



The Impact of Dependents in the Family on the Work Life Conflict of Employed Women in IT Sector in India

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ABSTRACT

Job and family is defined “as a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. There is a conflict between work and family when the earning member or bread winner is occupied by too many demands. One of the major societal changes, two jobs at a time in order to meet the expenses and in case of single parent families, work and family conflict is present. This study finds an impact of the dependents (non-earning member) on the work life conflict specific to employed women. It was found that for working women in India there is more work life conflict with family when there are more than two dependent members in the family and especially old-age/sick members that demand more time, responsibility and income generation from the bread winner in family.

Keywords: Women Labor force, employed women, family, work life

JEL Classification: D1, D31

Introduction

An important issue facing our society is the changing work and family roles of Indian women. Many women occupy both work and family roles, their experiences as paid workers, wives and mothers represent primary social contexts for examining women's lives (McBride, 1990). Many women of today are engaged in multiple roles and the effect that these social roles have on women's well being is worth examining (Repetti, 1998; Russo, 1990).

Members of dual earner families and families with young children are more likely to experience work family conflict (Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985). Voydanoff (1988) mentioned that important shifts in family structure and accompanying demands needed to be considered. Various work and family conflict antecedents and its outcomes have been developed and tested by (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983). Family conflict, work conflict and inter role conflict are highlighted in the study (Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983). Work conflict is the degree to which an individual face role stresses/demands with respect to family. Inter role conflict occurs when an individual face stresses/demands of one role that are disharmonious with strain in another role. Greenhaus

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and Beutell (1985) articulated three possible basis of work and family conflict - strain based conflict, time based conflict and behavior based conflict.

Models have been studied in relation to the work and family conflict with change in social and demographic trends with time (Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Bedeian, Burke, & Moffett, 1988).

Objectives of the study

The study aims to signify the impact of the dependents in the family in the work life conflict of employed women.

Literature

Work Life Conflict

Family is a part of every adult/grown up individual with work experience. More addition has been seen in the workforce due to social and demographics changes and concerns (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999; Lambert, 1990; Staines, 1980).

It's a routine of the majority that an adult has two major roles family orientation and working experience. These both are the roles, which are mostly played by the head of the family that man in most of the cases irrespective to ethnicity and religion. Women have now also emerged as the head of the family in the case of single parent, divorced, married and contributing earnings in the family etc. Adopting dual roles or accepting multiple roles of work life and home responsibilities naturally causes conflicts. It leads to stress and the limited capacity of one to perform well at work and handle the family responsibilities at the same time. Major downfalls with such individuals are physical fatigue and mental anguish (Coser, 1974; Marks, 1977).

Two types have been differentiated mainly in work and family conflict. First, Work interference with family conflict (WIF) and second, family interference with work conflict (FIW). WIF conflict occurs when there is overload of work or work is dominating the family activities and responsibilities, for e.g. an individual handling office work at home at the expense of family time. FIW conflict occurs when the family responsibilities and activities hinder office work and time, for e.g. leaving office timings and work more often for tackling home chores. These both constructs are correlated with each other with each being conceptually and empirically distinctive (Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee 1994; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992).

For WIF conflict, the predictor is work variable and for FIW conflict, the predictor is family variable (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) found three major types of work family differences, which are as follows:

1. **Time based:** It often possible that time spent on one role performance of routine hinders the role performance of other routine. Expansion of time in one role performance of routine takes up the time allotted or confine to other role performance of routine.
2. **Strain based:** The strain is the second conflict, which arises between work and family. The strain affects to actively contribute towards a certain role due to the other role's strain.
3. **Behavior based:** This conflict is incompatibility between the both routine behaviors.

Work family conflict and health (mental and physical) has association and even overall physical health (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999).

Work and family conflict makes an individual enter into depressive mode and other psychological concerns (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

There is indirect relationship between organizational commitment and work family conflict in terms of work load and office work related pressures (Good, Page, & Young, 1996).

Research methodology

Descriptive research design is used for this study in order to provide empirical results and conclusion. Through this research methodology behavioral differences of respondents have been investigated and reported.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is no significant difference among the different number of dependents in high conflict segment.

H₂: There is no significant difference among the different number of dependents in moderate conflict segment.

H₃: There is no significant difference among the different number of dependents in no conflict segment.

Data

The data has been collected, tested and reported through primary and secondary sources. First hand information regarding the respondents was collected in the form of questionnaires. Different and related literature support was gathered for this study about this research. The pilot testing was done with 50 respondents. Pilot testing was done prior to set appropriate scales, questions has been modified in the questionnaire to meet the criteria of the reliability.

Variables for the study

The independent variable identified for the study is the dependents namely the number of dependents and the dependent variable is the role conflict. The respondents were grouped into three segments using cluster analysis. These segments were further used for analysis on the independent variables.

The set of statements used for measuring the role conflict was used in the study. The validity was tested using the content validity and construct validity. The reliability measure was tested using the cronbach alpha. Three dimensions of role conflict namely the time, strain and behavior was made use of in the study.

Sampling

A random sampling technique was incorporated and in particular judgmental sampling technique through mall intercepts method has been deployed to collect the sample. The IT industry was selected for this study. Women, married and unmarried working at IT firms in India were selected as the sampling unit. The distribution of questionnaires was 1000 out of which 598 were fit for testing analysis.

Validity and Reliability

Cronbach alpha was used to check the reliability. The following are the alpha values for respective scales that have satisfied the minimum requirement of 0.8.

Work Family Conflict: 0.923

Table 1: Total Number of Dependents

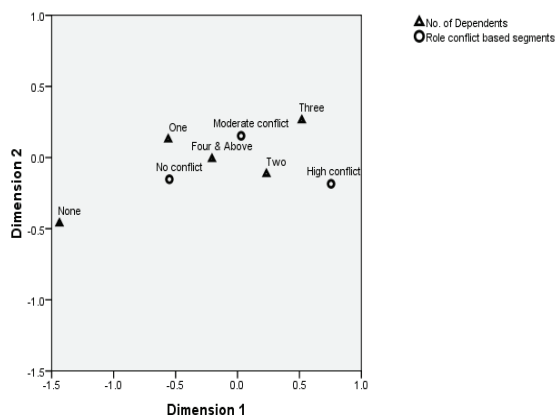
Dependents	N	Percentage
None	13	2.2
One	161	26.9
Two	311	52.0
Three	82	13.7
Four and Above	31	5.2
Total	598	100.0

The number of dependents refers to a non earning member in the family other than the children. Majority of the respondents have two dependents and the next highest percentage is having one dependent. Families having three or more dependents are considerably less.

Table 2: Number of Dependents

Segments	No. of Dependents					
	None	One	Two	Three	Four and Above	Active Margin
High conflict	0	17	71	21	5	114
Moderate conflict	6	84	160	45	16	311
No conflict	7	60	80	16	10	173
Active Margin	13	161	311	82	31	598

Symmetrical Normalization



From the correspondent table it is evident that those respondents who are having two dependents in the family form the majority in the high conflict segment followed by three dependents, same is the case with the moderate conflict segment more of respondents fall in the moderate conflict segment even when the number of dependents increases.

The least number of three as well as four and above dependent group fall in the no conflict and high conflict segment respectively.

The correspondent chart depicts the high conflict segment is associated only with the two dependent group the moderate conflict segment with four and above and the respondents with no dependents have no association with any of the conflict segments.

Results and Discussion

There were several studies carried out to explain the impact of dependents on the role conflict of employed women (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). As mentioned earlier a non earning member in the family other than the children can be referred to as dependent.

It is more complicated when the dependent is old and sick and always requires the attention of the another person for their daily activities. From the study it is evident that role conflict varies according to the number of dependents. The respondents were grouped into high conflict, moderate conflict and no conflict segments. It is found that respondents with two dependents constitute the majority of the high conflict segment.

The conflict that arises because of one dependent is comparatively less than the conflict that arises due to two dependents.

The number of dependents is totally a new perspective as a cause of role conflict. But in any case it cannot be concluded that a number of dependents and role conflict are directly proportional. It does not prove that increase in the number of dependents leads to increase in the role conflict.

Thus, the above Quantitative analysis and its Interpretation derives conclusive discussion on the nature and the intensity of the relationship between the number of dependents and its impact on the Work Life Conflict of Women Employees in IT Sector.

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