



DETERMINANTS INFLUENCING WORK LIFE
CONFLICT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL
WOMEN TEACHERS IN THIRUVALLUR
DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

S.Saranya¹

¹Research Scholar in Management, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India



ABSTRACT

Work-family conflicts—the trade-offs of your money or your life, your job or your child—would not be forced upon women with such sanguine disregard if men experienced the same career stalls caused by the-buck-stops-here responsibility for children.

-Letty Cottin Pogrebin

Work and family conflict (WFC) is an inevitable fact for employees and especially for Secondary School Women teachers. In this study, Determinants Influencing Work life conflict among Secondary School Women teachers in Thiruvallur district, Tamilnadu was analyzed using the stress-strain model (Dunham, 1984). The predictors of WFC are categorized into three groups: job-related factors, individual-related factors, and family-related factors. Job type, work time commitment, job involvement, role overload, and job flexibility were counted as job-related factors. Individual-related factors are life role values, gender role orientation, locus of control, and perfectionism. The number of children, life-cycle stage, family involvement, and child care arrangement are the family-related factors. This paper examines the how the determinants influences work life conflict among secondary school women teachers.

KEY WORDS: Work and Family Conflict, job-related factors, individual-related factors, and family-related factors

INTRODUCTION

In the past, Work-family balance was a major problem for females. On the contrary, parenting and caring factors don't affect men's work, due to which they are not victimized this conflict (Hearn, 1999). More than one decade's research has suggested a significant difference between predictors of WFC for male and female employees. Many educational researchers like (Frye and Breugh, 2004) have great urge to investigate the relationships between the professional and family lives of female teachers. Research on WFC emphasized on both managerial and non-traditional professions. According to Nadeem and Metcalf (2007), push and pull between family and job tasks are referred as Work-family Conflict. The term has very ancient history. In barter system era, job was not much commonly term. Work wasn't considered as a career, but merely a survival means. According to Lockwood (2003), Work-family Balance exhibits a balance in family and professional life. Work-family Conflict emerges when family or job demands are at opposite states. The need of balance family and work place tasks is predicament for employees and nearly impossible because of turbulent work environment and global economic development that need demanding job and tiring working hours. Silver and Frances (1994) suggested that increasing availability of flexible job, which women can adopt with families, may reconcile the conflict between work and family responsibilities. The rapid development in business life and the radical changes in family structure in the modern world made it necessary for more studies to be made by researchers on work and family conflict, including comparative studies between past and present conditions (Eija, Uussiautti and Maatta, 2012). This paper aims to find the determinants Influencing Work life conflict among Secondary School Women teachers in Thiruvallur district, Tamilnadu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

WORK-LIFE CONFLICT

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985, p.77) define work-family conflict as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect". In adult life, work and family are primary life domains and researchers have developed and tested various models of the antecedents (e.g. work hours, number of children etc.) and consequences (e.g. absenteeism, low job satisfaction) of work-family conflict. Very little theory development has related to the forms of inter-

role conflict affecting adolescents or young adults in full-time education. However, the work-family literature provides a useful basis for this development.

It is clear though, that what one domain (eg. family) gains, the other (eg. work) loses (Googins, 1991). From the perspective of employers, a choice can be made between wanting employees to channel time and creativity into solving home dilemmas and having that same energy for the benefit of the workplace (Googins, 1991). Competitive-control behaviours tend to be more valued in hierarchical organisations than they are at home (Kofodimos,1995).

An early contribution is by Kahn et al (1964), who define work-family conflict as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participating in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role. More recent studies have concentrated on the compatibility of role expectations (Frone et al, 1992; Netemeyer et al,1996; Carlson and Kacmar, 2000:1032).

Perhaps the most important contribution is by Greenhaus et al (1985), who suggest that workfamily conflict exists when (a) time devoted to the requirements of one role makes it difficult to fulfil requirements of another; (b) strain from participation in one role makes it difficult to fulfil requirements of another; and (c) specific behaviours required by one role make it difficult to fulfil the requirements of another. In a more general sense, inter-role conflict is experienced when pressures arising in one role are incompatible with pressures arising in another role. Note again that role pressure incompatibility exists when participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in another role (Kahn et al, 1964).

Voydanoff (1988) posits that meeting the often incompatible demands of family and work may create family-work conflict. For example, working long hours may prevent adequate performance of family responsibilities. Family demands may also interfere with work, e.g., a child's illness may prevent attendance at work or school. Understanding the points of view and interpreting the emotional state and behaviour of others depend on the ability to deal with the emotions aroused by social interaction, and are developed from information use (Welsh and Bierman, 2002).

Menaghan and Parcel (1990) explored that the work-family conflict form may vary by social class and the number of employed household members

as the single-parent, female-headed household may face financial stressor.

Lu et al. (2009) also explored the reasons of work life conflicts and the most prominent according to them are child care responsibilities, working hours, monthly salary and organizational family - friendly policy.

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To date, work/family interaction is seen as family issues that are not directly related to the responsibilities of either the workplace or the public sector, the strong cultural mandates to keep government and corporations out of private family lives having served to maintain a hands-off policy (Googins, 1991).

More recently, Rubin et al. (1994) argued that conflict had become too broadly defined but they want to use it to mean a “perceived divergence of interest, or a belief that the parties’ current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously”

Deutsch defined conflict as incompatible activities; one person’s actions interfere, obstruct or in some way get in the way of another’s action. Incompatible activities occur in both cooperative and competitive contexts. Whether the protagonists believe their goals are cooperative or competitive very much affects their expectations, interaction, and outcomes. How they negotiate their conflict in turn affects the extent to which they believe they have cooperative or competitive goals with each other.

Morton Deutsch’s (1973) theory of cooperation and competition indicated that defining conflict as opposing interests is fundamentally flawed. Although Deutsch is one of the most prominent conflict researchers (e.g., the first recipient of the International Association for Conflict Management’s Life-Time Achievement Award), the implications for his

definition of conflict have been largely missed. There does not appear to have been enough direct, open conflict about definitions to generate questioning of traditional definitions and developing more effective ones.

Pleck et al., (1980) reported a positive association between physical and mental work demands and a variety of work-family conflict. Goode (1960) said that role conflict has been penetrated in all spans of life. In Goode views, it is a problem of energies and skills allocation to individuals so that stress will not burn them out. Apart from it, changes in the level of work environment; engagement in territorial activities; communication stress and intellectual concentration demanded in work are major stressors at work (Burke et al. 1980b). Ferree (1990) said that societal attitudes and behavioral expectations of males and females are the predictors of gender role perspectives. Huber and Spitze (1983) reported that resources like, income, education and occupational status influence spouse’s prestige and status relationship and lessen passive and monotonous house activities.

PREDICTIVE MODEL OF WORK AND FAMILY CONFLICT

Job, family and individual factors as predictors of work-family conflict

The model is developed based on the stress-strain model (Dunham, 1984) and the social identity theory (Lobel, 1991), as well as the work of researchers (Figure 1). According to the stress-strain model, the predictors are referred to as stressors, and the conflict as strain. Social identity theory posits that people classify themselves in various social categories which define their identities and the roles they hold in a social environment. For example, a person could view himself/herself as a valued employee, a loving spouse, or a good parent, among other things. Each of these roles provides a different aspect of identity to the individual. Some will view being a valued employee as the most important aspect of their identity, while others may gain more pleasure from the role of spouse and therefore value it more. Conflict can arise when an individual who values a particular role is forced by situational constraints to spend less time than he/she would like in that role. The model in this paper suggests that these constraints or predictors could be job-related, family-related and individual-related factors predicting the extent of work-family conflict experienced by an individual.

1. Job-Related Factors

Employees in managerial and professional positions report higher levels of work-to-family conflict than those working in non-managerial and non-professional positions (Duxbury & Higgins, 2003). Among Spanish employees, Carnicer et al. (2004) found that there was a positive association between job category level and work-family conflict whereby managers experienced greater work-to-family conflict than lower category employees. Related to the job category level in the study were the employees' education levels. Employees with a master's or doctoral degree experienced greater work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict than employees with high school education.

Greenhaus & Beutell 1985 Studies suggest that work time commitment is related to the intensity of work-family conflict experienced by employees. One of the commonly measured forms of work-family conflict is time-based conflict, defined as conflict that occurs when the amount of time devoted to one role makes it difficult to fulfill the requirements of another role.

Work-family researchers have found that time committed to work contributes to conflict between employees' work and non-work roles (Beauregard, 2006; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Darcy & McCarthy, 2007; Kinnunen, Vermulst, Gerris, & Makikangas, 2003; Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002; Nielson, Carlson, & Lankau, 2001).

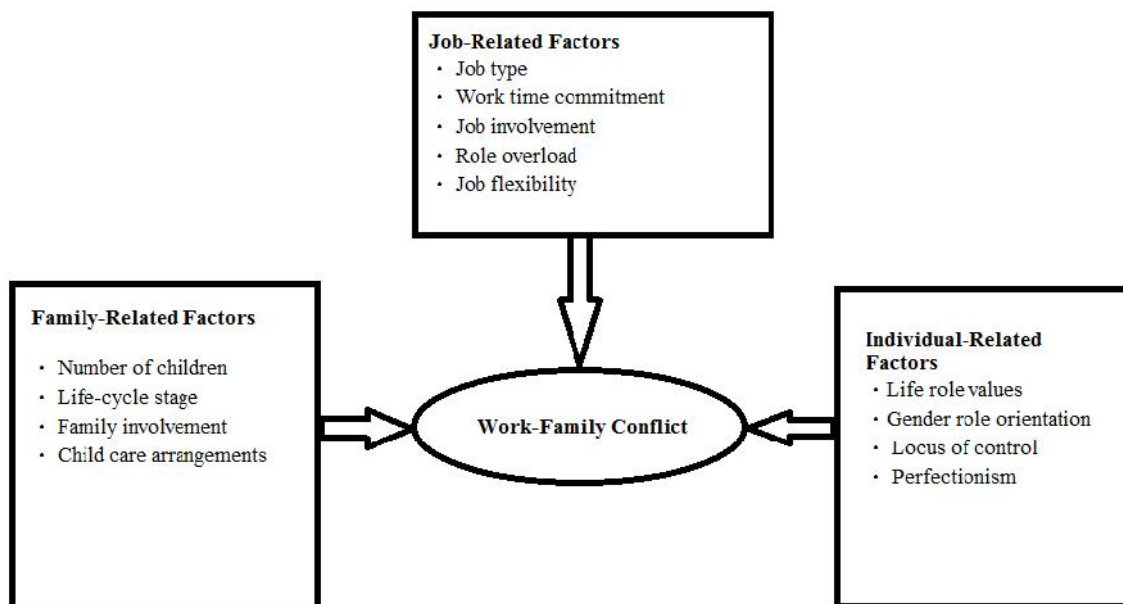


Figure 1. Predictors of Work-Family Conflict

According to the spillover theory, moods, stress, and thoughts generated in one role domain often influence or spill over into other domains (William & Alliger, 1994). Moorehead (2001) argued that this overlap is a relatively positive one and refers to this as “synchronizing work and family.” Research has demonstrated a positive relationship between job involvement and work-family conflict (Hammer et al., 1997; Darry & McCarthy, 2007). This implies that individuals with high levels of psychological involvement in their work role may be more preoccupied with their work and, hence, may devote an excessive amount of energy to their role at the expense of their family role, resulting in work-family

conflict. Other researchers have also demonstrated a significant relationship between role overload and work-family conflict (Fu & Shaffer, 2001).

Casey and Chase (2004), and Allen (2001) stressed the importance of flexible work arrangements including job schedule flexibility. They found that the adoption of job schedule flexibility was related to less work-family conflict. Similarly, Anderson, Coffey, and Byerly, (2002) and Carnicer, Sanchez, Perez, and Jimenez (2004) found schedule flexibility was negatively related to work-family conflict.

2. Family-Related Factors

Duxbury and Higgins (2003) found that both male and female Canadian employees with dependent care responsibilities report higher levels of work-to-family conflict. Intuitively, these results make sense as employees with children and/or elderly dependents are more likely to have inflexible commitments at home that will conflict with expectations or demands at work. This study also found that employees with dependent care responsibilities were at higher risk of caregiver strain. The presence of children in the household has also been positively related to work-family conflict (Carnicer et al., 2004).

Carlson and Kacmar (2000) found that employees who were more involved or immersed in the family domain experienced more family interference with work conflict. Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Collins (2001) found a positive relationship between family involvement and work-family conflict, a relationship that was stronger for males than females.

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

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 (Gordiner 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 (Aminah Ahmad, 2007).

3. Individual-Related Factors

Besides job- and family-related factors, a number of individual-related factors could contribute to the experience of work-family conflict. The incorporation of individual values into the work-family conflict research is important because life role values are central to organizing meaning and action for working people (Carlson, & Kacmar, 2000). In incorporating values into work-family conflict

research, Carlson & Kacmar (2000) has used three multiple perspectives, namely centrality, priority and importance. Centrality refers to the value expression of individuals with regard to how central work or family is in their lives when compared to other life roles. Thus, the different centrality placed on the role of work or family may be helpful in explaining differences in the experience of work-family conflict. Priorities refer to the value expression of individuals with regard to how individuals prioritize their life roles. Variation in values as expressed by prioritization of life roles should lead to differing experiences of work-family conflict. Life roles can also be examined from the perspective of importance which refers to the value expression manifested in the importance an individual places on a given role. The researchers found that individuals who valued work over family experienced greater family-to-work conflict. In addition, the sources, levels, and outcomes of work-family conflict were found to differ depending on the life role values held by the individuals when expressed in terms of work centrality and importance. However, differences in the work-family conflict process were not found for individuals whose values were expressed in terms of priority or family centrality.

Another individual-related antecedent of work-family conflict that has not been much studied is gender role orientation. This refers to the beliefs individuals hold about normal roles of men and women in meeting family and work responsibilities (Harris & Firestone, 1998). Conceptually, gender role orientation is seen as ranging on a continuum from traditional gender role orientation whereby the roles of men and women are seen as distinct and separate, to a focus on non-traditional gender role orientation characterized by role sharing between men and women. Hence, men who saw their roles as interchangeable with their wives' roles tend to accept more responsibility for tasks associated with childcare, meal preparation and cleaning than men who endorsed specialized roles between men and women.

There are a number of dispositional factors that may influence the work-home interface. Frider and Ryan's (2005) model proposes three ways in which dispositional factors may affect this interface. Personality may affect the type and amount of work and home role requirements that an individual experiences, the individual's perceptions of work and home role requirements, and the coping strategies

used to deal with the interference of the two roles. Wayne et al. (2004) found a positive link between neuroticism and both directions of work-home interference, and a negative link between conscientiousness and work-home interference. Negative affectivity was also found linked to work-home interference. Similarly Ratanen, Pulkkinen, and Kinnunen (2005) found that neuroticism was positively linked to work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. A study by Bonebright, Clay, and Ankenmann (2000) revealed that workaholics were found to have significantly more work-life conflict than non-workaholics.

Besides these personality factors, self-evaluations are likely to have an effect on work-home perceptions (Fride & Ryan, 2005). According to the self-consistency theory (Korman, 1970), individuals will seek and be satisfied with roles that maximize cognitive consistency. Those with more positive self-evaluations (including self-esteem, self-efficacy and perfectionism) will choose situations in which they can be effective, and avoid those in which they cannot. Individuals with negative self-evaluations may actually experience more home and work stressors, and therefore perceive greater interference (Fried and Ryan, 2005, Beauregard, 2006).

To date, only a few studies have examined the relationship between locus of control and work-family outcomes. Andreassi and Thompson (2007) conducted a more recent study on employees in the United States of America and found that internal locus of control was negatively related to work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1. To identify the factors that lead to work life conflict among secondary school women teachers.
2. To evaluate the degree of relationship among the factors of WLC.

ANALYSIS

Correlation Analysis:-

To test the objective II. I have conducted correlational analysis. The results of correlation analysis are presented in Table 1. The results indicated that all variables have statistically significant relationship at (p, 0.01). Job related factors have a significant positive relation with family related factors (0.533). Job related a factor has significant moderate relationship with individual related factors (0.678). Family related factors have a significant positive correlation with individual related factors (0.898). Hence the hypothesis is accepted.

Table1. Correlation Analysis

Variables	Job-Related Factors	Family-Related Factors	Individual-Related Factors
Job-Related Factors	1	0. 533**	0.678**
Family-Related Factors		1	0.898**
Individual-Related Factors			1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis:-

Regression analysis has been conducted to find the degree of relationship among the factors of WLC. The results of regression analysis based on independent variables (Job related and family related factors) are given in table 2 below.

The overall model fitness for regression equation was determined by F statistics. This model has shown positive and statistically significant statistics having F = 14.360 and p = .001. The

regression analysis results show that 13.56% of variance in dependant variable (Individual related factors) is due to these independent variables (Job related and family related factors) as shown through the value of R Square. Job related factors has the highest beta of .756 followed by family related factors having beta of .566 showing that they have positive relationship with Individual related factors of WLC. Hence hypothesis get accepted.

Table2. Regression analysis

Constant	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Significance .000
Job related factors	.756	.000
Family related factors	.566	.000

Significant level: * p, 0:001; n =122; Overall Model; F =14.360; p , 0:001, R2=.139 Adjusted R2=.121



DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

This research has implications for theory and practice, the findings of this study support the application of the universal WLC factors to teachers as well as providing confirmation of many of the profession-specific WLC factors identified in previous studies. Despite the differences in work cultures and job requirements, the commonalities in the experience of WLC appear to exceed the differences experienced by teachers, particularly with respect to WLC factors such as hours worked, workload, work pace and spillover. The factors that appear to primarily account for the differences in the experience of WLC are those which affect resiliency to WLC, such that for teachers, who are largely intrinsically motivated and rewarded and who work hard to meet internal standards of practice, there is a greater ability to cope with WLC.

It was believed that one of the most important predictors of work and family conflict were the role overload among the secondary school teachers. Thus, their support has a stronger effect on work and family conflict than the family and individual related factors. This research has several limitations. First, this study was conducted by using data from only secondary school teachers from Thiruvallur district in Tamilnadu. Therefore, the findings might not be generalizable to the other professions, and in other countries. Second, females were represented in our sample. Third, the sample size was small.

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