The Impact of Work-Family Conflict on Working Mothers' Career Development: A Review of Literature

Esther. Kadarko. Dizaho, Rohani. Salleh, Azrai. Abdullah

Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Petronas, Tronoh Malaysia.

Address For Correspondence:
Hussain S. Akbar, Kirkuk University/College of Science-Physics Dept.
Mobil :009647702383015; E-mail-drhussainsalihakber@yahoo.com

A B S T R A C T

Female labour force participation rate has been increasing rapidly over the past decades thereby changing the structure at the workforce and the globe at large. Due to the increase of women in the workforce and the fact that women are still the primary care-takers of children; working mothers are confronted with the challenges of balancing the role of motherhood as well as that of an employee which generated the idiom known as work-family conflict. This paper is a review of literatures from various scholars and experts that explores the impact work-family conflict have on working mothers' career development. Findings reveal that work-family conflict consisting of time, strain and behavioral conflict have negative consequences on working mother's career development.

Backrground:

The interaction amid work and family has been recognized to yield a concept acknowledged as 'work-life conflict or work family conflict'. This idiom, which emerged in the 1980s due to the high increase of women in the labour workforce and has its roots in the study of multiple roles which emphasis on the pressure women experienced when combining family roles and responsibilities and work role responsibilities (Eby, L. *et al.* 2005; Barnett, R.C. and K.C. Gareis, 2006). The ability to manage between work and personal life has become a challenge due to factors including increase in women workforce participation, advancement in technology, the younger workforce (generation Y), globalization, economic and societal changes (Aron Work Life Balance, 2009).

INTRODUCTION

The work role of an employee is as imperative as the family role and reconciling work and family role to achieve stability and balance has become a major challenge in today's workforce especially for women. According to (Duxburry, L. and C. Higgins, 1998; Dewe, P. and M. Kompier, 2008; Dubé., R., *et al.*, 2002; Duxbury and Higgins 2012; Mordi, Adedoyin,) family-to- work or work-to-family conflict creates poor emotional, mental, cognitive, psychological wellbeing, poor professional performance, and poor quality of life. Professional working mothers are caught up in the mixed of the juggling, meddling and interferences of one life spheres to another, however the presence of this conflicts impedes on women's career development.

Career development is an essential part of employees growth and organizational effectiveness because when employees are well developed and equipped with the right skills, competencies, knowledge and resources to grow, this impact on not just the employee but the organization as well as the country's economy. For the employee, career development has been acknowledged to improve employee's sense of purpose and direction,

enhance personal and professional development, improve quality of life, improve individual satisfaction, and increase self-esteem. Career development has also been identified to improving organization in term of attracting public/new workforce, motivating employees, reduce turnover rate and improve retention/loyalty, encourage knowledge sharing, create a skilled and competent workforce, create competitive advantage, and improves performance and productivity. And lastly career development benefit the country's government by heartening workforce adaptability and sustainability, encouraging workforce re-integration, enhancing national prosperity, preparing and supporting young people prior to labour market (Williams Work-life, 2008; Tipping *et al*., 2012).

Defination Of Terms:
A. Work-family conflict:
     Work and family conflict refers to 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, participation in the work is made more difficult by participation in family role while, participation in family role is made more difficult by participation in the (work) role" (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985). Additionally, (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985) also identified that work-family conflict occurs in three main forms i.e. time based conflict, strain based conflict and behavioral based conflict; the proposition is that any role characteristic that affects a person's time involvement, strain, or behavior within a role can produce conflict between that role and another role.

B. Career development:
     Career development has been defined by (Simonsen, P., 1997) as an ongoing process of planning and directed action toward personal work and life goals. Development means growth, continuous attainment and application of one's skills. Career development is the outcome of the individual's career planning and the organization's provision of support and opportunities, ideally a collaborative process. (Desimone, R.L., *et al*., 2002), similarly, has defined career development as an ongoing process by which individual's progress through a series of stages, each of which is characterized by a relatively unique set of issues, themes, and tasks.

Objectives:
     The main objective of this paper is to critically analyze and provide a deeper understanding on the impact of work-family conflict on working mothers' career development. Specifically, the aims are as follows:

 ➢ To critically analyze how time based conflict impact career development
 ➢ To critically analyze how strain based conflict impact career development
 ➢ To critically analyze how behavior based conflict impact career development

Literature Review:
     This study is built on the foundation of Super's life span, life space self-concept theory of career development. Among the many theories of career development, self-concept theory of career development by Super has received much attention worldwide. (Super, E.D., 1990) Proposed that career choice and development is basically a process of developing and implementing a person's self-concept. According to Super, self-concept is a creation of complex interactions among a number of factors, including physical and mental growth, personal experiences, and environmental characteristics and stimulation. In addition to the theory, (Savickas, M.L., 1994) acknowledging Super's self-concept theory as a theory profoundly and fundamentally a personal construct theory, however, took a different viewpoint by proposing that career construction is basically the process of developing and implementing individual professional self-concepts into work roles.
     The prominence of Super's theory is most clearly portrayed through his supposition of life roles and life space. Life at any moment involves a collective of roles that an individual is assuming, such as child, student, mother, father, citizen, worker, grandparent, and homemaker etc. The different life roles changes as one progresses through life stages, yet at each single moment, two or three roles may take a more crucial place, while other roles remain on the marginal. Life space is the collection of different life roles that one is playing at a given time in different contexts including home, community, school, workplace etc. Role conflicts, role interference, and role confusions are bound to surface when individuals are confronted with difficulties in coping with the demands associated with their numerous roles. Additionally, conflict arising from multiple life roles can be in form of time based conflict, strain based conflict and behavioral based conflict. Life and work satisfaction is a continual process of implementing the evolving self-concept through work and other life roles.
     Subsequently, career choice and development is not a direct process of self-concept implementation, but a process of dialogues and negotiations in which both the self and one's environment have to be consulted. Values such as familial devotion, family harmony, and loyalty may influence how the personal self is constructed, and the significance of diverse life and work roles as well as their dynamic interactions also influence an individual's

330
Esther. Kadarko *et al*, 2016
Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences, 10(11) Special 2016, Pages: 328-334

career choices and development. Thus, family roles of motherhood influences career choices of working mother which can impact their career development.

Career development has been impeded and hindered due to family and work role lack of consensus thereby inducing high conflict in family role and work role domain with tremendous consequences to both individual and organization. Although civilization has created room for dual earner couples, women are still however the child bearer which automatically make them the major care takers of the children from the time of birth till adulthood (Chen, Z., *et al*., 2008; Ezzedeen and Ritchey), revealed that women feel guilty leaving their children at home even when they have someone looking after the child/children.

Working mothers experience conflicts in balancing work and family roles and also experience gender/motherhood stereotyping at the workplace in climbing the career ladder which affects their career development. (Hite and McDonald, 2005), found that women often make career choices based on their family responsibilities, sometimes choosing to restrain their career progress to accommodate family roles and expectations. Despite record rates of female labor force participation and progress in gender attitudes, modern family norms still hold women accountable for hearth and home, which makes it harder for them to advance professional (Beatty, C.A., 1996; Rowney, J.I.A. and A.R. Cahoon, 1990; Tichenor, V., 2005). And although having children does not change their professional orientation (Korabik, K. and H.M. Rosin, 1995), working mothers are more likely than men to amend their careers in response to parenting (Blair-Loy, M. and A.S. Wharton, 2002; Brett, J.M., L.K. Stroh, 2003), due to conflict arising either as a result of time, strain or behavior creating difficulties in work and family roles.

A. Work-family conflict:

Work-family conflict is most described when work and family domains are mutually incompatible and irreconcilable, conflicting and opposing one role to another in terms of time, strain, and behavioral constraints. Thus, work-family conflict occurs in three main forms i.e. time, strain and behavioral based conflict; this means that any role characteristic that affects a person's time involvement, strain, or behavior within a certain role can produce conflict between that role and another role (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985).

B. Time base conflict:

This refers to the conflicts and challenges of balancing given time to both family roles and work role (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985). Time pressures coupled with association in one role may make it physically unfeasible to fulfill expectations arising from another role; pressures also may produce a preoccupation with one role even when one is physically attempting to meet the demands of another role [26]. Time is a key factor in individual's lives and a working mother has to balance the time between her job, her children, herself, and chores. Therefore dividing time sufficiently between family and work life of working mother is challenging, thus various scholars and researchers have identified that time conflict is a major determinant of work-family conflict (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985). Time conflict have significant impact on career development in that if a working mother is experiencing time conflict in terms of work and family roles then the motivation to engage in career development and advancement will be diminished due to lack of time sufficiency to cope with higher responsibilities due to conflicts in existing responsibilities (Bartolome, F. and P.A.L Evans, 1979).

Time is a major concern because time at the workplace is viewed by employers as a substitute for employee's effectiveness (Bailyn, L., 1980). (Raabe, B. and T.A. Beehr, 2003), identified that most settings of organizations have made it customary with assumptions establishing a link between time at work and quantity and quality of productivity. Organizations have developed the strategy of rewarding long hours and organizational commitment thus making it difficult for working mothers to balance the conflicts arising from work and family spheres (Lockwood, R., 2003). Furthermore, top managerial attitudes toward the advancement of employees working less than standard full-time hours or those employees who do not devote the maximum amount of time possible to the organization are seen as less productive and less committed, and therefore less valuable (Lewis, S., 1997). As a result, individuals available to work long hours and be present in the workplace are better able to compete successfully for career development opportunities (Burke, 2002). However, being a mother doesn't necessarily provide the luxury of such time to be equally and actively involved with work roles due to family roles. (Tausig, M. and R. Fenwick, 2001), have identified time, specifically the working hours to be the most consistent work factor and attribute predicting work-family conflict.

C. Strain Based Conflict:

The juggling between family roles and work roles has some health impact on individuals. Strain-based conflict, consistent with headaches, fatigues, tiredness, tension, anxiety, depression, lack of concern, and bad temper exists when strain in one role affects one's performance in another role; the roles are incompatible in the sense that the strain created by one makes it difficult to comply with the demands of another (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985; Duxburry, L., *et al*., 1991; Frone, M.R., *et al*., 1997) and (Thomas and Ganster, 1995), revealed that there is a relationship between work-family conflict and the incidence of physical sicknesses such

as hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, gastro intestinal disorders, allergies, and migraines. (Duxbury and Higgins 2012), identified that the most common reasons for missing work included health problems such as emotional, mental or physical fatigue. Both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict have also been associated with increased stress and burnout (Anderson *et al.*, 2002; Kinnunen and Mauno, 1998); cognitive difficulties such as staying awake, lack of concentration, and low alertness (MacEwen and Barling, 1994), and reduced levels of general health and energy (Frone, M.R., *et al.*, 1998). Furthermore, an employee experiencing strain conflict is less likely to participate or take initiatives for career development (Duxbury and Higgins 2012). Working mothers are more subjected to experience strain based conflict due to role pressures and difficulty in reconciling work and family domains, additionally, stress occurrence at work can spill over into family domain and vice versa. Conversely, stress and burnout occurring from home and spilling over to work domain can affect a working mother's energy and abilities to perform productivity and effectively therefore reducing the likelihood for working mothers to develop professional and possibly restrain instead from their career.

D. Behavioral Based Conflict:

Behavioral based conflict is a pattern of in-role behavior that occurs as a result of incompatibility with expectations regarding behavior in another role (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985). When individuals are stressed from keeping up with either family or work responsibilities, it results in behavior conflict (change in behavior) arising from role to another (Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985). The changes in behaviors include mood swings, unfriendly attitudes and behavior, behavioral conflict is a serious predicament with strong potential of negatively affecting employees as well as employers. (Beauregard, T., et al., 2009), have also identified the behavioral outcomes resulting from work-family conflict to include reduced work effort, reduced performance, and increased absenteeism and turnover. It has been reported that parents who feel overloaded by their numerous responsibilities are more incline to show less warmth to their adolescents and are more prone to engage in conflicts with them instead (Galambos, N.L., *et al.*, 1995). Difficulty balancing work and family life has a negative impact on dietary habits and physical activity practices (St-Onge, S., *et al.*, 2002).

In a study by (Duxbury and Higgins 2012), it was reported that (36%) of the respondents experienced high levels of depressed mood, (40%) reporting moderate levels of depressed mood, while (23%) reported low levels of depressed mood. This study demonstrated the intense behavioral conflict experienced by employees which can affect their zeal and motivation to engage in career development, because experiencing a depressed mood positions an individual in the least likely mood of pursuing professional growth and development. Due to heavy workload from family and work, individuals behaviors are affected consciously or unconsciously; for example, after having a long or bad day at work, a mother may return back home all agitated, moody, and unfriendly lashing out on the children; and, or a mother had a bad morning with the kids and as such becomes frustrated and go to work with an attitude creating unfriendly work environment for her colleagues and subordinates. According to (St-Onge, S., *et al.*, 2002) behavioral conflict also includes lack of interest in work or family related matters; which means lack of interest in work can also means lack of interest in career development.

E. Career Development:

Career development is one of the key drivers in individual and organizational effectiveness, hence, scholars and researcher have identified that lack of career development is at the detriment of both the individual as well as the organization. However career development has been noticeably more challenging to working mothers compared to their male counterparts. The (Malaysian Insider 2013) reported that the nation's workforce is deteriorating rapidly due to the fact that women are making the decision to quit the workforce in order to stay at home and take care of their families. This decision is triggered by the challenges in handling family and work roles. According to (Roth, P.L., *et al.*, 2010), women are less readily considered promotable compared to their male counterparts. Where family demands are concerned, ambitious women rarely depend on organizational support for fear of reinforcing the communal stereotype (Broadbrigde, A., 2008). Moreover, many women executives and those in elite occupations muddle through by making discreet choices between career and family such as "opting out" or delaying parenting (Blair-Loy, M. and A.S. Wharton, 2002).

The gender difference practical in the effect of motherhood on career advancement still highly exist even with the high increase in women labour participation rate. The ability for working mothers to climb the corporate ladder is challenging and extremely difficult. The responsibility that comes with being a mother affects working mother's career development. (Marks, S.R., *et al.*, 2001), revealed that 83% of female respondents agreed that commitment to family responsibilities impedes women's career progress. (Valcour and Hunter, 2005), found that having children was associated with greater career progression within the same organization for men, but reduced career progression within the same organization for women. In a large-scale study of American public sector workers, having children was linked to greater career success for white men, but not for white women or for any ethnic minority staff (Daley, D.M., 1996). These findings are explicable due

to the juggling act and spillover from family-to-work and from work-to-family role resulting in high work-family conflict which hinders working mothers from developing their careers. Diminished career development can be from either the individual or the organization; the individual may decide not the take up career development initiatives due to the (already loaded) family responsibilities in order to avoid more workload. Lack of career progress can also be a result of motherhood discrimination in the workplace where the working mothers are denied further career development due the fact that they are mothers and the assumption that they are unlikely to succeed since they have other demanding responsibilities.

However, developing oneself will equip working mothers with the necessary skills, knowledge, experience, and competence needed to climb up the corporate ladder with minimum gender or motherhood discrimination. Although women can take the initiative in attaining career development, it is however, to a large extend the responsibilities of the organizations to provide opportunities practices, polices, and initiatives to reduce work-family conflict and promote career development (Kaiser *et al*., 2004). Career development is essential for both the organization and the employee it results in enhanced to employee satisfaction, motivation, loyalty/retention, reduced absenteeism, and increased morale, create competitive edge and most importantly improve performance and productivity.

Methodology:

This paper is as a result of secondary data and literatures gathered from experts reviews on work-family conflict and career development. Previous studies and past literatures from scholars and experts in the field/area were critically studied and reviewed to gain an in-depth understanding of how work-family conflict impacts working mothers career development. Journals and articles used for the study were obtained online from various reputable sources.

Discussion And Conclusion:

Conversely from the literatures reviewed, it is noted that working mothers experience extreme challenges in regard to work and family roles and thus working mothers experience work-family conflict which occurs in any of the three forms {time, strain, behavior based conflict} thereby hindering career progress.

Primarily, career progression has been said to be affected due to motherhood, time has been identified as a constant factor predicting work-family conflict, and health deteriorating has also been linked to work-family conflict as well as behavioral changes. Career development is imperative for organizations effectiveness; therefore taking necessary precautions and strategies in ensuring employees career development is paramount.

Additionally, scholars and researchers have outlined that working mother's responsibilities have significant impact on their career development therefore is it essential for organizations to understand how this problem occurs. Family and work role responsibilities are inevitable and these roles constitute to time conflict, strain conflict and behavioral conflict (work-family conflict) where mutual reconciliation between work and family domain remains a challenge.

REFERENCES

Eby, L. *et al*. 2005. A. Work and family research in IO/ OB: Content analysis and review of the literature (1980 ñ 2002. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 66: 124-197.

Barnett, R.C. and K.C. Gareis, 2006. Parental after-school stress and psychological well-being. Journal of Marriage and Family, 68: 101-108.

Aron Work Life Balance, Some History and Perspectives, 2009. The New World of Business.

Duxburry, L. and C. Higgins, 1998. Work-life balance in Saskatchewan: Realities and challenges. Prepared for the Government of Saskatchewan.

Dewe, P. and M. Kompier, 2008. Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project. Wellbeing and work: Future challenges. The Government Office for Science, London.

Dubé., R., M. Zins, and P. Brassard, 2002. *Alimentation: le profil du consommateur et ses habitudes.* BioClips+, Direction générale des politiques agroalimentaires, ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec., 5(3): 7.

Duxbury and Higgins 2012. Revisiting Work-Life Issues in Canada: The 2012 National Study on Balancing Work and Care giving in Canada. National work long summar.

Mordi, Adedoyin, Ajonbadi Impediments to Women Career Advancement: The Nigerian Experience Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti bulletin. LXIII(2): 11-22. Economic Sciences Series

Williams Work-life balance of shift workers. 2008. Canadian Social Trends. No. Spring. Statistics Canada Catalogue. 75-001.

Tipping *et al*., 2012. The Fourth Work Life Balance Employees Survey. Employees Relations Research Series 1220

Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, 1985. The Impact of Human Resource Mangement Practices on Turnover, Productivity, & Corporate Financial Performance. Academy Management Journal, 38(3): 636-672.

Simonsen, P., 1997. Promoting a development culture in your organization. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black.

Desimone, R.L., J.M. Werner and D.M Harris, 2002. Human Resource Development. (3rd'Ed) Orlando, Harcourt College Publishers.

Super, E.D., 1990. A life space approach to career development. In a D. Book- career choices and development; Applying temporary approach to practice. San Francisco, pp: 193-239.

Savickas, M.L., 1994. Measuring career development. Current status and future directions; the career development quarterly, 43: 54-62.

Chen, Z., G.N. Powell and J.H. Greenhaus, 2008. Work-tofamily boundary management, conflict, and enrichment: A person-environment fit approach. Meeting of the Academy of Management, Anaheim.

Ezzedeen and Ritchey, Career advancement and family balance strategies of executive women. Government and Community Affairs, Comcast Corporation, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA

Hite and McDonald, 2005. Reviving the Relevance of Career Development in Human Resource Development. Human Resource Development Review, 4(4): 418-439. DOI: 10.1177/1534484305281006

Beatty, C.A., 1996. "The stress of managerial and professional women: is the price too high?" Journal of Organizational Behavior, 17(3): 233-51.

Rowney, J.I.A. and A.R. Cahoon, 1990. "Individual and organizational characteristics of women in managerial leadership", Journal of Business Ethics, 9(4/5): 293-316.

Tichenor, V., 2005. "Maintaining men's dominance: negotiating identity and power when she earns more", Sex Roles, 53(3/4): 191-205.

Korabik, K. and H.M. Rosin, 1995. "The impact of children on women managers' career behavior and organizational commitment", Human Resource Management, 34(4): 513-28.

Blair-Loy, M. and A.S. Wharton, 2002. Employees' use of work-family policies and the workplace social context. Social Forces, 80(3): 813-845.

Brett, J.M., L.K. Stroh, 2003. "Working 61 plus hours a week: why do managers do it?" Journal of Applied Psychology, 88(1): 67-78.

Rizzo, J.R., R.J. House and S.I. Lirtzman, 1970. Role conflict and ambiguity in complex organizations.

Bartolome, F. and P.A.L Evans, 1979. Professional lives versus private lives-Shifting patterns of managerial commitment. Organizational Dynamics, 7(4): 3-29.

Roth, P.L., K.L. Purvis and P. Bobko, 2010. A MetaAnalysis of Gender Group Differences for Measures of Job Performance in Field Studies. Journal of Management., 20: 1-20.

Bailyn, L., 1980. The slow-burn way to the top: Some thoughts on the early years of organizational careers. In C. B. Derr (Ed.), Work, family, and the career. New York: Praeger, pp: 94-105.

Raabe, B. and T.A. Beehr, 2003. "Formal mentoring versus supervisor and co-worker relationships: differences in perceptions and impact", Journal of Organizational Behavior, 24: 271-93.

Lockwood, R., 2003. Work/life balance: Challenges and Solutions. 1800 Duke Street, Alexandria

Lewis, S., 1997. 'Family Friendly' employment policies: A route to changing organizational culture or playing about at the margins? Gender, Work and Organization, 4(1): 13-24.

Burke, 2002. "Organizational values, job experiences and satisfaction among managerial and professional women and men: Advantage men?", Women in Management Review, 17(5): 5-6.

Tausig, M. and R. Fenwick, 2001. Unbinding time: Alternate work schedules and work life balance. Journal of Family and Economic Issues, 22(2): 101-118.

Duxbury, L., C. Higgins, C. Lee and S. Mills, 1991. Balancing work and family: A study of the Canadian Federal Public Sector, Ottawa.

Frone, M.R., M. Russell and G.M. Barnes, 1997. Workfamily conflict, gender, and health related outcomes: A study of employed parents in two community sample. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 1(1): 57-69.

Thomas and Ganster, 1995. Impact of Family Supportive Work Variables on Work Family Conflict and Strain: A Control Perspective. Journal of Applied Psychology, 80: 1-15.

Anderson *et al.*, 2002. Formal organizational initiatives and formal workplace practices: Links to work-family conflict and job-related outcomes. Journal of Management, 28(6): 787-810.

Kinnunen and Mauno, 1998. Antecedents and outcomes of work-family conflict among employed women and men in Finland. Human Relation, 51: 157- 77.VA 22314, USA.

MacEwen and Barling, 1994. Daily consequences of work interference with family and family interference with work. Work and Stress, 8: 244-254.

Beauregard, T., Alexandra, Henry, C. Lesley, 2009. Making the link between work-life balance practices and organizational performance. Human resource management review, pp: 9-22. ISSN 1053-4822.

Galambos, N.L., H.A. Sears, D.M. Almeida and G. Koleric, 1995. Parents's work overload and problem behavior in young adolescents. Journal of Research on Adolescence, 5: 201-223.

St-Onge, S., S. Renaud, G. Guérin and E. Caussignac, 2002. Vérification d'un modèle structurel à l'égard du conflit travail-famille. Relations industrielles/Industrial relations, 57(3): 491-516.

Broadbrigde, A., 2008. Senior careers in retailing, An exploration of male and female executives' career facilitators and barriers, Gender in Management: An International Journal, 23: 11-35.

Marks, S.R., T.L. Huston, E.M. Johnson and S.M. MacDermid, 2001. Role balance among white married couples. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 63: 1083-1098.

Valcour and Hunter, 2005. Work and life integration: Organizational, cultural, and individual perspectives Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp: 61-84.

Daley, D.M., 1996. Paths of glory and the glass ceiling: Differing patterns of career advancement among women and minority federal employees. Public Administration Quarterly, summer, pp: 143-162.

Kaiser *et al*., 2004. International perspective on the work life integration of professionals. ISBN: 978-3-64216198-8.