression of the formal workload on the mediator (role conflict) was also significant ( $b = .19$ ,  $t(107) = 2.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ). When we include role conflict as an additional predictor in the analysis, the direct effect of formal workload on intention to leave become non-significant ( $b = -.14$ ,  $t(106) = -1.64$ ,  $p = ns$ ), however the effect of role conflict on job satisfaction was also only marginally significant ( $b = -.15$ ,  $t(106) = -1.78$ ,  $p < .10$ ). Furthermore, from the output we can see that the bootstrapped estimate of the indirect effect is lie between  $-.0968$  and  $.0030$  with 95% confidence interval, indicating that zero is within the 95% confidence interval, thus we conclude that the indirect effect is not significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 4d was rejected.

Furthermore, we predicted that among workers involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in informal workload affects intention to leave via role overload (H5a) and role conflict (H5b). Both of these hypotheses were not further examined since the pre-conditions for testing the mediation effect were not met. That is, we found that perception of formal workload was not related to intention to leave (see also Table 1). Therefore, Hypothesis 5a and 5b were rejected.

Hypothesis 5c stated that among workers involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in informal workload affects job satisfaction via role overload. After confirming that the pre-conditions for testing the mediation were met, relevant regression analysis was performed. The result showed that the regression of informal workload on job satisfaction, ignoring the mediator, was significant ( $b = -.15$ ,  $t(105) = -2.04$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The regression of the informal workload on the mediator (role overload) was also significant ( $b = .38$ ,  $t(105) = 6.29$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Furthermore, the direct effect of informal workload on job satisfaction become non-significant ( $b = -.03$ ,  $t(104) = -.39$ ,  $p = ns$ ) when

role overload ( $b = -.31$ ,  $t(104) = -2.66$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was include as an additional predictor in the analysis ( $R^2 = .10$ ), indicating full mediation which was significant as indicated by a Sobel test ( $z = -2.42$ ,  $p < .05$ ). We also calculated a 95% confidence interval ( $-.2052$ ;  $-.0369$ ) for testing indirect effects which confirming that the mediation effect was significant because zero was not included in the confidence interval. Therefore, Hypothesis 5c was supported.

In Hypothesis 5d we stated that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in informal workload affects job satisfaction via role conflict. After having established that the pre-conditions for testing the mediation were met the relevant regression analyses was conducted to test Hypothesis 5d. The result indicated that the regression of informal workload on job satisfaction, ignoring the mediator, was significant ( $b = -.15$ ,  $t(105) = -2.04$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The regression of the informal workload on the mediator (role conflict), was also significant ( $b = .31$ ,  $t(105) = 3.96$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, when we include role conflict as an additional predictor in the analysis, not only the effect of informal workload that become non-significant ( $b = -.11$ ,  $t(104) = -1.38$ ,  $p = ns$ ), but the effect of role conflict was also not significant ( $b = -.13$ ,  $t(104) = -1.45$ ,  $p = ns$ ). The calculation from 95% confidence interval also showed that the indirect effect is estimated to lie between  $-.0979$  and  $.0212$  indicating that zero is within the 95% confidence interval, thus we can conclude that the indirect effect was not significant. Thus, Hypothesis H5d was rejected.

From the result of the mediation test we can confirm that Hypothesis 4c and 5c were supported. Therefore, we can conclude that among employees involved in a corporate volunteering besides their regular work activities, increase in formal or informal workload, or both formal and informal workload affects their job satisfactions (i.e., when the formal or informal workload, or both formal and informal workload increases the job satisfaction will decrease) and this effect is fully mediated by the role overload.

## **DISCUSSION**

Does corporate volunteering always affect employees in positive way? The rareness of research focusing to answer that question made it remained unanswered. This study is an attempt to provide answer to the question by examining how role conflict and role overload might play a role in the relationship between doing formal work task and corporate volunteering task to employees' job satisfaction and intention to leave.

In this experiment study we developed and tested the framework to understand the effect of doing corporate volunteering activity (informal workload) besides performing regular work activities (formal workload) to employees' psychological outcomes. We found that increase in formal or informal workload or both formal and informal workload contribute to increase in role overload or role conflict or both role overload and role conflict among employees. Furthermore, the result also showed that informal workload moderates (i.e., strengthens) the positive effect of formal workload on role overload or role conflict or both role overload and role conflict. Finally, multiple regression analysis showed that increased formal and informal workload affects job satisfactions (i.e., when the formal or informal workload or both formal and informal workload increased the job satisfaction will decrease) and this effect is fully mediated by the role overload.

Possible explanation of why participants experience role conflict and role overload might be due to the fact that the participants attempted to balance doing the corporate volunteering activity and formal work task. It has been stated that many demand place on individual, but not accompanied with sufficient amount of time and energy may make it difficult for individual to adjust to the multiple roles they have been assigned to (Broady as cited in Reid & Hardy, 1999). This will cause role overload and role conflict, and furthermore may also negatively affect job satisfaction.

From this result we can conclude that unlike the popular believe that stated volunteerism always has positive impact on individual, under certain circumstances it also may have some drawbacks. In this study we could see that engaging in multiple roles is not always beneficial to individual, especially in the context of an employee who performed a corporate volunteering activities besides their regular work activities.

### **Theoretical implication**

Our analysis and the concept of role conflict and role overload, combine with the empirical data we gathered to test the validity of this analysis, contribute to the literature in several ways. A lot of research has addressed volunteer work, working as an unpaid worker in organization, but the topic of corporate volunteering as a part of CSR program is still relatively new topic as compare to the traditional form of volunteering. We know a lot about how people perform during volunteer work and about the psychological process involve in the volunteer work (Hotchkiss et al., 2014; Wilson, 2012; Gilster, 2012; Rozario et al., 2004), but we still do not know much about the psychological process that involve in the employees participating in corporate volunteering. Since corporate volunteering is performed through one's work, as part of a company's initiatives (Rodell et al., 2016), it may differ in certain component than the traditional form of volunteering activity that is being performed during individual's own personal time. The present study tried to fill this theoretical gap by providing insight on the psychological mechanism behind employees involved in corporate volunteering, and the potential effect of corporate volunteering to the employees.

In general, most research in line with corporate volunteering focuses on how corporate volunteering could be beneficial to employee and organization (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Do Paco & Nave, 2013; Robledo et al., 2015). However, the present study enables us to look at the potential negative effect of corporate volunteering. Our study found that high



amount of corporate volunteering that is combined with high amount of formal work task could increase role conflict and role overload among employees. This increase will also be followed with decrease of employees' job satisfaction. This finding is new since up to now the research has only been address the positive effect of volunteering but nobody focused on the potential negative effect of corporate volunteering. This is important because if we have no knowledge on the negative effect of corporate volunteering than we also can not mitigate the potential drawback of corporate volunteering.

Furthermore, the present study is the first to examine the relationship between doing corporate volunteering and formal work task with employee's individual outcomes from role conflict and role overload perspective. Therefore, this study is distinctive in the way its investigate role conflict and role overload process among employees who have to perform both corporate volunteering activity and formal work task. This perspective is interesting especially because up until now corporate volunteering as an extra activity has not been address as a cause of role overload and role conflict. Traditionally, the predictors of role conflict and role overload that has been research are primarily focused on the organizational and operational stressor such as non supportive organizational culture, understaffing, competing demands, time pressure (Duxbury, Higgins, & Halinski, 2015), lack of knowledge about the tasks, and unclear expectation from supervisor (Cho, Choi, & Lee, 2014). However, this present study attempted to introduce a different approach for investigating how corporate volunteering as an extra activity may contribute to role conflict and role overload. Furthermore, to the best of our knowledge, there is still no research that add volunteering component to the role theory perspective. Therefore, we think the result from this study may broaden our existing insight in this area of research.

## **Practical implication for organizations**

There has been research on how to recruit people to do volunteer work (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008), and how to enhance volunteer motivation (Samuel, Wolf, & Schiling, 2013). However, there is still much to learn about what organization can do to reap the benefit of corporate volunteering without causing potential negative effect to their employees (Rodell et al., 2016). The current study attempted to fill this gap, as it suggests that in implementing corporate volunteering organization also needs to pay attention to employees' workload and give employee's clear expectation, in order to prevent the potential risk of role overload and role conflict.

Reflecting from our result that indicated high amount of corporate volunteering task and high amount of regular work task is followed by the increased level of role conflict and role overload, and in result have a negative effect on job satisfaction. Thus, organizations need to take careful consideration on the amount of corporate volunteering task they assign to their employees. Role strain perspective suggests that the inadequate time to fulfil set of demand may contribute to role conflict and role overload and contribute to work stress (Duxbury et al., 2015). We strongly suggest for organization that want to implement corporate volunteering to first have a clear idea on the current workload of their employees. Organizations have to make sure that the corporate volunteering task they assign to the employee will not be viewed as a hindrance to performing their actual work task. Thus, not causing role conflict and role overload, and not resulting to negative outcomes for the employees.

Additionally, still concerning the implementation of corporate volunteering there are several aspects organizations could pay attention such as the load of the activity itself, availability of clear and sufficient information about the content, activity, and how to perform the corporate volunteering activity. A clear guideline and comprehensively described tasks

will resolve the potential risk of role conflict. It is also important to note that organization should not expect worker to do corporate volunteer activity if they also have to perform all the regular work task, because it will place extra burden to their employees. More specifically, organization could consider to lessen and make the formal work of employees who participate in corporate volunteering activity to be less intense. Moreover, organization could also offer employees clear work schedule or overview of daily activity.

### **Limitation of the present research**

The first limitation of the current research lies in the methodological approach we used. This research was an experimental research that were being conducted at the laboratory. As a consequence, it may not represent the actual day to day work of an employee. For instance, the experiment only last for half an hour and it may not be sufficient for participant to grasp their role as an employee. Furthermore, the condition at the lab may be quite different from real office setting. This limitation may effect the generalizability of the result. However, we mitigated this limitation by providing the participants with a clear, detail, and believable scenario regarding the fictitious organization and their role as an employee. Furthermore, rather than the degree to which the experiment mirrors the situation in real world the generalizability of experiment is more dependent on the degree to which the constructs are true to the constructs themselves (Highhouse, 2009). Looking at the Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis result, it is proven that the scales we used in the present study have good internal consistency and therefore able to measure the constructs as intended. Thus, despite the possible limitations it may have, this experimental design enables us to draw conclusion about the causal effects of corporate volunteering on role conflict, role overload, job satisfaction, and intention to leave.

Another limitation is that the participants were not actual employees, but they are university students placed in the role of employees. The nature of the job between actual employees and student is different. Additionally, there is also difference in culture and lifestyle between full time worker and full time university student (Dahlgren et al., 2006). For instance, the work environment is often very dynamic and often times a job description is not limited. On the other hand, in the academic setting a clear syllabus consist of what the student expected to do is provided at the beginning of the study period. Students and employees also have different perspective on time. Even though deadlines exist for both students and employees, most of the time the culture at campus is to push off assignment until the last minute, staying up all night to study for an exam or to finish an assignment is seen as a common thing. Meanwhile in the workplace the manager or supervisor are often keeping tracks of an employee's progress on their project, and completing assignment on the last minute is often seen as a negative thing and even not acceptable. We must acknowledge that these differences were involved in how they may handle problem and interpreting multiple roles. However, most of our participants or 62.2% ( $N= 69$ ) of them to be exact, are students who currently also have a side job. Alongside this data, we can perceive that our participants have a mind set that is similar with an actual employee. Therefore, we expect that the obtained research result can be generalized to the actual employees.

Therefore, even with this limitation we think the presents research remain useful as to the best of our knowledge, this is the first research conducted to examine the effect of corporate volunteering seeing from role perspective area. This fact could be regarded as one strong point of this research, since it is important to achieve result in a simulated setting before examining this among actual employees.

### **Suggestion for further research**

Future researches are advised to examine role enhancement that might also become the mediating variable between corporate volunteering and its outcomes. According to the role enhancement scheme, individual who involves in multiple productive roles will have more resources, a larger social network, more prestige and in turn will result to better physical and mental health (Lum & Lightfoot, 2005). The concept of role enhancement suggests that by participating in corporate volunteering activity, employees have an opportunity to broaden their social support and also find meaning in their job through enrichment of the personality and ego gratification, thus lead to positive health outcomes (Rozario et al., 2004). Exploring this variable may help to explain other possibilities of role perspective area, thus, adding a more fruitful explanation on the relationship between this construct and volunteering activity.

Another advice would be, in addition to role enhancement, exploring role ambiguity and how it might influence the relationship between corporate volunteering and its outcomes. Employee who involve in corporate volunteering will engage in multiple role since they have to perform regular work tasks and also doing corporate volunteering tasks. Taking into account the definition of role ambiguity, it is clear that the concept has the potential to offset the negative effect of multiple roles and may operate as moderator (Lang et al., 2007). High role ambiguity results in unclear expectation and it may be detrimental for employees who experience high job demands due to multiple roles. Role ambiguity has been associated with different aspect of strain such as depression, burnout, tension, and psychological wellbeing (Lang et al., 2007). By also assessing the role ambiguity, researchers would be able to shed more light on unravelling the complexity of corporate volunteering activity and its outcomes, and moderating variables involved in this relationship.

Another suggestion for future research is to also expand this study from an experimental study with the laboratory setting into a field study, on purpose of establishing more real life setting to this research. We did encounter difficulties in trying to conduct this study on the actual organization, but as a result this study could be the pioneer of corporate volunteering seeing from role perspective area. However, it is highly recommended for future research to conduct field study in order to validate the currently obtained result. Because now we already conducted an experimental study and we would like to know whether the research would also apply to the actual employees in organizations.

Drawing on the elaborated explanations, we conclude that role conflict and role overload are relevant and valuable in the field of volunteering activity. In this study we also found that letting employees to participate in corporate volunteering activity can trigger role conflict and role overload. Therefore, with currently obtained finding we advise organization to be aware of this and make sure that role conflict and role overload will not result from employees' participation to corporate volunteering. We hope that organization takes notice of this finding so that they can improve their corporate volunteering implementation.

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