Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict among Dual-Career Couples in the Selected Information and Communications Technology Organization

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Abstract:The struggle of individual in juggling work and family responsibilities has obtained interest and brought work-family conflict issue to the forefront to management to solve. The sample of this study consists of dual-career couples employees whereby a total of 144 employees were selected that are 72 employees from the selected Information and Communication Technology organization while their spouse from various industry. Data were gathered using self-administered questionnaires. The drop and the collect method were used to collect data from the sample, with the help of the human resource department of the organization. This study used random sampling procedure to select the respondents. This study used correlation research design to investigate the direction and strength of the relationship among variables. There are three independent variables (organization social support, time-management and type of dual-career couples), one dependent variable (work-family conflict). This study indicated that there is relationship between all three independent variables with the dependent variable. That is, the relationship between organization social support, time management and type of dual-career couples with work-family conflict. This study will contribute empirical data to the existing work-family literature, and hopes give additional insight into work-family study in Malaysia.
Key Word: Work-family conflict, Organizational social support, Time-management, Type of dual-career couples.

I. Introduction

Today, in Malaysia and virtually all over the world, conflicts have reached a critical point between work and family domain among dual-career couples employees. It is necessary to look into studies based on dual-career couple, both at individual and organization level, as it needs better knowledge in understanding the source of conflict arising from work and family relationship (Berlato& Correa, 2017). This conflict increases the occurrence of declining physical and psychological wellbeing of employees. Therefore, the tendency of male and female to satisfy the conventional roles of their work and family are declining. Besides, many people are searching for alternate career options in order to better integrate their work life and personal life. Such a shift is due to the increasing demands of the workplace, and leaving little time for personal life (Skidelsky, 2017).

Many employers identified that assisting dual-career couples to overcome their work, and personal life demands are essential in enhancing workers production and their life. The social support given by the organization to workers may help workers in managing their work and family demand (Boyar, Campbell, Mosley & Carson, 2014). However, problem may arise if availability of organization social support is written on book only but not well implemented. Despite the growing importance of understanding organization social support linkages to work–family conflict because of rising pressures, many theoretical complexities related to organization social support remains under-recognized and empirically under-explored (French, Dumani, Allen & Shockley, 2018). Furthermore, most research on organization social support and work-family conflict has been conducted internationally. For example Zheng and Wu (2018) in China, Mirzaei and Hoseinbeigi, (2016) in Estahban, Ibrahim and Marri, (2015) in the United Arab Emirates, and Gurbuz, Turunc and Celik (2012) in Turkey. Therefore, this study intended to contribute to the theoretical complexities by empirical evidence in the strength of the relationship between organization social support and of work-family conflict among dual-career couples to the literature.

Dual-career couple also confronts day-to-day challenges regarding time management between the two cases: time for career and family. The issue on time management has been proposed for years by the researcher (Macan, 1994; Adams &Jex, 1999 & Green & Skinner, 2005). This time factor is considered as a dilemma among dual-career couples because the individual need to correctly manage their time for work, time for family

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and time for themself (Berlato& Correa, 2017). Though researchers (Fider, Fox & Wilson, 2014) have suggested that teamwork between couples can be the answer for this dilemma however, the problem may arise between dual-career couples when males only involve themselves in one-third of the family responsibilities (Pleck, 1977). Emphasizing this, the study of Sultana, Tabassum and Abdullah (2014) deserve more consideration which identified time factor that dual-career couples experience when managing their time between their career and family. Few existing research has been conducted using time management as a factor of work-family conflict, and the result are inconsistent. For example, Adams &Jex (1999) in their investigation, found that time management is positively related to work-family conflict. On the other hand, other researchers (Green & Skinner, 2005; Major, Klein &Ehrhart, 2002 &Goudarzi, Sheikhi&Kheir, 2012) found that time management influence negatively with work-family conflict. Thus, more studies are needed to confirm the direction of the relationship between time management and work-family conflict among dual-career couples and this study will be able to shed this gap by providing empirical evidence to the literature.

Besides that, there is a concern in studying the types of dual-career couples which presented in Berlato (2015) study. The culture of dual-career has been necessary for married couples which involves career and family domains. The decision of choosing either these domains or choosing both domains simultaneously, represents the typologies of the dual-career couple (Rapoport; Rapoport, 1971; Hall, Hall 1980; Hunt & Hunt, 1982). The different perception on types of dual-career couples that brings the interest in these studies, that is type of dual-career couples can result in positive outcomes (known in the study as gains) or adverse outcomes (conflicts and dilemmas) for the partners. This depends on the level of priority and involvement that work and family have on individual's well-beings (Janasz, Behson, Jonsen&Lankau 2013; Crain, Hammer, Bodner, Kossek, Moen, Lilienthal & Buxton, 2014). For this study, Hall and Hall (1980) types of dual-career couples namely accommodators, adversaries, allies and acrobats were used. This was because they extended their study from previous studies and explain that the four categories are not static. Couples often move from one category to another depending on their priorities and emotional and financial resources. Most studies on the type of dual-career couples and work-life conflict was carried out in International countries such as Gerami, Etemadi, Ahmadi&Fatehizade, (2016) in Iran studied on pathology between dual-career couples. Berlato (2015) in Brazil on the dual-career activities in Brazil: unwinding typologies. Thus, more study on the type of dual-career couples and work-family conflict is necessary in Malaysia. This study anticipates that the findings will shed light on the relationship between types of dual-career couples and work-family conflict, thereby helping to gain a fuller understanding of work and family issues among dual-career couples.

Besides that, by reviewing the previous literature on antecedents of work-family conflict among dual-career couple's studies have mostly focus on various work, family and individual variables. For example, Greenhaus, Parasuraman, Granrose, Rabinowitz and Beutell (1989), have studied on work variable, which is work role stressor, task characteristics, work salience and work schedule flexibility. Furthermore, in Higgins and Duxbury (1992) has studied on work and family variable, which is work and family involvement, and work and family expectations.. Zhang and Liu (2011) in their study have emphasis three group of variable of work, family and individual such as individual (gender, income, lifelong career status, level of education and personality), work (work stress, balance programs, and highly-committed work system), and family (family demand and stress, child responsibility, social support to family and connubial influence). In another study conducted by Himali (2017), investigated on work and family variable, which includes role overburden, a number of leave, having children whose age less than five years and childcare arrangements. However, not many studies focusing on the influence of organization social support, time management and types of dual-career couples on work-family conflict in a single study. Therefore, more studies are needed to confirm the influence of the relationship between organization social support, time management, type of dual-career couples and work-family conflict among dual-career couples. There are also limited studies conducted among dual-career couples in the Malaysian ICT industry. Thus this study will be able to shed the research gap from the previous literature.

Previous studies on work-family conflict among dual-career couples have been conducted mostly in international settings. For example Higgins and Duxbury (1992) in the US has investigated on work-family conflict in the dual-career family, Feldman, Masalha, and Nadam (2001) in Israel have studied on how dual-earner couples manage work-family conflict while making the transition into parenthood, Elloy and Smith, (2003) in Australia studied on factors of work-family conflict among dual-career couples, Kundu, Phogat, Datta and Gahlawat (2016) in India investigate on influence of workplace attributes on work and family pressure of dual-career couples, Yang Duon and Brough, (2016) in China carried out an investigation on crossover effects of work-family conflict among Chinese couples, Himali (2017), in Sri Lanka investigate on determinant of work-family conflict among dual-career couples, Mäkelä, Lämsä, Heikkinen and Tanskanen (2017) in Finland studied on work-to-personal-life conflict among dual and single-career expatriates: Is it different for men and women. However, to date only few studies have conducted in Malaysia settings, for example Ahmad (1999) in Malaysia, studied on gender role orientation in dual-earner families. Besides that, Zakaria and Ismail (2017) studied on The Consequences of Work-family Conflict and The Importance of Social Supports to Reduce Work-

family Conflict dual-career couples. Thus, studies on work-family conflict among dual-career couples in Malaysia setting is intended to shed the gap by providing empirical evidence to the current work-family literature.

II. Literature Review

Conservation of Resource Theory (COR)

According to Hobfoll (1989) conservation of resource theory, work-family conflict can be categories as a stress factor. For example, due to the pressure to manage between work demand and family demand, couples might experience a threat to the reduction of time and energy which know as resource in COR theory (Grandey&Cropanzano, 1999). Organization social support in COR theory is known as a crucial social resource that has two purposes that is self-defining and instrumental in preserving the available resource and gaining new resource. Hobfoll and Stokes (1988) state that organization social support as social interaction that provides individual with help or with closeness affection to an individual or group which perceived as caring or loving. A resource is essential in coping with increasing conflict in work and family domain.

Based on COR theory, there is few coping mechanisms of work-family conflict. One method related to the cross-domain resource investment to avoid resource loss. Resources defined as objects, states, conditions, and other characteristics that individual's value the most (Hobfoll, 1988). The value of resource differs among individuals and conditions. As instant, time devoted to the family could be perceived as essential resources to one individual while another individual may see it as a threat to other resources (e.g., one's self-esteem in an abusive relationship). An individual has to ensure they have enough resource in order to invest and gain new resources such as new skills, ultimately protecting them from future resource loss (Hobfoll, 2001). Thus, one of the effective ways to use limited and valuable time is the implementation of time-management. Time-management is defined as valuing every minute, eliminating unnecessary tasks an emphasizing the main nature of work.

Gender Role Theory

Gender role is shared cultural expectation based on individuals' socially-identified gender (Eagly&Karau, 1991; Kidder, 2002). Gender role theory explains that ''individuals internalize cultural expectations regarding their gender because of social pressures external to the individual favourbehaviour consistent with their prescribed gender role" (Kidder, 2002).Gender role theory is strengthening by the explanation of the construct of gender role orientation (Lucke, 1998). Gender role orientation defined as a performing a role based on the social expectations, or extent to which a person view themselves with the traditional belief of his or her gender role (Livingston & Judge, 2008). Work and family domain been conventionally narrated with gender lines. Acknowledging that different gender have different behaviour in their roles and coping strategies, for example ways couples act in work and family domain. Thus, it can be seen in the past studies as researcher in their study organize and sort dual-career families by typologies or identifiable subgroups. Hall and Hall (1980) identified four dual-career types' accommodators, adversaries, allies and acrobats.Accommodated refers to the spouse involve highly in the career domain and low involvement in the home domain, while the other spouse has contrasting priorities. Adversaries' couples classified as spouses who have high involvement in the career domain and shows less involvement family domain or do not show any support to each other. Allies couples generally show more participation in either one of the domain career or family, but not in all functions (they join forces in a priority). Acrobats explains that couples generally shows high involved in their respective roles. The relationship between both domains is significant for these couples.

III. Methodology

Correlation research design was used in this study to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010).The population of this study was employees from the ICT organization. The ICT organization was selected through simple random sampling using Microsoft excel namely Boost AxiataBhd, and the employee was selected randomly from the organization based on the criteria (dual-career couples). The number of employees was approximately 300. The sample size of the employee was based on the G-power analysis. The total number of respondent include in this study was 72 dual-career couples (144 employees).Therefore, 150 number of the questionnaire given to the dual-career couples. However, 146 questionnaires were returned to the researcher, and two was not valid with representing a response rate of 97.3%. The research instrument used in this study will be questionnaire in order to collect data from respondents. The instrument used developed by the previous researcher and has used in several studies, thus having a good validity result.Questions on organization social support were taken fromThe Comprehensive Evaluation Social Support (CESS) developed by Boyar et al. (2014). Besides that, questions for time-management were taken from Assessment of Time Management Skills (ATMS) developed by White, Riley and Flom (2013) which assess the awareness and use of time management to cope with daily activities. Questions on

types of dual-career couples based on Hall and Hall (1980) study on types of dual-career couples. These questions consist of 7 items measuring couples involvement in career and home domain. Lastly, questions on work-family conflict was taken from "Construction and Initial Validation of a Multidimensional Measure of Work–Family Conflict" developed by Carlson et al (2000).The correlation between organization social support, time management and work-family conflict among dual-career couples was measured using inferential analysis using Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient. On the other hand, the correlation between type of dual-career couples and work-family conflict among dual-career couples was measured using inferential analysis using spearman correlation to report the strength and direction for each of the independent variables with the dependent variable. To determine the influence of organization social support, time management, types of dual-career couples on work-family conflict among dual-career measured analyses using Multiple Linear regression to report the strength and direction.

IV. Result

In this study, the correlation between organization social support, time-management and type of dual-career couples as independent variables and work-family conflict as dependent variables were tested. Thus, it was used to determine the strength of association between the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable.

Table no 1: Correlation between Organization Social Support and Work-Family Conflict

		Organization_Social Support	WFC
Organization_Social Support	Pearson Correlation	1	-.565**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	144	144
WFC	Pearson Correlation	-.565**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	144	144

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

The association coefficient for organization social support and work-family conflict is a moderate correlation that the r-value is -0.565 at significant level 0.01. The result explains when the organization social support is high will lead in low work-family conflict. Otherwise, when the organization social support is low, resulting to high work-family conflict. This is similar to the past research finding which propose that social support from organizations is a significant element that may able to lower the occurrences of work-family conflict (Allen, 2001; Hill, 2005; &Fiksenbaum, 2014).

Table no 2: Correlation between Time-Management and Work-Family Conflict

		Time_management	WFC
Time_management	Pearson Correlation	1	-.533**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	144	144
WFC	Pearson Correlation	-.533**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	144	144

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

The correlation coefficient for time-management and work-family conflict shows moderate results that the r-value is -.533 at significant level 0.01. The result shows a negative and moderate significant association between time-management and work-family conflict. The result shows that, when respondent time-management is high will lead to low work-family conflict. Otherwise, when the respondent time-management is low will lead to high work-family conflict. Based on the previous study on the factors of WFC notice that the quality of time devote to career and family role (Gutek, Searle, &Klepa, 1991; O'Driscoll, Ilgen, & Hildreth,1992) and time-management (Staines&Pleck, 1984) correlated to work-family conflict. Besides that, researchers also notice that employees experience lower work-family conflict is because of proper time-management and high work-family conflict is when their time-management is poor (Adams &Jex, 1999).

Table no 3: Correlation between Type of dual-career couples and Work-Family Conflict

			Type_DCC	WFC
Spearman's rho	Type_DCC	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.361**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	144	144
	WFC	Correlation Coefficient	.361**	1.000

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	144	144

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

The correlation coefficient for the type of dual-career couples and work-family conflict recorded a moderate relationship that the r-value is 0.361 at significant level 0.01. The result shows a moderate and significant association between type of dual-career couples, and work-family conflict. The findings is supported from the past researcher Gerson (2010), conflict may arouse in dual-career couples, when they are likely to centre on disagreements about whether or not to share and how to share their work and home responsibilities. Furthermore, Lorch (2010), propose that the interplay of many roles may lead to conflict between their work and family domain that may require dual career couples to make a necessary adjustment between these two domains.

In this study, multiple linear regression was used to determine the influence of organization social support, time management, types of the dual-career couple and work-family conflict among dual-career couples in selected ICT organization.

Table no 4: Multivariate analysis Result

	Unstandardized B	Coefficiens Std.Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig value	Lower Boundary	Upper Boundary
(Constant)	116.699	7.782		14.997	.000	101.312	132.086
Organization_social support	-.225	.052	-.612	-4.371	.000	-.327	-.123
Time_management2	-.195	.061	-.217	-3.210	.002	-.316	-.075
Accomodators	-9.945	4.050	-.381	-2.456	.015	-17.952	-1.937
Adversaries	.251	.093	.161	2.709	.000	.068	.434
Allies	-5.847	3.388	-.136	-1.726	.087	-12.546	.852
Acrobats	.231	.056	.397	4.132	.000	.121	.342

Note. $F=37.181$; $\rho=.000$; $R=.758$; $R2=.574$; $\Delta R2=.559$

Results of the regression modelshow that the R square is .574, there are 57.4% of the variance in work-family conflict can be predicted from organization social support, time management and accommodators, allies and acrobats. F-statistics equal to 37.181, a p-value less than 0.05 shows that the overall regression modal fitted well and significant at predicting work-family conflict among dual-career couples. The strength of association between independent variables towards work-family conflict is a strong relationship since R equal to 0.758. The result indicates that the overall combination of the construct is significantly predicted of dual-career couples' work-family conflict in selected ICT organization.

From the table above, four independent variables negatively related to work-family conflict among dual-career couples while three variables have significant value P< .05 and one variable has p> 0.5. Two independent variables were positively and significantly related to work-family conflict. The result shows that organization support increased by one unit value, work-family conflict decreased by -.225 unit value while other independent variables remain constant. On the other hand, one unit value of time management increase, work-family conflict decreased by -.195 1unit value while other independent variables stay constant. Besides that, accommodate type of dual-career couples increased by 1unit value, work-family conflict decreased by -.9.945 unit value while other independent variables remain constant. As 1unit value increased in adversaries type of dual-career couples, the work-family conflict increased by .251-unit value while other variables stayed constant. As 1unit value increased in allies type of dual-career couples, work-family conflict decreased by -5.847 unit value while other variables stayed constant. Lastly, acrobats type dual-career couples increased by 1unit value, work-family conflict increased by .231 unit value while other independent variables remain constant.

Based on the table above, organization social support with β=-.612 is the highest standardized coefficient value, followed by acrobats type of dual-career couples with β=.397, accommodators β=-.381, time-management with β=-.217, adversaries type of dual-career couples with β=.161 and finally allies with β= -.136. The result indicated that organization social support is the highest predictor that influences work-family conflict among dual-career couples, followed by acrobats couples, time management, accommodators couples and finally allies couples.

V. Conclusion

Many factors should be considered while studying work-family conflict among dual career couples including the antecedents that contributes to the occurrence of conflict between the work domain and family domain (Byron, 2005). These antecedents need to be address as it enables employees to understand effects of it and therefore will be useful for employees to look for solutions to overcome these conflicts.In effort to deal with the limitation of the current study, it would be interesting to test whether the use of larger sample, would yield similar result as using small sample in the current study one must be caution in making generalization on these

findings. Even though quantitative research was conducted and was suitable for this study, qualitative research would allow for better understanding of perceptions and views of employees in who are in dual-career couples regarding work-family conflict issues. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative methodology could help understand dual-career couples and the differences in view of work-family conflict. Data collection methods examples like interviews and observations would help researcher obtained a better understanding of difference view of individual in dual-career couples regarding work-family conflict. Lastly, it is also suggested that more than one organization in various industry should be included, as it will add value to explore the concept of work-family conflict among dual-career couples.

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