Research Article

How Salesperson Improves Their Customer Stewardship Behavior in the Mobile Internet Era

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Nowadays, sales are facing with the growing number of work-life conflicts with the development of the mobile Internet. And, academics and enterprises turn to focus continuously on the issues that how can salesperson balance work-family conflict, achieving high sales performance and obtaining customer satisfaction and loyalty. From a new perspective of the management of salesperson on the front lines, this paper explored the formation of sales' work-family balance on customer stewardship orientation and tested the intermediary role of personal life-work promotion and personal life-work conflict. The results of the stepwise regression analysis show that work-family balance (I) has the direct effect on the formation of the sales staff's customer housekeeping orientation, (II) promotes the positive promotion of customer stewardship by strengthening personal to work promotion, and (III) reduces the passive influence on personal life-work conflict on customer stewardship and promotes the formation of customer stewardship orientation by restraining personal life-work conflict. The above results complement the informal control system of sales force, reveal the formation mechanism of customer stewardship behavior, and provide practical suggestions for enterprises to reach long-term sales goals through the management of sales personnel.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, salespersons are facing the growing number of work-life conflicts with the development of the mobile Internet. For example, some hotel sales managers were keen to keep in touch with customers through Wechat, sharing a variety of hotel advertisements in their Circle of Friends, in order to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, create customer value, and increase sales performance and gain sustainable market share. However, the use of social media has blurred the line between work and life; salespersons were busy with communicating with their customers, as well as dealing with their daily life, such as taking care of their children. It has been shown that around 70 percent of baby boomers are concerned about "*how to reach a balance between work-family in their careers,*" while 92 percent of millennials want to strike a balance between work-family. Recent research by the Pew Research Centre in Washington

D.C., (2015) found that 46 percent of parents in households were working full-time, as well as 90 percent of working mother in dual-earner households were satisfied with their lives, which was twice than working father under the same conditions.

This paper mainly discussed how frontline salesperson improves their customer stewardship behavior in the mobile Internet era from the perspective of role theory, including work-life balance [1–3]. Customer stewardship behavior is a combination of sociological and psychological concepts, emphasizing that "salespeople are responsible for customers' benefit, and the customers' long-term benefit greatly outperforms personal benefit." They take their responsibility to the customer and the company's job requirements as their mission and put "their own benefit" in a secondary position to achieve higher customer satisfaction and create more customer value [4, 5]. One of the main concerns of this paper is to find the cause of the behavior

from customer stewardship, i.e., how can companies promote the formation of customer stewardship's behavior among salespeople through various formal and informal means.

According to role theory, salespeople play the role of "liaison" and "communicator" between brands and products and customers in the work environment [6]; meanwhile, they play the role of mother, father, son, daughter, partner, helpmate, etc., in the family environment. On the basis of role theory, this paper mainly discussed the following three research questions: does salespeople's work-family balance promote the formation of the customer stewardship behaviors? Is there a mediating variable of work-family balance on the formation of customer stewardship behavior? Is it mediated by the variables "personal-to-work conflict" or "personal-to-work promotion"?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Customer Stewardship Behavior. Customer stewardship behavior was derived from stewardship theory, which advocated that sales are willing to connect the interests of customers with their own performance goals and focus on the sense of mission and contract spirit for customers, which will be conducive to achieving the long-term goal of sales growth of the enterprise [4, 5].

Past research often regarded customer stewardship as customer orientation, which could not illustrate the conceptual difference between customer orientation and customer stewardship. In general, customer orientation is based on relationship marketing theory, and the underlying assumption is that the sales personnel's primary goal is customer satisfaction [7, 8], which is an effective way to achieve sales performance. Customer orientation focuses on satisfying customer needs and enhancing customer value, and salesperson with customer orientation would be more willing to spend time and effort identifying customer problems for catering customer needs and achieve sales more effectively [9, 10].

Customer stewardship behavior places more emphasis on the sales' psychological control than customer orientation. Salespeople with customer stewardship behavior not only view responding to customer needs as a job responsibility within a formal control system but also view customer welfare as a moral constraint within an informal control system. Under this dual mechanism, salespeople regarded it as their responsibility to protect the customer's interests in the process of making a sale and treat the difficulties they encounter in the buying process as their top priority [5, 11]. Salesperson's psychological ownership of the customer's welfare and this psychological contract with the customer initiates salespeople's self-control, prompting them to be willing to sacrifice their own self-interest to a certain extent in order to achieve the customer's benefit. This suggests that salespeople with high customer stewardship behaviors are more likely to think "in the customer's shoes" and often "play" the role of the customer, better performing their extrarole behaviors as a salesperson.

Overall, customer stewardship behavior is a more progressive concept than customer orientation, which implies that salespeople will put in more effort and do more work outside of their roles. Because customer stewardship behavior brings a greater degree of work engagement than customer orientation, customer stewardship behavior is significantly stronger than customer orientation in promoting sales performance [12].

2.2. Role Theory. There was a rich literature on role theory, which was talked about.

According to role theory, individuals are playing multiple roles at the same time and each role activity is interconnected and not independent [13, 14]. Role theory originated from sociology, which believes that individuals are in a social network, and composed of various ties or positions; each social tie or position has different social roles, and each social role requires different responsibilities and expectations from individuals [15]. Based on role theory, scholars have proposed some basic concepts: work-family balance, personal-to-work conflict, and personal-to-work promotion [2]. In particular, work-family balance (WFB, work-to-family balance) is considered as employees are competent in both work and family role expectations through a variety of coordination and communication activities when they engage in work or family roles" [2, 16]; personal-to work-conflict (PWC) theory states that when individuals are involved in work or life roles, participant in one activity (e.g., sales) inevitably means that they have less time or energy to participate in another activity (e.g., motherhood), the reduction of time or energy in another role (e.g., motherhood). Therefore, when individuals play a variety of roles, they feel work conflict [3], which has a negative impact on performance. It has been demonstrated that role conflict makes salespeople more likely to feel slack in their work, which affects their performance. Personal-to-work enhancement (PWE) theory emphasizes that the experience or performance of an individual in one role contributes to positive gains in other roles [1, 3], e.g., a salesperson with a high level of happiness in his or her personal. For example, if a salesperson has a high sense of well-being in his or her life, when he or she enters sales, they will be more motivated to provide the best customer experience and customer service to customers, thus satisfying their needs and achieving a win-win situation in life and work.

3. Research Hypothesis

3.1. Work-Family Balance and Salesperson Customer Stewardship Behavior. According to customer stewardship theory, the salespersons with customer stewardship feel that there is self-conscious ownership and moral responsibility for the overall interests of the customer, and thus, they are willing to put more effort into handling the psychological contract with the customer during the sales process. It has been argued that the improvement of salespeople's customer stewardship orientation is determined by their active work

ethic [17]. Role theory suggests that work-family balance means that employees can achieve a "win-win" not only in work but also in life; the employees would be able to fulfill the role expectations of work or family [18, 19]. For example, a salesperson might have more time to enjoy life with their families, care for them, and achieve a harmonious work-life status [20]. Past research on work-family balance mainly focused on job performance, job satisfaction, etc., and several scholars indicate that individual's balance of work-family has a significant contribution to the individual's job performance [17, 21]; the culture of work-family balance created by supervisors is directly related to managers' work satisfaction, loyalty, and work performance which have the direct relevance to [22]; also, in individualistic cultures, high levels of work-family balance have a more positive impact on individual job and life satisfaction [23].

When salespeople are in a state of high work-family balance, their job self-awareness, self-confidence, and customer focus increase, and note that when employees have high levels of job self-awareness, self-confidence, and an enhanced connection with customers, they will view customer's problems as their responsibility and consider themselves competent in the customer stewardship role [24]. Therefore, a balanced work-family state is more likely to help salespeople to consider the interests of customers as their own responsibility, to consider customers' difficulties as their own, and to perform more extrarole behaviors. Accordingly, we propose hypothesis 1:

> H1: salesperson work-family balance enhances salesperson customer stewardship behavior.

3.2. Impact of Personal-to-Work Promotion on Customer Stewardship Behavior.
Unlike work-family balance theory, personal-to-work promotion is primarily based on a psychological perspective emphasizing that individuals who have emotional experiences while playing one role contribute to their performance in another activity [1, 3]. Van Steenbergen et al. [25] found that personal-to-work promotion can lead to better experiences when employees engage in work or family life role activities. When individuals feel positive emotions such as happiness and satisfaction in their personal lives, such positive emotions may also contribute to more energetic and positive emotions to perform their work roles, thereby increasing positive experiences in the field of work [26, 27]. In short, for employees, satisfaction and happiness in their personal lives can facilitate positive performance of job duties, including both in-role and extrarole behaviors. For salespeople, active performance of job duties means that salespeople perform more extrarole behaviors. The extrarole behavior of salesperson means that they not only complete the set tasks arranged by the company (to meet customer needs) but also consider customer interests from the perspective of customers and recommend products or services that are most suitable for the customer, rather than the most beneficial to the company's sales performance. This is implying that salespeople have the high customer stewardship behavior [4, 5]. Accordingly, we propose hypothesis 2.

> H2: Salesperson's personal life-work promotion enhances salesperson's customer stewardship behavior.

3.3. Impact of Personal-to-Work Conflict on Customer Stewardship Behavior.
Personal life-work conflict indicates that when an individual is involved in a work or life role, playing one role in an activity inevitably results in a reduction of time or energy for their participation in the other activity, which inevitably creates a role conflict; according to role theory, it is known that because work and family roles have different expectations for individuals, the behaviors that individuals perform at work are not necessarily recognized when they return to the home [28]. For example, for salespeople, their jobs require them to consider their customers' benefit and be emotionally responsive all the time, but when they return to their family life as a mother, they need to demonstrate role behaviors such as objectivity and fairness and good sense of distinguishing right and wrong. [29]. Bolino and Turnley [30] indicated that employees' overload and work stress will cause the work-family conflict and other problems. Sales personnel will face personal-to-work conflicts such as long working hours, frequent overtime, frequent travel, and difficulty in adjusting their work schedules [20]. Amstad et al. [31] studied the impact of personal-life conflicts on individual performance in the field of work and life, respectively, and found that employees' personal-life conflicts had a more significant negative impact on their work performance than on their performance in life activities [31, 32]. When personal-to-work conflict is high, salespeople may treat "responding to customer needs" as a "given task" rather than performing more extrarole behaviors and may be preoccupied with completing tasks as quickly as possible in order to return to their families and enjoy the pleasures of our personal lives. Accordingly, we propose that

> H3: Salesperson personal-life conflict inhibits salesperson customer stewardship behavior.

3.4. The Impact of Work-Family Balance on Salespeople's Personal Life-Work Promotion.
Jeremy [33] states that if companies can promote work-family balance through measures such as flexible work arrangements, employees' loyalty, and adaptability to their jobs will increase as well. Wang and Zhang [34] point out that the more work-family balance employees have, the stronger their family life contributes to work. According to the balance between work-family theories, a high-level balance means that employees can effectively balance their family life and work roles. The personal life-work promotion theory emphasizes that employees who have positive experiences while engaging in family life role activities can facilitate their performance of work [25]. When salespeople achieve work-family balance, it suggests that they will have more positive emotions to deal with at work. A good balance between work-family leads to high-level job satisfaction and job identity, and along with this job satisfaction, salespeople are more motivated to handle various sales tasks assigned by

their supervisors, etc. Salesperson will generate consciousness of customer stewardship's behavior that focuses on the interests of the customer. Accordingly, we propose hypotheses 4 and 5.

> H4: Salespeople work-family balance contributes to the personal life-work promotion.
>
> H5: Salespeople personal life-work promotion mediates balance between work-family and customer stewardship behavior.

3.5. The Effect of Work-Family Balance on Salespeople's Personal to Work Conflicts. Past research has found that cross-level balance of work-family had been positive on perceiving work stress among researchers and exacerbating their personal-work conflict [35]. Omar et al. [36] argued that the lower the work-family balance of civil servants is, the fiercer the work-family roles' conflict would be. For salespeople, balance between work-family means that they are able to achieve a balanced distribution of two types of role activities by reasonably coordinating and communicating their roles in the work/family domain and effectively allocating the resources needed for both types of role activities [20]. We argue that when salespeople achieved work-family balance, it can help them have more flexible time and energy allocation in handling multiple role activities, effectively alleviate salespeople's personal-to-work conflict level, and instead facilitate their performance of job duties and increase salespeople's customer stewardship behavior. Accordingly, we propose hypotheses 6 and 7.

> H6: Salesperson work-family balance helps to suppress personal-to-work conflict.
>
> H7: There is the mediation of personal life-work conflict among salespeople between work-family balance and customer stewardship behavior.

Combining the above hypotheses, the research model is shown in Figure 1.

4. Study Design

4.1. Data Collection and Sample Selection

4.1.1. Questionnaire Design. First, the independent variables affected the participants' perceptions of the dependent variables in the process of completing the questionnaire; in order to ensure that the questionnaire duration was moderately, we split all the questions into two questionnaires for the participants in the process of the questionnaire design. The first questionnaire consisted of the dependent variable, mediating variables, and individual matching information; the second questionnaire consisted of independent variable, basic information about the individual, and matching information. The first questionnaire and the second questionnaire were administered one week apart. Secondly, in order to check whether the subjects were paying attention when completing the questionnaire, basic logical statements such as "there are 25 hours in a day" were added to the questionnaire [37]. Therefore, to ensure the quality of the

data collected, we added four randomized attention test items to two questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed on the Qualtrics website and a link was distributed in class for participants to complete via cell phone.

4.1.2. Questionnaire Distribution and Collection. In this study, we distributed the questionnaires to two main parts: one part was in an MBA classroom in a business school of a university in an eastern coastal city, and the other part was in a corporate training classroom in a business school of a university in an eastern coastal city. They were voluntarily attended by participants working in sales. In this paper, we distributed a total of 250 questionnaires in four MBA classrooms and one corporate training classroom one after another in December 2016, March 2017, and May 2017, and excluding the samples that did not pass the attention test, 223 valid questionnaires were collected, with a questionnaire efficiency rate of 89.2%.

4.1.3. Analysis of Demographic Information. In this questionnaire research, we obtained data on demographic variables (age, gender, educational background, years of work, etc.). The data demonstrated that the proportion of female salespeople accounted for 59.19% and married salespeople accounted for 64.6%, indicating that most sales have married family life. In addition, it is known that 52.9% of the samples have children, further indicating that the sample collected in this research is consistent with this study's question. The demographic information of each sample is specified in Table 1.

4.2. Variable Measurement. In this study, we derived the items for the measured variables from English scales in the published literature. Two PhD students with bilingual background in marketing translated all the measurement questions in both directions and proofread several times. Prior to the actual distribution of the questionnaire, a prestudy ($N = 30$) was conducted and the relevant text and language presentation was modified based on the prestudy results. The questionnaire was based on the 7-point Likert Scale, in which "1" means "strongly disagree" and "7" means "strongly agree."

4.2.1. Work-Family Balance. This study used a scale developed by Carlson et al. [16] to measure the "work-family balance" variable, which consisted of six questions, including "I can negotiate and achieve the goal of my work and family," "I can achieve the goal of my work and family well," "I am surrounded by people who say I am able to balance between work and family well," "I am able to meet the role expectations of my key people at work and at home well," "I am surrounded by people who say I am able to balance my work and family well," "I can achieve the goal of my supervisor and my family," "I can achieve the goal that my supervisor and my family set for me," "my co-workers and family members feel that I achieve the goal," and "based on
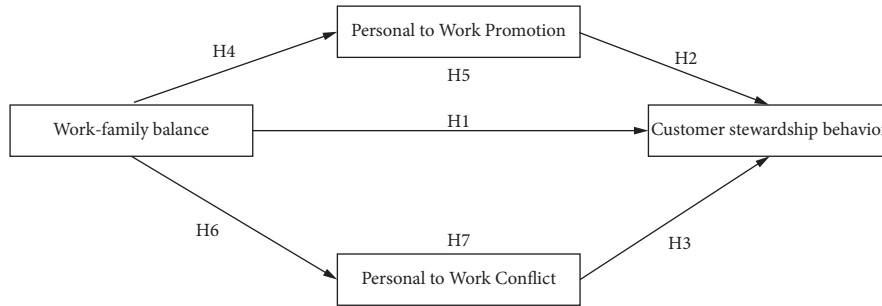
Figure 1: Research model.

Table 1: Demographic analysis.

Demographic variables		Number of samples	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	91	40.81
	Female	132	59.19
Age	Age under 25 years	15	10.09
	Age between 26 and 35 years	176	78.92
	Over 36 years old	32	14.35
Education level	High school and below	3	1.35
	Specialty	31	13.90
	Undergraduate	131	58.74
	Master and above	58	26.01
Marital status	Married	144	64.60
	Unmarried	99	35.40
Children's status	Yes	118	52.90
	No	105	47.10

feedback of my colleagues and family, I am clear that I fulfill my work and family responsibilities."

4.2.2. Personal-to-Work Promotion.

Using Fisher et al.'s [38] study, three measurement items were formed: "the experiences I have in my life make me feel better at work," "my personal life inspired me to complete my work well," and "my personal life makes me relax and let me feel ready for tomorrow's work."

4.2.3. Personal-to-Work Conflict.

This study used the "personal life-work conflict" scale developed by Mr Wilson and Mr Baumann [28], which consists of five main measures: "I miss work activities because I spend more time on personal matters," "the stress from personal activities makes it difficult for me to focus on my work," "personal activities waste my effort that I should devote to my work," "I am often tired to take part in personal activities because I am often too tired to work productively because I am involved in activities," and "my interests prevent me from performing my job duties.

4.2.4. Customer Housekeeping Behavior.

Schepers et al.'s [24] study was used to measure the customer stewardship behavior of salespeople: your performance in selling high-margin products "generated high sales," "achieved sales of new products," and "exceeded sales goals".

5. Empirical Analysis

5.1. The Reliability and Validity Tests.

In order to examine the reliability and validity of this scale, this study first analyzed the reliability of Cronbach's α coefficients in each variable. And, the results reflected that the model had high internal reliability (WLB = 0.941, PWE = 0.831, PWC = 0.886, and CSB = 0.804). Meanwhile, the AVE values of each variable were 0.774, 0.746, 0.691, and 0.569, all of which were larger than 0.5, indicating that the convergent validity of this scales was also relatively good. Then, this study used validation factor analysis to test the discriminant validity, and the specific test indexes included χ^2, df, RMSEA, SRMR, CFI, and TLI : RMSEA values less than 0.1 are acceptable and less than 0.08 are ideal, and the same for SRMR values; CFI and TLI are better than 0.9, and the closer to 1, the better; there is no specific numerical size for χ^2/df. In general, the smaller the ratio of these two values, the better the overall fitting effect of the model. The results of validated factors' analysis which tested the discriminant validity are shown in Table 2.

5.2. The Homologous Deviation Analysis.

In this paper, one salesperson filled in the data for each variable (work-family balance, personal-to-work promotion, personal-to-work conflict, and customer stewardship behavior), so there may be a problem of common method bias. Therefore, according to Zhou Hao and Long Lirong [39], the procedural control was first adopted to collect data on the variables in two separate

TABLE 2: The results of validated factor analysis on the discriminant validity of this scale.

Models	Factor	χ^2	df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
One-factor model	WFB + PWE + PWC + CSB	1404.757	152	0.193	0.511	0.450
Two-factor model	WFB, PWE + PWC + CSB	852.722	151	0.142	0.737	0.702
Three-factor model	WFB, PWE + PWC, CSB	553.934	149	0.111	0.842	0.819
Four-factor model	WFB, PWE, PWC, CSB	281.814	146	0.065	0.947	0.938

TABLE 3: The means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients of each variable.

Variables	Means	Standard deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gender	1.59	0.493	1							
Age	31.22	4.265	0.055	1						
Education level	4.09	0.668	0.021	−0.044	1					
Working hours	41.66	19.934	0.027	0.110	0.061	1				
WLB	5.186	.944	−0.064	0.206**	−0.071	−0.001	1			
PWE	5.208	1.024	−0.120	0.064	0.039	0.085	0.401**	1		
PWC	2.482	1.0750	0.148*	−0.094	−0.003	−0.003	−0.214**	−0.341**	1	
CSB	5.942	0.7270	0.059	0.051	0.069	0.002	0.254**	0.307**	−0.301**	1

TABLE 4: The results of hierarchical regression analysis.

	DV: personal life-work promotion		DV: personal life-work conflict		DV: customer stewardship behavior			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Gender	−0.262	−0.203	0.337*	0.307*	0.083	0.110	0.147	0.167
Age	0.015	−0.005	−0.026	−0.016	0.009	−0.001	0.000	−0.004
Education level	0.062	0.095	−0.018	−0.034	0.079	0.094	0.077	0.088
Working hours	0.004	0.004	0.000	5.648^*e^{-005}	0.000	0.000	−0.001	0.000
Work-family balance		0.439**		−0.222**		0.204***	0.125**	0.163**
Personal life - work promotion							0.180***	
Personal life-work conflict								−0.185***
R^2	0.027	0.182	0.033	0.068	0.011	0.077	0.106	0.147
F	1.528	9.624	1.829	3.177	0.604	3.617	5.349	6.177
R^2 value change	0.027	0.155	0.033	0.036	0.011	0.066	0.053	0.070
F value change	1.528	40.885	1.829	8.318	0.604	15.507	13.000	12.586

occasions. Meanwhile, after obtaining the data, we used Harman's one-factor test. The variance, which is explained by the largest factor in the exploratory factor analysis results, was 33.95%. It was less than the empirical criterion of 40%, indicating that there was no single factor in the sample data that could explain the vast majority of the variables. In addition, according to the results of the validated factor analysis, the one-factor model fit was poor (χ^2/df = 9.242, RMSEA = 0.193, CFI = 0.511, and NFI = 0.486), and the one-factor model was not valid; while the fit of the four-factor model was significantly better than the one-factor model (χ^2/df = 1.930, RMSEA = 0.065, CFI = 0.947, and NFI = 0.897), indicating that there was no serious problem of homogeneous method bias in this study. The results of data analysis are credible.

5.3. The Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Correlation Analysis. From Table 3, it can be seen that significant positive correlations between salesperson work-family balance and customer housekeeping behavior existed ($r = 0.254$ and $p < 0.01$), personal life-work promotion and customer housekeeping behavior ($r = 0.307$ and $p < 0.01$), personal life-work conflict and customer housekeeping behavior

($r = −0.301$ and $p < 0.01$), and there was a significant negative correlation between work-family balance and personal-to-work promotion ($r = −0.401$ and $p < 0.01$), and personal-to-work conflict ($r = −0.214$ and $p < 0.01$) among salespeople. The correlations between these variables are consistent with the direction of the hypothesis of this study, which also provides preliminary evidence for the next step of hypothesis testing.

5.4. Hypothesis Testing. In Table 4, we concluded the results of this study, which show that there is a significant positive effect of salesperson work-family balance on customer stewardship behavior (Model 6, $\beta = 0.204$, and $p < 0.01$) with control variables considered, and H1 is verified; there is a significant positive effect of salesperson personal life-work promotion on customer stewardship behavior (Model 7, $\beta = 0.180$, and $p < 0.001$), and H2 is verified; there is a significant positive effect of salesperson personal-to-work conflict on customer stewardship behavior (Model 8 and $p < 0.001$; Model 7, $\beta = 0.180$, and $p < 0.001$) had a significant positive effect on customer stewardship behavior (Model 7, $\beta = 0.180$, and $p < 0.001$), and H2 was verified. Salesperson

TABLE 5: Bootstrap analysis of mediating effect test.

Intermediary effects	Effects	95% confidence interval	
		Lower limit	Upper limit
Overall effect	0.0916	0.0439	0.1575
Personal-to-work promotion	0.0567	0.0154	0.1196
Personal-to-work conflict	0.035	0.0154	0.1196
Direct impact after controlling intermediaries	0.1193	0.0119	0.2267

personal-to-work conflict had a significant negative effect on customer stewardship behavior (Model 8, β = -0.185, and $p < 0.001$), and H3 was verified. Meanwhile, work-family balance had a significant positive effect (Model 2, $\beta = 0.439$, and $p < 0.001$), and H4 was verified. Work-family balance had a significant negative effect on personal-to-work conflict (Model 4, $\beta = -0.222$, and $p < 0.001$), and H6 was verified. As we can see, the empirical results verified all hypotheses in the main effects, indicating that the measurement model has a strong predictive power and can be discussed subsequently.

In order to verify the mediating effects of salesperson's life-work promotion and personal life-work conflict between the work-family balance and customer stewardship's behavior, this study mainly used the mediating effect test procedure of SPSS software and added the demographic variables of salesperson's gender, age, education level, whether they were married, and whether they have children as control variables to the test model using the Bootstrap method, which was used to test [40], with a sample size of 5000 selected and a confidence interval of 95%.

The results of the analysis in the mediating effect of salesperson work-family balance $\longrightarrow$ customer stewardship behavior (Table 5) showed that the overall mediating effect of salesperson personal life-work promotion and personal life-work conflict in the formation mechanism of work-family balance on customer stewardship behavior was significant (95% CI = [0.0439, 0.1575]). The mediating effects on both personal life-work promotion and personal life-work conflict were significant, with indirect effects of 0.0561 and 0.0346, respectively, and 95% confidence intervals of [0.0154, 0.1196] and [0.0154, 0.1196], respectively. Meanwhile, after controlling the mediating variables (personal life-work promotion and personal life-work conflict), work-family balance had a significant direct effect on salesperson customer stewardship behavior with 95% confidence intervals of [0.0119, 0.2267], indicating that personal to work promotion and personal-to-work conflict played a partial mediating role, with H5 and H7 passing validation.

6. Conclusion and Future Prospects

6.1. Discussion

6.1.1. Work-Family Balance Has a Direct Contribution to the Formation of Customer Stewardship Behavior among Salespeople. According to the results of the above stepwise regression analysis, it can be seen that the direct path of influence of work-family balance on customer stewardship behavior is significant at the 99% significance level, and this result indicates that salespeople's work-family balance has a

direct contribution to the formation of their customer stewardship behavior. In other words, when companies provide salespeople with a better working environment, flexible working hours, and work arrangements that match salespeople's work-family life, they can effectively help salespeople adapt to the role expectations they are given at work and at home, i.e., achieve a high level of work-family balance. When they achieve a balance between their roles at work and at home, they will respond positively to the needs of customers and will be able not only to do their jobs well but also to generate extrarole behaviors and establish a psychological contract between themselves and customers from the perspective of responsibility to customers.

6.1.2. The Internal Mechanism of Salesperson's Customer Stewardship Behavior. We found that work-family balance not only has a direct effect on the formation of customer stewardship behavior but also indirectly affects the formation of customer stewardship behavior through personal-to-work promotion and personal-to-work conflict.

Work-family balance has a significant positive effect on salespeople's personal-to-work promotion, indicating that when salespeople have the ability to balance their family and life roles. Salespeople are more likely to have happiness in their family life, and driven by this positive emotion, they are more likely to have high job loyalty at work, thus enhancing the production of extrarole behaviors. For sales people, their extrarole behavior means that they imagine themselves as customers' housekeepers from the customers' point of view; they achieve customer satisfaction and customer loyalty by establishing a high contact psychological contract with them, recommending products or services for customers not only from the perspective of company profit but also from the actual needs of customers, and by creating more customer value on the basis of satisfying customers' needs. Therefore, for enterprises, they should manage to balance the salesperson's work and family roles; meanwhile, pay attention to whether the sales personnel bring a high degree of work-family benefit after achieving a high level of work-family balance. Only when enterprises help sales personnel to achieve high levels of work-family balance and personal life-work promotion will the customer stewardship behavior in salespeople be promoted. The work-family balance $\longrightarrow$ personal-to-work conflict $\longrightarrow$ customer stewardship behavior path shows that sales personnel personal-conflict has a significant inhibitory effect on the formation of customer stewardship behavior ($\beta = -0.185$ and H3 was supported), which is consistent with our expected results. If salespeople exhibit

negative effects on their work status when they develop personal and work conflicts over time and energy, this performance inhibits the formation of their customer stewardship behavior. However, the company can make the working hours of salespeople more flexible through various means (e.g., establishing flexible working hours and caring for subordinates) which can reduce the conflicts caused by limited time and energy and effectively mitigate their personal to work conflicts caused by role conflicts. When their personal-to-work conflicts are alleviated, their sense of slackness towards work will be reduced, and in such a working environment, salespeople are more likely to develop a contractual spirit towards customers, thus promoting the formation of their customer stewardship behavior.

6.2. Managerial Suggestions. This paper revealed the formation mechanism of salesperson's customer stewardship behavior, which implied that when salespeople achieve a role balance between their work and family, they would spend more time and effort in demanding customer's need, as well as generating their extrarole behaviors and establishing a psychological contract between themselves and customers from the perspective of responsibility to customers. This finding suggested that salesperson's customer stewardship behavior could be developed and improved through balancing salesperson's role between work and family. For example, salesperson could keep in touch with their customers through some social media when they cannot achieve at workplace because of the spread of COVID-19, which help them be stable and promote their sales performance and create customer deeper consumption demands.

6.3. Future Research. This paper mainly focused on exploring the formation mechanism of salespeople's customer stewardship behavior as hypothesized according to role theory. Nearly 85% of the salespeople in this research sample have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is the high education level salesperson, so it is accurate that the conclusions obtained in this paper apply to salespeople with high education levels. As education level affects individual and team competence (competency), which is an important high predictor variable for individual customer management orientation, their customer stewardship behavior may be generally higher. In the future, a more broad-based sample should be selected to examine whether there are differences in main effects across subpopulations.

This paper mainly studies the formation mechanism of salesperson customer stewardship behavior from work-family role theory. All the research on customer stewardship behavior shows that there are factors affecting the formation of salesperson customer stewardship behavior such as employee work/family role balance, conflict, and facilitation. In the future, academics can make a deep study on the formation mechanism of salesperson customer stewardship behavior from the perspectives of resource acquisition theory and leadership style theory.

Data Availability

No data were used to support this study.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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