

Insights Into Work-Family Conflict among Working Mothers: Does Occupation Status Matter?

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ABSTRACT

Working mothers provide a remarkable contribution to the development of our country's economy. There are many changes in women's lives in the modern era. The present life of working mothers is extremely challenging. The work-family conflict has now evolved as an essential and universal problem for working mothers in today's world. This study set out to research significant differences in work-family conflict across the occupation status of working mothers. The sample comprises 210 working mothers from the north Kerala region. Data was collected through a field survey by using a structured questionnaire. Collected data has been analyzed by using various statistical tools like one-way ANOVA and Bonferroni Post hoc test. The research has revealed that the occupation status of working mothers had a significant difference in work-family conflict. The Research also revealed that the working mothers in the private sector have a greater work-family conflict than others. This result validates earlier research findings, where the occupation status had a significant influence on work-family conflict among working mothers.

KEYWORDS: *Work-family conflict, Working women, Occupation, Home Responsibility*

1.0 Introduction

The rise in the number of women in the workforce is a worldwide phenomenon, and India is no exception. In recent days, working mothers experience acute stress in balancing between the workplace and home. Flexible learning through the use of IT has increased their working time and is still engaged in managing and administrating along with other related jobs like record keeping, office work, conducting the meeting, accounting, etc. This has increased working hours from early morning to late evening and has affected the personal lives of workers in the field.

In recent decades, the profiles of women's employees have changed considerably. Families have changed from the traditional position of male breadwinner to the position of dual-earning couples (Choudhary & Singh, 2016). Women in the pre-centuries were restricted to their homes and very few were allowed to work in the factories/business/farm sectors/petty shops. Rarely some women were permitted to get higher education and permission to this was fully dependent upon the permission of their

parents/guardians. As the economy grows rapidly, women secure more space to get more information, education, and jobs. Women practically enter every sector/branch of industry. This situation has provided an important challenge for working women, to play an enhanced role in their homes and to fulfill their obligations towards children, parents, husband, family, and social societies with satisfaction altogether.

Sometimes, she has to take care of her extended family member and as a result, she encounters significant stress to maintain a balance between her career and family life. Working women are so obliged to handle simultaneously many activities and increased duties for a balanced professional and personal life. With the increased workload, they have to encounter significant pressure and strain upon their health also. Working mothers have to discharge various roles and responsibilities throughout their life. When they are unable to balance between professional and personal life; conflict takes place.

How to cite this paper: Vishnu P K | Dr. Anil P V | Vyshak P K "Insights Into Work-Family Conflict among Working Mothers: Does Occupation Status Matter?" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-5 | Issue-5, August 2021, pp.690-695, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd43909.pdf



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Hence, it is a need of the situation of the working mothers to maintain a balance between professional and personal life.

1.1 Work-Family Conflict – A literature Review

The researcher has gone through previous studies of the subject matter before resuming the objectives and was presented as the literature review. Many researchers and theories focused on the work family conflicts. The influence of work-family conflict on organisational and personal well-being has been explored in the literature (Ford et al., 2007; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). As a result of the productive family patterns, Adult human lives have been directed to fulfil the two most essential responsibilities, namely work and family roles. The men and women have to perform dual roles as workers and as family members (Karimi et al., 2012). Each of these categories has its own set of roles and responsibilities. The literature shows that these work and family roles interact in a variety of ways (Zhou et al., 2020).

Work-family conflict is a psychological condition characterised by an imbalance of work and home life. Job burnout, dissatisfaction, work stress, long working hours, and role conflict are the most significant factors that lead to work-family conflict. (Bakker et al., 2005; Ford et al., 2007; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Spector et al., 2004). Workplace challenges such as job pressure and stressful events (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008) may physically and emotionally exhaust an individual to the point that work-family conflict arises (Baeriswyl et al., 2016; Frone et al., 1997).

The two-way model of work-family conflict demonstrates that workplace stress factors such as a lack of autonomy or an excessive workload affect the “work” side of the balance, whereas family stress factors such as misbehaving kids or excessively dependent parents harm the “family” side (Liu et al., 2019). Work/family conflict is bidirectional, which means that work roles can clash with roles and obligations in the family domain, and family roles can conflict with work roles. The bidirectionality of work/family conflict is supported by research, which also suggests that work-to-family and family-to-work conflict may have different origins and outcomes (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005).

In a person's life, work and family are two crucial domains. Both home and work duties have a direct impact on each other (Patel et al., 2006; Sánchez-Vidal et al., 2019). The study of the negative effects of work-family conflict has received a significant amount of organisational attention. (Turan et al., 2021) The study's primary goal is to look at the role

of burnout in the influence of work-family conflicts (WFC) on job satisfaction among important participants in the maritime sector. According to the findings, Burnout has a minor mediation impact on work satisfaction, (Sprung, 2021) to fill a gap in the research by looking at personal and global economic stress as predictors of family distress and work-family conflict in a population of farm spouses. Examining the work-family interface of farm couples, economic stress is an essential factor. Furthermore, family distress and work-family conflict were more affected by personal economic stress than global economic stress. By gaining a deeper knowledge of the familial mechanisms through which farm spouses may be affected by economic stress.

2.0 Statement of the problem

In families and workplaces, women play a significant role. Women are deeply entrenched in their social life in the role of homemakers and caretakers. In the modern era, women's lives are now changing and the life of working mothers are highly stressful. Working women occupy a space equivalent to males and are becoming more aspiring and professional. Other elements of their life are being ignored by working women and losing quality time with their children and families, relaxation time, and also time for their hobbies. Working mothers are more stressed than males as they have to work from early morning to late night to satisfy the daily requirements of their family members. For women employees, work occupies an important place in their lives, the status of quality of work life affects not only their physical but also social, psychological, and spiritual wellbeing.

For more than five decades, substantial study has been conducted on the work-family conflict of employees in many areas. however, little attention has been paid to the occupation perspective on work-family conflict. Since employees of different occupation status vary in conflict between work and family matters. The factors which are associated with high or expected levels of work-family conflict for private employee perhaps may or may not be the same for public employees. Therefore, The present study was designed as an investigation of the relationship between family-work conflict and occupation status of working mothers

3.0 Research Objectives and Hypothesis

This study is focused on investigating the work-family conflicts and the nature of these conflicts among working mothers in the state of Kerala from the perspective of their occupation status.

Following research questions guided this study.

1. What is the nature of work-family conflicts among working mothers?
2. Does occupation status of the working mothers is really a matter in work-family conflict ?

In alignment with research questions, the primary objectives of the present study are

1. To measure the degree of work-family conflict among women employees
2. To determine the significant difference in work-family conflict across different occupation status of working women

The following hypothesis has been formulated in accordance with the objectives of the study.

H₀: The degree of work-family conflict has no differences across the occupation status of working mothers

4.0 Research methodology

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between work-family conflict and occupation status of working mothers. For this, a descriptive research approach was used. The study was conducted on a sample 210 of full-time working mothers in north Kerala. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire. This questionnaire was initially developed by (Erdamar & Demirel,

The Nature of Work-Family Conflicts as Perceived by Working Mothers

The results of the nature of the work-family conflicts as perceived by working mothers are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The nature of work-family conflicts as perceived by teachers

Statements	Mean	SD
Tasks/responsibilities at work – unable to spend time with family.	4.24	1.12
Fatigue at work – creates difficulties in home responsibilities.	3.79	.95
Workplace duties cause tiredness while performing home tasks.	3.89	.76
Workplace tasks result in postponing house tasks.	3.36	.89
Workplace tasks reduce efforts for home responsibilities.	3.75	.94
Continuously think about workplace problems, affecting the family.	4.06	.86
Workplace duties/responsibilities get ahead of family.	3.89	.72
Fatigue at work – decreased tolerance towards family.	3.74	.83
Workplace problems cause stress and nervousness at home.	4.01	.76
Problems/troubles at home affect professional life.	3.56	.73
Overall	3.82	.85

Source: Primary data

Table 1 clearly shows that the overall mean values of statements about work-family conflicts is 3.82, and range from 2.36 to 4.24. All these values show that working mothers agreed with all statements and believe that their workplace activities affect their family role. They truthfully say that their work responsibilities and tasks prevent them from spending time with their families. Working mothers also view that they continuously think about workplace problems which affect affecting the family. They Further perceived that workplace duties cause tiredness while performing home tasks.

2014). There were two components to this questionnaire. The purpose of the first section of the questionnaire was to collect demographic information from the participants. The second section of the questionnaire consists of ten items that are rated on a five-point scale in order to obtain information about work-family conflict.

The respondents were selected randomly from the north Kerala region. The questionnaire was distributed to 241 working mothers, who were available on days of data collection. Of these 241 teachers, 210 returned their questionnaires. So the return response rate of the tool was 87%. As a result, all these 210 working mothers in north Kerala were taken as a sample for this study.

Advanced decisions were made when formulating objectives, designing method, selecting the sample for data collection. Data analysis and reporting were planned with expertise's approval and data analysis was done using the SPSS, the relevant statistic tools such as ANOVA, Post hoc analysis were used.

5.0 Results and discussion

This study included two stages in its data analysis procedure. A descriptive analysis describing the nature of work-family conflicts as perceived by working mothers in the first step. The second stage included hypothesis testing with ANOVA.

Work-family conflict and Occupation status

The descriptive statistics of occupation status of the working mothers is presented in table 2

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Public sector	48	42.6875	3.67369	.53025	41.6208	43.7542	35.00	49.00
Private sector	42	44.7143	3.45201	.53266	43.6386	45.7900	36.00	49.00
Professionals	33	38.7879	3.73127	.64953	37.4648	40.1109	31.00	45.00
Business	44	35.1818	2.83067	.42674	34.3212	36.0424	28.00	40.00
Self employed	43	33.7209	3.34753	.51049	32.6907	34.7511	25.00	39.00
Total	210	39.0714	5.46758	.37730	38.3276	39.8152	25.00	49.00

Source: Primary data

The table 2 provides some very useful descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation and 95% confidence intervals for the dependent variable for each separate group (Public sector, Private sector, Professional, Business and Self-employed), as well as when all groups are combined. This table shows the summary statistics for the 5 groups, the mean scores are 42.6875, 44.7143, 38.7879, 35.1818, and 33.7209 for public sector, private sector, professional, business and self-employed respectively. Respondents belong to the self-employed category have the smallest mean compared to the other groups. An analysis of variance was performed to examine the relationship between work-family conflict and occupational status and the result was presented in table 4.

H_0 : The degree of work-family conflict has no differences across the occupation status of the respondents

Table 3 Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.483	4	205	.208

Source: Primary data Significant at 0.05 level

A requirement for the ANOVA test is that the variances of each comparison group are equal. This is tested using the Levene statistic and the result is presented in table 2. The significance value of the Levene statistic based on a comparison of medians is .208 which is greater than .05. This is *not* a significant result, which means the requirement of homogeneity of variance has been met, and the ANOVA test can be considered to be robust.

Table 4 ANOVA Test Result

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3864.333	4	966.083	83.088	.000
Within Groups	2383.596	205	11.627		
Total	6247.929	209			

Source: Primary data Significant at 0.05 level

The table 3 shows the output of the ANOVA analysis and whether there is a statistically significant difference between work-family conflict and occupation status. The result shows that there was a statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way ($F(4,205) = 83.088, p = .000$). The significance value is 0.000 (i.e., $p = .000$), which is below 0.05. and therefore, reject the null hypothesis. Hence, the results conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the between work-family conflict and occupation status.

Table 5 Bonferroni Correction Result

(I) Occupation	(J) Occupation	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Public sector	Private sector	3.60606*	.78524	.000
	Professionals	5.06695*	.78914	.000
	Business	-5.92641*	.79321	.000
	Self employed	-3.89962*	.77109	.000
Private sector	Public sector	-3.60606*	.78524	.000
	Professionals	1.46089*	.73120	.000
	Business	-9.53247*	.73559	.000
	Self employed	-7.50568*	.71168	.000
Professionals	Public sector	-5.06695*	.78914	.000
	Private sector	-1.46089*	.73120	.000
	Business	-10.99336*	.73976	.000
	Self employed	-8.96657*	.71599	.000
Business	Public sector	5.92641*	.79321	.000
	Private sector	9.53247*	.73559	.000
	Professionals	10.99336*	.73976	.000
	Self employed	2.02679	.72047	.094
Self employed	Public sector	3.89962*	.77109	.000
	Private sector	7.50568*	.71168	.000
	Professionals	8.96657*	.71599	.000
	Business	-2.02679	.72047	.094

Source: Primary data Significant at 0.05 level

From the results so far, there are statistically significant differences between the groups as a whole. The table 4 shows which groups differed from each other. The Bonferroni post hoc test was employed to identify which groups differed from each other. The Bonferroni correction analysis shows that it is only the mean difference between the business and self-employed does not reaches significance (.094>0.05). It is showed that the respondents in the business category was not statistically differ from the respondents of self-employed category.

6.0 Conclusion

The following main conclusions were derived from the findings in answer to the study questions. First, it was discovered that working mothers believe that their workplace tasks cause conflicts or obstacles in their family roles. This study has been piloted to quantify the work-family conflict of working mothers in the current era to determine the significant difference in work-family conflict across the occupation status of working mothers. The sample survey has revealed that there is a significant difference in work-family conflict across the occupation status of working mothers. The study also reveals that working mothers in private sector have a higher work-family conflict than others. This result confirms previous research findings, where the occupation status had a significant influence on occupation status of working mothers

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