

# Determinants of Work-Family Conflict of Dual Career Couples

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**Abstract:** Work-family conflict occurs when work related demands interfere with home responsibilities and Family-work conflict arises when family responsibilities impede work activities. Both types of conflict have been negatively related to employees' satisfaction. In Sri Lankan context the values and beliefs of family has been socially and ethically appreciated. But today the market demands of a worker and the family demands being a wife and a mother, a worker is getting the trouble of balancing the both career and the family. The consequence of work - family conflict is a deviation from the existing psychological condition of human life. Therefore, it is important to recognize the variables related to work-family conflict. The population of the study is the dual career couples of private sector garment industry in Horana area in Kalutara district and 10% of the population is taken as the sample. The principle method of the primary data collection will do through standard questionnaire; the random sampling technique will have administered for the study. The variables will have evaluated by the percentage analysis, coefficient of correlation, chi-square analysis and binary logistic regression. The study revealed that role overload, number of leaves, having children whose age less than 5 years and child care arrangements emerged as significant predictors of work-family conflict and family-work conflict of dual career couples.

**Key words:** Dual career couples, Employees' satisfaction, Family-work conflict, Work-family conflict

## INTRODUCTION

Work-family conflict has been defined as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible. This definition implies a bidirectional relation. Work-family conflict occurs when work related demands interfere with home responsibilities and Family-work conflict arises when family responsibilities impede work activities. Both types of conflict have been negatively related to employees' satisfaction (Neteyer et al., 1996). Life-work fit is defined as workers' perception that the job is balanced with home life they feel safe doing the work and that they have flexibility to attend to work and home duties. Work-life balance also reflects fit between personal life and work life.

The concept of work-family conflict has been explained by (Kahn et al, 1964) using the role theory framework. They proposed that the major determinant of an individual's behavior is the expectation of behavior that others have for him or her. The role theory predicts that the expectation surrounding each of these different roles a person performs can generate inter-role conflict when they involve pressure to dominate the time of the focal person to satisfy all expectations of his or her work and family roles since each role requires time, energy and commitment. Using this framework, (Kahn et al 1964) defined work family conflict as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from work and family spheres are mutually incompatible. Such incompatibility is indicated by the fact that participation in the work role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family role and vice versa.

The quality of fit between an individual's work and family life is a primary issue for families today and a major challenge confronting the labor market of the future (U.S. Department of Labor, 1999). Over the last 25 years, the number of dual career couples has been increasing (Boles et al, 2001). As a result, there has been an increase in the attention given to work- family conflict and family - work conflict. This increased attention, at least partially, results from a perception that work - family conflict and family-work conflict can result in undesirable work related outcomes. Work-family conflict has been conceptualized as a two-dimensional construct where work interferes with family and family interferes with work (Frone et al, 1996).

Work - family conflict can be explained as the mutual hindrance of work and family roles and organizational problems. Worker, individual always identify him with the roles he plays in each of these domains, and he is considered to be the most common and value roles. So, experience and results of work - family balance of workers. Work- family conflict is most commonly defined as a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Business world is not family friendly, insufficient social security arrangements and frequent economic crises have significant negative effects on family.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The changing scenario in business has its own impacts in human life. In Sri Lankan context the values and believes of family has been socially and ethically appreciated. But today the market demands of a worker and the family demands being a wife and a mother, a worker is getting the trouble of balancing the both career and the family. The consequence of work - family conflict is a deviation from the existing psychological condition of human life.

Therefore, the present study is a timely attempt to investigate the work-family conflict, family- work conflict, work and life satisfaction and health among the dual career couples in Sri Lankan garment industry.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study is to recognize the variables related to work-family conflict and family – work conflict.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Life satisfaction of the worker directly affects for the household economy. The decisions which are taken by the satisfied worker lead to increase the productivity level of the family and as well as to enhance their personal satisfaction. There by, households can perform their day today activities successfully.

Household is the smallest entity in the society. Success of a household is directly associated with the success of the entire society. Therefore, studying the variables related to work-family conflicts, family – work conflict, health and satisfaction becomes a major factor in order to achieve an economic development in any country with a social welfare.

By using the results of this study, economists can construct indices to measure the life satisfaction of workers. And also, the study data are widely useful to international agencies, researches, social workers and the general public.

Considering all above factors, this study will be very important for the economy and as well as for the entire society.

**METHODOLOGY**

The population of the study is the dual career couples of private sector garment industry in Horanaareain Kalutara district and 10% (210) of the population is taken as the sample. The principle method of the primary data collection will do through standard questionnaire; the random sampling technique will have administered for the study.

The variables will have evaluated by the binary logistic regression.

**FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

The model with having children whose age less than 5 years and child care arrangements has been recognized as the best logistic regression model for identifying the significant factors with the work-family conflict of dual career couples.

$$\text{logit}(\pi_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_i^{\text{leaves}} + \beta_j^{\text{role overload}} + \beta_k^{\text{children}} + \beta_l^{\text{child care}}$$

**Table 1: Best Fitted Logistic Regression Model**

Parameter	Category	$\beta$	Sig.	Exp $\beta$
Children whose age less than 5 years	have	2.96	0.00	19.48
Role overload			0.02	
	Very High	2.81	0.01	16.59
	High	2.24	0.02	9.41
	Moderate	0.84	0.45	2.32
Leaves	no	2.25	0.00	9.48
Child care arrangements			0.04	
	Good	2.76	0.44	1.93
	Neutral	3.13	0.21	2.98
	Bad	3.24	0.04	5.68
	Very Bad	2.95	0.00	9.14
	Constant	-1.47	0.21	0.23

Source: Sampling Survey, 2017

According to the results of the best fitted logistic regression model,

All estimated explanatory coefficients are greater than one and it denotes positive relationship with dependent variable.

Work family conflict is 19.48 times higher than for dual career couples having children whose age less than 5 years compare to the dual career couples who have not the children whose age less than 5 years. This illustrates that probability of having work family conflict is greater than 82% for dual career couples having children whose age less than 5 years compare to the dual career couples who haven't children whose age less than 5 years.

As the role overload towards the job is very high, the work family conflict is increased by 16.59 times and work family conflict is increased by 9.418 times when they belong to the role overload towards the job is high category. This scenario further explains that when pay attention for the role overload of the job, chance of having work family conflict is greater than 80% for group of dual career couples in very high category, 68% for high category and 35% for moderate group respectively.

Work family conflict of dual career couples is 9.489 times higher than for couples who haven't the ability to get leaves from the working place compare to the couples who do not have a chance to obtain leaves. In other words, probability of having work family conflict is greater than 69% for dual career couples without the availability of leaves compare to the couples who without the access for leaves.

Finally, considering the child care arrangements, work family conflict among the couples who categorized in to good group is increased by 1.93 times, the couples who categorized in to neutral group is increased by 2.980 times, who categorized in to bad is increased by 5.68 times and work family conflict among the couples who are belong to very bad category is raised by 9.14 times respectively relative to the very good category. This point out that chance of having work family conflict based on the child care arrangements is greater than 76% for group of employees in good category, 84% for neutral, 86% for bad and 81% for dual career couples are in very bad group.

## CONCLUSIONS

Having children whose age less than 5 years and child care arrangements emerged as significant predictors of work-family conflict among dual career couples.

In the view of the dual career couples having children whose age less than 5 years, more than 80% of them are faced work family conflict. Ahmad (2007) found that operators with youngest child aged less than three years experienced more work-to-family conflict than those with youngest child aged three and above. Similarly, Lu et al. (2006) found that age of the youngest child was negatively correlated with both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work family. The findings support the contention that working mothers with younger children would experience more work-to-family conflict than those with older children. Parents of dependent young children, especially mothers, have higher family demands than those with older children. These greater, often unpredictable demands, such as childcare arrangement and care of sick child, would result in lower levels of control over the work and family interface and thus higher levels of work-family conflict. However, as the children get older the demands, especially those related to childcare, would decrease, resulting in increased levels of control and lower stress for the parents (Ahmad, 2008).

Considering the ability to get leaves from the working place, more than half of the dual career couples are faced work family conflict due to the inability to take leaves from the job.

Among all the factors, child care arrangements have emerged as the most important factor for predicting the work family conflict. Child care arrangements have an important impact on parents' experiences of work and satisfactory provisions help protect against pressures of dual-earner lifestyles. The importance of child care in balancing professional and personal life among female gynecologic oncologists has been reported (Gardiner et al., 2000). Among married women in dual earner families, concerns about their child, including quality of child care arrangements, accounted for substantial amounts of variance in the role strain experienced by these women (Greenberger & O'Neal, 1990). A study of female production operators in manufacturing companies revealed that the operators experienced work-to-family conflict and the intensity of conflict experienced was negatively related to satisfaction with child care arrangements (Ahmad, 2007).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Work-family conflict is a serious human resources issue. Women experiences work family conflict because they have to manage both work and family roles simultaneously, whereas men can delegate their family responsibilities to their wives and concentrate fully on their career. And also selected organizations can offer courses on baby care for both spouses and fathers to be and they should be strongly encouraged to participate so that they can help with child care.

Employers have little enthusiasm for greater codification of employees' policies which restrict working time, putting emphasis on liberal doctrines of employees' choice (to work long hours) and freedom of market (Reeves, 2001). However, the government may encourage employers to offer greater flexibility to employees. In consequence, time flexible prescriptions (flexi-time; part-time working) have been offered by employers as the most common prescriptive approach to provide balance between work and life for their employees.

Practices such as parental leave, domestic leave and flexible work can be designed exclusively to make family life easier and therefore make work easier firstly through addressing family role conflicts.

Work-family conflict has become a societal issue. This issue leads to health-related problems such as over stress, mental imbalance, emotional exhaustion and life dissatisfaction. In order to reduce these health-related problems, the society needs to promote the meaning of balancing the work and family roles and emphasize the important of personal interests.

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