

The Impact of Work Demand on Work-Family Conflict: A Case Study At The Kuala Muda District Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah

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ABSTRACT

When individuals perceive that the demand of the work exceed their ability to cope with both work and family, thereby a stressful condition occurs which endangers the employee's well-being. Work-family conflict will contribute to negative work attitude, increased absenteeism, increased turnover, decreased performance, poorer physical and mental health while work-family conflict can be defined as a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. The objectives of this research are to investigate the impact of hours worked of the employees on work-family conflict, to identify the relationship between impacts of work schedule inflexibility with level of work-family conflict and to examine the work stressors which contribute the most to work-family conflict. The type of work demand that has been studied in this research are hours worked, work schedule inflexibility and work stressors. The total respondents of 159 staffs of the Kuala Muda Distict Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah were selected through convenience sampling where the respondents were selected randomly. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents which consists of five sections such as demographic (Section A), work-family conflict (Section B), hours worked (Section C), work schedule inflexibility

(Section D) and work stressors (Section E). The data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics, Pearson Correlation, Cronbach's Alpha and Multiple Regression Analysis of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

Keywords: Interrole conflict, Role overload, Work demand, Work-family conflict

INTRODUCTION

Work-family conflict is bound to happen and it will affect both individual and organization. Whether the employees work in a large office with twenty people or a small office with just two people, they still have to face with work demand that may contribute to work-family conflict which can cause tension and may impair the ability to cope with family and social life. Santos & Cabral-Cardoso (2008) reports that the relationship between work and family regarded as two separate domains competing for the time and energy of individuals. For everyone, work and family are central components in people's lives and thus require a great arrangement of time and energy in order to manage the multiple responsibilities. In addition, there is an accepted level of evidence indicating that work-family conflict has a major influence of the well-being of workers, impacting on physical, behavioral as well as cognitive-affective aspect of their lives which contribute to negative outcomes such as elevated job stress, including the typically associated somatic complaints, lower job satisfaction, organizational commitment, family life satisfaction and spillover moods (Kirrane & Buckley, 2004).

Cohen and Liani (2009) investigate a study on work-family conflict among female employees in Israeli hospitals. Data of the study were collected from a sample of 168 female employees in two public hospitals in Israel. Work-family conflict occurs when sets of opposing demands arise

from participation from multiple roles. The work-family conflict is intensified when the work and family roles are salient or central to the person's self-concept and when there are strong, negative sanctions for non-compliance with role demands (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985 cited by Cohen & Liani, 2009). The work-family conflict is considered to be bi-directional (Frone *et al.*, cited by Cohen & Liani, 2009) or in other words, work can interfere with the family and the family can interfere with work. Work-family conflict also usually occurs when employees find themselves struggling to juggle the competing demands of work and family (Byron, 2005 cited by Cohen & Liani, 2009). The finding of the study indicates that the employee's income reflects a position with more responsibilities and higher ranking which requires more time spent and longer working hours on the job that increase work-family conflict. Besides, it is not surprising that working full time and taking care of children increase the levels of work-family conflict among Israeli working women because nearly all of the child care tasks are usually performed by Israeli women. The finding from the study suggests that an effective way to reduce the work-family conflict is to create positive attitudes among employees regarding their job and work setting.

Carmen K. Fu and Shaffer (2001) explore a study on the tug of work and family, direct and indirect domain-specific determinants of work-family conflict. For this study, the data was collected from a random sample of academic, administrative and general grade staff of a university in Hong Kong. Sometimes, the work demand may affect the family, such as when long hours in paid work prevent the performance of domestic tasks and sometimes long hours worked will contribute to less hours spent towards the family. Work-family conflict occurs when the time demands of work role are incompatible with those of another, for example, working overtime forces the cancellation of a family outing. When the actual hours spent at work increase, less time will be available for family activities (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985 cited by Carmen K. Fu & Shaffer, 2001). Hours worked will be positively related to work-family conflict. The finding indicates that the work demand had much stronger effects, role conflict, role overload and

hours spent on paid work were especially influential on the work-family conflict. Besides, the study found that men experienced greater work-family conflict. The study also suggests introducing family-support programs such as child-care facilities and flexible schedules can help employees balance the competing demands of work and family.

Jean Lee Siew Kim and Choo Seow Ling (2001) investigate a study on work-family conflict of women entrepreneurs in Singapore. A survey questionnaire was used as the primary research instrument. One work characteristic that leads to work-family conflict is time pressure which can be measured by schedule flexibility. Work schedule inflexibility is one of the time pressure which is related to time-based work-family conflict, which occurs because time devoted to one role makes it difficult to meet the requirements of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985 cited by Jean Lee Siew Kim & Choo Seow Ling, 2001). Work schedule inflexibility will contribute to the serious dilemma of work and family among women entrepreneurs as they are responsible for the success of their own business venture and the welfare of their employees. Work Schedule inflexibility is positively associated with work-family conflict. The finding of the study indicates that schedule conflict is a major work-family conflict dimension for Singapore women professionals. Besides, the study found that schedule inflexibility can affect the amount of time spent with the spouse compared to the women who engage in flexible work schedules spend more time with their spouses and families. The study also suggests that the companies should consider implementing flexible work schedules because a flexible work schedule will enable the companies to attract and retain talented people who are not able to work full time, especially married women.

Rotondo and Kincaid (2008) explore a study on conflict, facilitation and individual coping styles across the work and family domains. Data from the MIDUS study were analyzed using two-staged least squares regression to incorporate reciprocity between the work and family domains into the

model. Work stressors threaten one's ability to function effectively in the family domain and create work-family conflict. Work stressors-related outcomes such as depression (Frone *et al.*, 1992 cited by Rotondo & Kincaid, 2008), burnout (Haar, 2006 cited by Rotondo & Kincaid, 2008), as well as work-related outcomes such as absenteeism, satisfaction, commitment and turnover intentions (Boyar *et al.*, 2003; Hammer & Grandley, 2003 cited by Rotondo & Kincaid, 2008) are examples of the deleterious consequences of work-family conflict. Work-family conflict had been influenced by work stressors, where the employees may not have the time and ability to function well in the family and work stressors make the employees irritable and too tired to do things that need attention at home. The study indicates that work stressors are positively associated with work-family conflict. The finding of the study indicates that in order to achieve the work-life balance, conflict and work stressors should be low and facilitation should be high. The study had suggested that the implementation of program that help employees improve functioning or performance at home would be a more appealing investment than programs helping employees manage conflict created by work interference with family.

METHODOLOGY

The sample size for this research is only 159 staffs from 270 populations. The respondents had been chosen only from the staffs who work in the Kuala Muda District Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah.

In this research, the convenience sampling will be used as sampling technique in order to obtain some quick information (Sekaran, 2003). The respondents will be selected from Kuala Muda District Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah randomly. Questionnaires will be distributed to each staff that had been selected.

At an effort to accomplish the aim of the study and in light of the literature review the following research objectives were set:

- i. To investigate the impact of hours work of the employees on work-family conflict in Kuala Muda District Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah.
- ii. To identify the relationship between impacts of work schedule inflexibility with level of work-family conflict in Kuala Muda District Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah.
- iii. To examine the work stressors which contribute the most to work-family conflict in Kuala Muda District Police Headquarters (IPD), Kedah.

Data Collection

The primary source of data collection is need. The data will be collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire is a reformulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives. Questionnaires are an efficient data collection mechanism to know exactly what is required and how to measure the variables of interest. It is the best way that can be used because of time and money constraints (Sekaran, 2003). The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, which consists of five sections which are demographic (Section A), work-family conflict (Section B), hours worked (Section C), work schedule inflexibility (Section D) and work stressors (Section E).

Data Analysis

This research uses the Statistic Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 16.0 for Window program system for the processing of raw data received, data analysis and to show the final result of data that have been gathered. Descriptive Statistics, Pearson Correlation, Cronbach's Alpha and Multiple Regression Analysis are used to analyze the data collected through questionnaire from the respondents for measuring the outcome.

RESULT

Several benefits can be found through work-family conflict study. Firstly, this study will identify several work demand such as hours worked, work schedule inflexibility and work stressors which will help the employers to recognize the constant challenge many employees face in balancing work and family. It is important for the employers and organization to fully understand the combination of individual's limited time and energy are likely to contribute to work-family conflict which will help the employers to develop the ability to control the level of work-family conflict. In working environment, work-family conflict continues to be an increasing challenge for organizations and those they employ. Although every job and career has its own risk impact on organizational, family, personal outcomes and sources of work-family conflict, and each job carries its specific work demand, work-family conflict can be reduced by recognizing the work-family conflict factors.

Secondly, it is important to identify the impact of work demand on work-family conflict. For many people, work and family roles are the most important and self-relevant life roles, so through this study, it will provide

suitable information in order to help the organization develop the steps to overcome the work-family conflict. The employers and organization can create several techniques to help the employees to manage the work-family conflict level by controlling the demand involving work that will make the employees become more satisfied with their life and consequently they will be more productive for themselves and for their role in work and family.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, work-family conflict refers to the causes and the effects of feelings of pressure. Work-family conflict may be common in all occupations but these occupations do not face exactly the same problems. When combining work role and family role, they end up having a very intense life style, since each of the roles demands their time, energy and commitment. The main problem exist in work-family conflict is the problem to find the time to juggle both family and work roles. The difficulty of striking a balance between family and work responsibilities not only affects parents and their children but also organizational productivity. Parents must take responsibility for the values they choose and the decisions they make on how to protect their family while respecting their work priorities.

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