Does work and family support moderate the relationship between work family interference and job satisfaction?

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Abstract

Of late, economic and business globalization incubates work family issues increasingly important not only in developed but also developing country. This study investigated the moderating effect of supervisor and family support between work family conflict (work to family conflict and family to work conflict) and job satisfaction. Using a simple random sampling, 127 employees working in a banking organization were selected and the relevant data were garnered with the aid of self-administrated questionnaire. Results indicated that work to family conflict and family to work conflict was significantly, negatively related to job satisfaction. Result further revealed that the family support moderated the family to work conflict and job satisfaction. Contrary to expectation, supervisor support did not moderate the relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction. Implications for research and practice, and the limitations of the present study are discussed.

Keywords: *Family support, family to work conflict, job satisfaction, supervisor support, work to family conflict.*

1. Introduction

The issue of work family conflict has received a great attention of late. Both work and family domains are overriding aspects in the life of the people. Albeit human beings are well-nigh stuck to family structure, they hinge on work as it is the source for generating income that would necessary for the family functioning. In the contemporary world, employees are performing a multi-role in their day to day life (Livingston & Burley, 1991). As the difficult move to a more equal distribution between work and family roles execution, conflict between these two roles has become a striking concern for the organizations and individuals. The multi-roles performed by individuals in society today can become overwhelming and result in work family conflict. The issue of work family conflict has been considered as a particular concern for today's businesses (Grandey, Cordeiro, & Crouter, 2005).

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The work family conflict research typically focuses on the difficulties employees have in balancing their work and family responsibilities (Adams, King, & King, 1996). The subject of how work/family balance can be achieved and enhanced has received significant consideration from academics, employers, workers, politicians and the media (Hudson, 2005). The possible outcomes of work family conflict can be classified into physical outcomes (e.g. poor appetite, headache, stomach upset, fatigue), psychological outcomes (e.g. depression, marital satisfaction and life satisfaction), behavioral outcomes (e.g. heavy drinking, cigarette use, anger), and work related outcomes (e.g. job satisfaction, absenteeism, tardiness and poor work-related role performance) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Frone et al., 1997, Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). For example, individuals who report higher levels of work family conflict also report lower levels of general well–being (Aryee, 1992; Frone et al., 1992; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), lower levels of job satisfaction (Adams et al., 1996; Jayaweera, 2005; Grandey et al., 2005; Jayaweera, 2007); higher levels of burnout (Burke, 1988), and more alcohol use and poorer health (Frone et al., 1997) compared to individuals who report lower levels of work family conflict. Researchers have also shown that individuals who report more work family conflict are more likely to have lower performance and leave the organization (e.g., Kossek & Ozeki, 1998) compared to their peers reporting less conflict. Therefore, it is obvious that work family conflict plays as a deleterious factor against the success and survival of the organizations. Thus, this study has become most crucial study to take necessary steps to measure and balance the existing level of work family conflict, and to understand role of family support and supervisor support.

Work family conflict and job satisfaction becomes an increasing important concern for organizations when focusing on the issue of developing managers in the changing global and regional scenario in Sri Lanka (Jayaweera, 2005). This study extends the previous research by examining the unique effects of work to family conflict and family to work conflict on job satisfaction by moderating effect of supervisor support and family support. In the present study, supervisor support and family support were examined as a potential moderator of the relationship between work family conflict (work to family conflict and family to work conflict) and job satisfaction. Empirical evidence suggests that supervisor support and family support moderate the relationships between interrole conflict stressors and strain symptoms such that the stress-strain relationship is lower under conditions of high versus low supervisor support (Aryee, Luk, Leung, & Lo, 1999). Consequently, the objective of the study was designed to examine moderators of perceived supervisor support and family support on the relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction

2. Conceptual background

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work family conflict (WFC) as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respects" (p.77). Lobel (1991) defined work family conflict as "a condition that arises when participation in either role (work and non-work) is incompatible with participation in the other role" (p.509). In another way, it has been defined as "simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other" (Kahn et al., 1964, p.19). Role theory proposes that organizations (e.g., work or family) may be

viewed as a rolesystem where the relationships between people are maintained by expectations that have been developed by roles. According to role theory, work role may interfere with family role or family role may interfere with work role. In the context of the interference between work and family, the two competing demands are generated from the work and family domains. These demands are called work and family demands. On the basis of these demands, work family conflict forms three types of conflict (Greenhaus, & Beutell, 1985; Haines et al., 2013; Allen et al., 2013).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) distinguished three forms of work family conflict: time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict. All three forms are formulated based on the role theory, which conceptualizes conflicts as reflecting incompatible demands on the person, either within a single role or between multiple roles occupied by the individual (Carlson et al., 2000).

Time-based conflict occurs because "time spent on activities within one role generally cannot be devoted to activities within another role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Work family conflict based on time occurs when responsibilities in one domain are difficult to fulfill, because of the time spent in the other domain. A second form of work family conflict is *strain-based conflict*. Strain-based conflict occurs when strain from one role makes it difficult to perform in another role. For example, anxiety and fatigue caused by strain from one role will likely make it difficult to perform in another role. Strain-based work family conflict is when "roles are incompatible in the sense that the strain created by one makes it difficult to comply with the demands of another" (Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985). The third type of work family conflict defined by Greenhaus and Buetall (1985) is *behavior-based conflict*, in which "specific patterns of in role behaviors may be incompatible with expectations regarding behavior in another role". This is likely to occur when one works in an environment where there are strict policies and procedures concerning how employees should behave like a very rigid office environment where communication and behavior are dictated by policies and procedures. Behavior-based conflict occurs when the employee continues to display the same unyielding communication patterns in the home with his/her children and family members.

Generally, these forms of conflict lead to two directions of work family conflict. They are confined to work to family conflict and family to work conflict. Work to family conflict is used to describe conflict that is perceived to originate in the work domain and family to work conflict is used to describe conflict that is perceived to originate in the family domain. Many researchers assert that both directions of work family conflict need to be examined to fully understand the work family interface (e.g., Anafarta, 2010; Gutek et al., 1991; Frone et al., 1992; Carlson et al., 2000). Therefore, the present study conceptualized work to family conflict (WFC) and family to work conflict (FWC) as two different constructs.

A crucial model for the study of work family conflict (work to family conflict and family to work conflict) has been derived by Carlson et al. (2000) and it represents entire theoretical constructs (Liu, Kwan, Lee, & Hui, 2013; Cowlishaw, Birch, McLennan, & Hayes, 2014). This is the six-dimensional model of conflict between work and family. In reviewing the work family conflict literature, Carlson and his colleagues found that less than half of the 25 studies conducted prior to 2000 distinguished between the two

directions of work family conflict. Three forms of conflict with two directions of conflict resulted in a six-dimensional model of work family conflict.

Table 1
Direction of Work family Conflict

		Work interference with family	Family interference with work
Forms of work family conflict	Time	Time-based work interfering with family	Time-based family interfering with work
	Strain	Strain-based work interfering with family	Strain-based family interfering with work
	Behaviour	Behaviour-based work interfering with family	Behaviour-based family interfering with work

Source: Six dimensional model of work family conflict adapted from Carlson et al. (2000).

Family support and work support: Family support occurs when family members help other family members. For example, support might be talking about work related problems and /or family related matters. Therefore, the quality of one's relationship with a spouse has been found to be related to work family conflict. Burke (1988) found that spousal support was negatively associated with family to work conflict. Similarly, Grzywacz and Marks (2000) found that a low level of spousal disagreement was associated with less work to family conflict. Adams et al. (1996) found that the effects of family support were dependent on the direction of the conflict. Specifically, low levels of family support were related to high levels of work to family conflict and high levels of family support were related to lower levels of family to work conflict. Carlson and Perrewe (1999) found that family support was negatively associated with work family conflict. But in the recent researches, many researchers tried to find the moderator effect of family support on work family conflict and job satisfaction (e.g., Youngcourt, 2005). Some researchers did not found perceived family support moderate the relationships between work to family conflict and job satisfaction, or between family to work conflict and job satisfaction.

Supervisor support from work has been found to be negatively associated with work to family conflict (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999). These researchers argue that supervisor support be viewed as an antecedent to perceived stressors and suggest that individuals who acquire supervisor support systems at work perceive less work family conflict. According to these results, employees who experience high levels of perceived social support at the workplace from colleagues and supervisors will experience lower levels of interference between work and family domains. Frone et al. (1997) in their study of American employees found that work related support (i.e. supervisor support and co-worker support) was a strain-based predictor of work family conflict. Their findings were consistent with Adams et al. (1996). In other words, they found that employees with high levels of support at work will experience less work to family conflict and vice versa. Similar results were reported by Moen and Yu (2000).

The literature review has provided sufficient ideas to formulate the following hypotheses.

H_1: Work to family conflict is negatively related to job satisfaction.

H_2: Family to work conflict is negatively related to job satisfaction.

H₃: Supervisor support will moderate the relationship between work family conflict (work to family conflict and family to work conflict) and job satisfaction.

H₄: Family support will moderate the relationship between work family conflict (work to family conflict and family to work conflict) and job satisfaction.

3. Methods

3.1 Participants and procedure:

Participants were selected from banking sector in Jaffna district. A sampling frame, all employees, in the selected banks was created. Using a random sampling, self-administrated questionnaire to 150 employees was given. The number of potential participants (sample) for the research was decided based on the total number of employees available in each bank. The sample was consisted of 88 male (69.3%) and 39 female (30.7%) employees. Ages range from 20 to 58 with an average age of 35.45 years ($SD = 11.39$).

3.2 Instruments

Measuring work family conflict: Work family conflict questionnaire was developed by several researchers time to time (Burke, Weir, & DuWors, 1979; Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980; Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981; Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Wiley, 1987; Stephens & Sommer, 1996; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996; Carlson et.al., 2000). To date, only one measure (Carlson et al., 2000) has addressed thorough test of multidirectional/ dimensional nature of work/family conflict. Therefore, in this study, work family conflict was measured using Carlson et al.'s (2000) 18 items scale questionnaire. The scale consists of six subscales (3 items each), measuring time, strain, and behaviour based conflict for both work to family conflict and family to work conflict. Using a 5-point Likert scale, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each item. The responses range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 strongly agree. An example of an item from the time based work to family conflict scale was, "The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities" An example item from the time based family to work conflict scale was, "The time I spend on family responsibilities often interferes with my work responsibilities" In the current study, the Cronbach alpha for work to family conflict was 0.75 while alpha for the family to work conflict was .80.

Measuring job satisfaction: Job satisfaction was measured using five items originally developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) called as Job Satisfaction Inventory (JSI). Despite the age of this measure, it has still been used widely in recent literature, postgraduate dissertations (e.g., Wu & Short, 1996, Aryee et al., 1999). Further in 2006, Lambert and his colleagues also used Job Satisfaction Inventory questionnaire to measure job satisfaction in their survey of work family conflict on correctional staff. There are five questions were used to measure job satisfaction, one of them was reverse scored. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example is: "My job is like a hobby to me". In the current study, the Cronbach alpha for job satisfaction was 0.75.

Measuring supervisor support: Supervisor support was assessed using five items, originally developed by Eisenberger et al. (2001). It examines how much an employee's supervisor values the contribution of and cares about the well being of his or her employees. Respondents reported on a 5-point scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. An example is: "My supervisor really cares about the effects that work demands have on my personal and family life." In the current study, the Cronbach alpha for supervisor support was 0.75.

Measuring Family support: Family support was measured with a scale designed by Baruch-Feldman et al. (2002) with four items. The Family Support Scale examines how much an individual perceives support from his or her family. Respondents reported on a 5-point scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Sample items include: "When something goes wrong at work, I can talk it over with my family". In the current study, the Cronbach alpha for family support was 0.75.

4. Results and discussion

Participants were asked to describe level of work to family conflict. The reported mean score of 2.92 (SD =0.63), indicating that moderate level of work to family conflict. In the case of family to work conflict, mean response was 2.36 (SD =0.64), indicating low level of family to work conflict. Participants were also asked a series of questions about level of job satisfaction. The mean response was 3.99 (SD=0.67), indicating high level of satisfaction Results indicated that state bank employees were satisfied more than private bank employees (M=4.07>M=3.88). Mean value of perceived supervisor support was 3.63 (SD=0.67), showing high level of supervisor support. Participants were also reported high level of family support, yielding mean value of 3.97 (SD=0.71).

Relationship between work to family conflict and job satisfaction was found, negatively correlated which is significant at .01 significance level (r =-.33 p<0.01). It indicated that higher level of work to family conflict leads to lower level of job satisfaction. Result indicated that family to work conflict was also significantly, negatively related (r =-.42 p<0.01) to job satisfaction. It implies that higher level of family to work conflict result in low level of job satisfaction.

Table 2

Regression result: Work family conflict with job satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	27.54	1.41		19.61**	.00
WTFC	-.12	.05	-.21	-2.49**	.01
FTWC	-.20	.05	-.35	-4.14**	.00

Predictors: (Constant), WTFC, FTWC, *p < .05; ** p < .01, R Square .22 F = 16.97** df = 2, 124, Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction

The regression for job satisfaction is presented in Table 2. Work to family conflict and family to work conflict produced negative significant result with beta weights of -0.12 and -0.20 respectively. Significant negative relationship of work to family conflict and family to work conflict and job satisfaction was found (p < 0.01). Therefore, hypotheses one and two were supported. The association between dependent and independent can be

explained by coefficient of determination (R^2). Value of coefficient of determination (R^2) is .22 which implies that 22 percent of observed variability in job satisfaction can be explained by work family conflict. The remaining 78 percent of variability is not explained in this model.

Family support and supervisor support were tested as moderators of the relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction by using hierarchical regression analysis. In this analysis, work family conflict (work to family conflict and family to work conflict) were entered as a block at the first step, and the family support and supervisor support were entered in the second step. In the next step, the centering procedure was used, suggested by Aiken, West and Reno (1991) for regression analysis using interaction terms (Martins et al., 2002). The work to family conflict x family support, work to family conflict x supervisor support, family to work conflict x family support and family to work conflict x supervisor support interaction terms were entered at the third step. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Results of hierarchical regression

Step		ΔF	df	R	ΔR^2	Beta
Step 1	WTFC					-.21**
	FTWC					-.35***
		16.97***	2,124	0.46	0.22	
Step 2	Family support (FS)					-0.06
	Supervisor support (SS)					0.37***
		10.17***	2,122	0.57	0.11	
Step 3	WTFC x FS					-1.02
	FTWC x FS					1.01**
	WTFC x SS					0.61
	FTWC x SS					-0.34
		1.492	4,118	0.60	0.03	

*** $p < .01$ ** $p < .05$

As shown in the table, results indicated that there was a significant R^2 change value (.22; F change = 16.97, p = .00) at step 1. In the second step, again there was a significant R^2 change value (.11; F change = 10.17, p = .00). However, in the third steps, R^2 change value was not statistically significant when the interaction term was entered (.03; F change = 1.49, p = .21). The result suggest that the interaction between work to family conflict and family support, work to family conflict to supervisor support and family to work conflict to supervisor support were not significant (p>.05). However, family to work conflict x family support interaction was statistically significant (p = .05). Therefore, family support does only play as moderator between family to work conflict and job satisfaction.

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Follow up procedures recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) were employed to establish the form of the interaction and its correspondence to the pattern predicted by the present hypothesis. To aid in interpreting the results, a graph was created with the predicted mean outcomes for four conditions. These conditions included low family support / low family to work conflict, low family support / high family to work conflict, high family support / low family to work conflict, and high family support / high family to work conflict. Based on a regression equation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) using the low or high conditions for family to work conflict and family support, it was possible to derive a predicted score of job satisfaction for the four conditions. The predicted job satisfaction scores for the four conditions are presented in the graph in Figure 1.

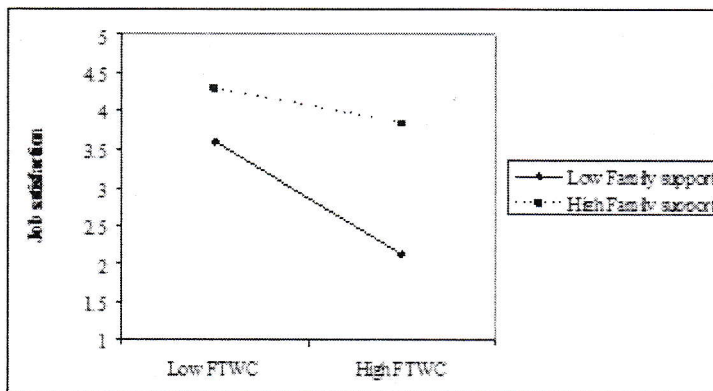**Figure 1** Moderating effects of family support

Figure 1 shows the results for the interaction of moderator between family to work conflict and job satisfaction. As shown in the figure job satisfaction is low when the family support is low but the amount of family to work conflict is high. However, when the family support is high and the amount of family to work conflict is provided is also high, the job satisfaction is slightly negative than low level family to work conflict at high level of family support. Finally, when the family support is low, employees actually have lower levels of satisfaction.

Therefore, family support appears to moderate the relationship such that higher levels of family support are predictive of a positive relationship between family to work conflict and job satisfaction, whereas relatively lower levels of family support are predictive of a negative relationship between family to work conflict and job satisfaction. In sum, Supervisor support does not appears to moderate the relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction.

5. Conclusion

Hypothesis postulated that work family conflict would be negatively related to job satisfaction. In support of this hypothesis the result indicated that work family conflict was significantly, negatively related to job satisfaction. It implied that high level of work family conflict will reduce employees' job satisfaction. Further, results suggested that family support did moderate the relationship between family to work conflict and job satisfaction. In the current study, it was also hypothesized that supervisor support would

moderate relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction. Supervisor support did not moderate the relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction.

The finding from the present study may have useful practical implication. Managers can use relevant data to manage work family conflict and to avoid negative impact that work family conflict can have on their family, work and society. The results indicate that the nature of work to family and family to work conflict are different in terms of the dimensions that are most important. Indicating that to minimize these types of conflict, different types of mechanisms may be needed. Also stress is not experiences equally by all. Conflict due to family roles may be negotiated at the workplace. This has important implications for the structuring of workplace policies. Current study will bring better new awareness of work family conflict, and gets involved more on family matter. Therefore, this research would be seminal and guide for any decision and research. Overall, this study would be need of the time.

Though the present study provides number of insights into work family conflict and job satisfaction, there were some limitations that have to be pointed out. As the research design of this study was cross sectional one, it is impossible to infer a causal relationship. Undertaking research at one period in time can only reflect that period in time. A greater focus on longitudinal research designs may give a better indication of work family conflict and job satisfaction. Other important limitation of the study was that the time, strain and behavioural factors were considered as determinants of work family conflict. Now a day, increasing unemployment, living cost, marital distress, and parental stress have the more influence on work family conflict. Future research should more carefully model and test the interrelationships among the various aspects of conflict.

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