

Work Attitudes Leading to Work Family Conflict in Health Professionals of Twin Cities of Pakistan

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Abstract

The study was conducted with the intention to determine any link between work attitudes like organizational commitment (affective and continuation commitment), work-related contentment, and work-family conflict of married healthcare professionals. The study investigated the differences of work-family conflict in single-earner and dual-earner couples. Work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict were assessed using the Work and Family Conflict Scale (10 items). Revised version of the Employee Commitment Survey (12-item) was opted to determine affective and continuance commitment of employees. Short Index of Job Satisfaction (6-item) was utilized to assess job satisfaction level of the employees. The association between the study variables was assessed using Pearson correlational analysis. Multiple linear regression analysis carried out to see how well continuance commitment, affective commitment and job satisfaction can predict work-family conflict and t-test was performed to see the single and dual-earner couples' differences. Analysis demonstrated that work-family conflict negatively correlates with satisfaction at job $r = -.233$ with $p < 0.01$ and affective commitment $r = -.246$ with $p < 0.01$. Job satisfaction also has negative correlation with affective commitment $r = -.456$ with $p < 0.01$. Job satisfaction and affective commitment are negatively associated with work-family conflict, but continuation commitment is found to be a positive predictor. The research found no significant variation in work family conflict of single-earner and dual-earner couples of healthcare professionals (doctors).

Keywords: work family conflict, affective commitment, job satisfaction, single-dual earner, health professionals

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Introduction

Work attitudes are considered crucial with the advent of new forms of employment, that are more adaptable in nature i.e., temporary contracts and increased employee accountability (Corsani & Bureau, 2006). The tendency in contractual jobs adds up to the job insecurity. People are ready to stick to their employer despite of low pay scale and distressing job environments. Due to the rising inflation, multiple family members have to participate in

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job market. This leads to imbalance in family life (Akram, 2020). The imbalanced interaction between job affairs and family life results in a situation of discomfort and unease termed as work-family conflict. Work family conflict (WFC) term is coined by Greenhaus and Beutell in 1985 on the basis of origin of conflict.

A misalignment of work and home life is called work-family conflict in psychology (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). The WFC is categorized into three divisions: time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based difficulties (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Work-family roles are difficult to strike a balance between both because of the increased demands at work and family settings in the modern industrial societies. Individuals are expected to manage several tasks simultaneously, requiring them to divide their time and resources between work and home. The most prevalent concerns that contribute to WFC include work load beyond individual capacity, dissatisfaction resulting from lack of appreciation and encouragement, stressful environment, role conflict and lengthy work hours (Bakker et al., 2005; Ford et al., 2007; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Spector et al., 2004). Workplace stressors such as work overload and unpleasant incidents can physically and emotionally deplete a person to the point where work-family conflict occurs (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008).

Work-life balance refers to a state of person's satisfaction where work related and other activities are balanced and supportive of progressive life. A recent research states that attainment of a higher degree of work life balance not only enhances person's performance at work place but also improves life and family satisfaction. With establishment of work-life balance there is decline in depression and distress in daily life. It also reduces physical and mental exhaustion (Barnett, 2019).

Meyer and Allen (1991) offer the "Three Component Model," a well-known theoretical framework that suggests that commitment is a multifaceted term with three components: affective, normative, and continuance. Each of these characteristics defines a different facet of organizational commitment. Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment, identification, and involvement with the company. The moral obligation to stay in the organization is represented by the normative commitment, while the continuance commitment refers to the employee's perception of the costs of leaving the business. This could be due to a personal investment, status, tight professional ties, or a worry of not being able to obtain a better job in the future. In other words, a high affective commitment employee is willing to stay in the organization, a strong normative commitment employee should stay in the organization, and a high continuance commitment employee must stay in the organization.

Work family conflict as an entity and association of work family conflict with job satisfaction and affective commitment have been studied previously (Panda et al., 2022; Galletta, et al., 2019), but the association between work attitudes other organizational commitment kinds including continuance, and normative commitment with work family conflict is yet to be analyzed (Rehman & Waheed, 2012). It is reasonable to suppose that all three types of commitment will interact and influence organizational behavior to some extent. Only the affective and continuance elements of organizational commitment will be examined in this study. These two types of commitment are extremely important to research because

affective commitment is linked to employees' happiness and emotional attachment, whereas continuation commitment is linked to the costs of leaving and the rewards of staying.

Moreover, this research aims at comparing the work family conflict of single earner and dual-earner couples. The evolution of gender roles from traditional societal norms around family structures to progressed life has brought changes in society. The study is conducted to understand the impact of different family arrangements on work family balance. In traditional household, men role was considered as a bread winner and women as homemaker. Hence the shift in division of roles has a great impact on both families and work. The wife's participation in the workforce is a significant step toward gender equity; however, it is also described to have a negative effect on home management (Azeez, 2013). Bird et al. (1990) described two categories of families on the basis of employment position. A dual-earner couple is one where both the partners work and earn money. A single-earner couple is one where one partner (either husband or wife) works and the other one stays at home with the children.

Role conflict theory (Kahn et al., 1964) is an ancient framework that suggests that individuals may experience conflict when they are trying to fulfill multiple roles, such as being an employee, spouse, and parent simultaneously and remains applicable in contemporary state. This theory provides a crucial framework in understanding the challenges faced by health professionals in multifaceted roles (Liu and You, 2019).

Rationale of the Study

The research is important in its nature as it is proposed to fill a research vacuum in the existing literature by identifying the key antecedents of the Work Family Conflict in terms of organizational commitment for work-related tasks as well as family responsibilities. The implications of this research will be in aiding the policy making bodies in the formulation of work and family friendly policies that will be beneficial for the optimum functioning of employees and thus ultimately benefitting the organization in the longer run.

Objectives

1. To investigate the effect of affective commitment, continuation commitment and job satisfaction on work family conflict.
2. To identify the difference in work family conflict among single-earner and dual earner couples.

Hypotheses

H1: There would be significant impact of affective commitment and job satisfaction on work family conflict of health professionals.

H2: There would be significant relationship between continuance commitment and work family conflict.

H3: Work family conflict would be higher among dual earner couples as compared to single earner couples

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The impact of different types of organizational commitment and job satisfaction on health care professionals' work-family conflict is studied using a quantitative cross-sectional research approach. At the end, there will be a comparison of two groups in terms of work-family conflict: single earner couples vs. dual earner couples.

Participants and sampling

166 healthcare professionals were selected from different hospitals of Islamabad/Rawalpindi using purposive sampling technique. The study includes male and female doctors married for at least two years. Health professionals married for less than 1 year and working less than 6 hours a day are excluded from the study. Immediate post marital period is filled with a lot of challenges related to personal adaptability, new responsibilities and new relations. As the objectives were to study the effect of work-related factors on WFC therefore to avoid any confounding factor creating bias, the immediate post marriage period is excluded.

Data Collection

The data was collected through standardized survey questionnaires and through google forms.

Measures

The following measures were used in the study to collect the data from the selected participants:

Demographic Sheet. Demographic sheet is used to obtain demographic information of health care professionals which include age, gender, spouse employment status, years of marriage, number of children, family structure.

Work-Family Conflict Scale (WAFCS). The Work-Family Conflict Scale (WAFCS) by Haslam (2015) is a tool for assessing work-to-family conflict WFC_Tot_WAFCS (5 items) and family-to-work conflict FWC_Tot_WAFCS (5 items). WFC_Tot_WAFCS (5 items) and FWC_Tot_WAFCS (5 items) are two subscales of the WAFCS 10-item scale that examine theoretically independent but related phenomena (5 items). Both subscales show strong internal consistency, construct validity, and contemporaneous and predictive validity (Haslam, 2015). WAFCS uses a 7-point Likert scale with 7 = "very strongly agree and 1 = "very strongly disagree."

Short Index of Job Satisfaction. Short Index of Job Satisfaction is a 6-item scale with a 5-point scale Likert where 5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree (Sinval & Moroco, 2020).

Employee Commitment Survey. The Employee Commitment Survey (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997) assesses three types of employee commitment to an organization: first is desire-based (affective commitment), second is obligation-based (normative commitment), and third is cost based commitment (continuance commitment). Affective Commitment Scale (ACS), Normative Commitment Scale (NCS), and Continuance Commitment Scale (CCS) are

validated tools that are used in this study. Each scale is assessed independently and can be used to determine an organization's "commitment profile" of employees. A revised version of Employee Commitment Survey of 18-item questionnaire was used. The questionnaire uses a Likert-type scale with 7 = very strongly agree and 1 = very strongly disagree.

Procedure

Data was collected from 166 healthcare professionals. The participants were told about the study's purpose and are only selected when they volunteered to participate. Participants were asked to sign consent form, demographic sheet, and standardized questionnaires of Three Component Model Employee Commitment Survey, Short Index of Job Satisfaction (SIJS), and Work-Family Conflict Scale (WAFCS).

Data Analysis Plan

The data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistical version 23. Independent sample t-test was used to measure the difference in WFC between single and dual earner couples. Multiple regression was conducted to find the effect of types of organizational commitment i.e., affective, continuance (independent variables), continuance commitment (independent variable), and job satisfaction (independent variable) on work and family conflict (dependent variable). The association between the study variables was assessed using Pearson correlational analysis.

Ethical Considerations

The American Psychological Association (APA) ethical guidelines were followed. Participants were explained beforehand regarding the goal of this research, brief background of the study, estimated time, and about the confidentiality of the responses. The questionnaires in the google forms format were shared with the participants. It was mutually decided to fill questionnaire when participants had free time. An informed consent was obtained from each participant. The participants were assured that the information provided will only be used for research purpose.

Results

The results of this study are given below:

Table 1:

Demographical Features of the Study Population

Baseline characteristics	<i>F</i>	%
Birth-order		
Eldest	53	31.9
Middle	80	48.2
Youngest	33	19.9
Spouse Employment		

Working	89	53.6
Non-Working	77	46.4
Family Structure		
Nuclear	72	43.4
Joint	94	56.6

The age of study participants ranged 25 to 62 (M=36, SD=8.795), duty hours per day range from 6 to 14 (M=8.45, SD=1.844). The years of marriage (M=8.36, SD=8.491) showed minimum value observed is 1 and maximum is 37. The variable number of children had minimum value of 0 while 6 is the maximum. A total of 53% of the participants had working spouse (n = 89) in comparison to about 46% (n = 77) participants who had nonworking spouse in our population. The birth order and family structure of study participants is shown in table 1.

Table: 2

Descriptive Statistics of work-related characteristics of Study Participants

Variable	Obs.	M	SD	Min.	Max.
Age	166	36.00	8.795	25	62
Duty Hours per day	166	8.45	1.844	6	14
Years of Marriage	166	8.36	8.491	1	37
Number of Children	166	1.63	1.364	0	6

The number of children of study participants had minimum value of 0 while 6 is the maximum. The association between the study variables was assessed using Pearson correlational analysis. Analysis results demonstrated that work-family conflict negatively correlates with job satisfaction $r = -.233$ with $p < 0.01$ and affective commitment $r = -.246$ with $p < 0.01$. Job Satisfaction also has negative correlation with affective commitment $r = -.456$ with $p < 0.01$ as shown in table 2.

Correlational Analysis

The association between the study variables was assessed using Pearson correlational analysis, summarized in table 3.

Table 3.

Pearson Correlational Analysis Of Study Variables (N=166)

Study	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4
Variables							
WFC	166	38.02	12.673	1			

JS	166	21.44	4.527	-.233**	1		
AF	166	25.70	7.926	-.246**	.456**	1	
CC	166	27.73	7.821	.383**	.076	.040	1

**At the 0.01 level, correlation is significant (2-tailed).

Analysis results demonstrated that work-family conflict is negatively correlated with job satisfaction $r = -.233$ with $p < 0.01$, with affective commitment $r = -.246$ with $p < 0.01$ and positively with continuance commitment $r = .383$ with $p < 0.01$. Job Satisfaction is negatively correlated with affective commitment $r = -.456$ with $p < 0.01$.

Regression analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis carried out to see how well continuance commitment, affective commitment and job satisfaction can predict WFC (summarized in table 4). Affective commitment, continuance commitment, and job satisfaction significantly predict WFC and explained 24% variance in WFC ($F(3, 162) = 17.146$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .241$).

Table 4:

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for study participants (N=166).

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta(β)</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>
Constant	38.142	5.137		7.424	.000
AFC	-.287	.123	-.180	-2.336	.021
CC	.654	.111	.404	5.881	.000
JS	-.507	.216	-.181	-2.350	.020

Note: $R^2 = .0241$ ($p = 0.000$), $F(3, 162) = 17.146$. AFC: Affective commitment, CC: Continuance commitment, JS: Job Satisfaction, t: t-value, SE: Standard Error

Independent Samples t-test:

It was performed to see the single and dual-earner couples' differences of Work-family conflict Scale scores in the selected sample (results summarized in table 5)

Table 5:

Summary of Single And Dual-Earner Couples' Differences Of Work-Family Conflict Scale Scores On T-Test

Variables	Single-earner couples		Dual-earner couples		t(164)	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
WAFCS	39.42	12.175	36.82	13.036	-1.319	0.544	0.2
WIF	23.45	7.187	21.81	7.451	-1.442	0.417	0.2
FIW	15.96	7.312	15.01	7.386	-8.30	-8.30	0.1

Note: WAFCS=Work–Family Conflict Scale, WIF=Work–to–Family and FIW=Family–to–Work

An independent sample t-test was applied to contrast work family conflict, work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict scores between single and dual earner couples. There was no significant dissimilarity in the scores of both these categories for WAFCS, WIF and FIW. The work and family conflict score, work-family conflict score, family work conflict score had Cohen's d value of 0.2 (<.50), 0.2 (<.50) and 0.1 (<.20), which is considered small effect size and trivial effect sizes respectively. Therefore, there was minimal difference between the two groups.

Discussion

The objective of this study was to elucidate potential correlation or any discernible connections between work attitudes, such as organizational commitment (affective and continuation commitment), job satisfaction, and work-family conflict of married healthcare professionals. The study went on to look into the differences of work-family conflict in single-earner and dual-earner couples. First and second hypotheses proposed that a higher level of affective commitment and job satisfaction are related with a lower level of work-family conflict and higher levels of continuance commitment are related to a higher level of work-family conflict respectively. The correlation coefficient for JS and WFC is -0.233 whereas for affective commitment and WFC is -0.2456 indicating a negative correlation between these variables proving the hypothesis. On the other hand, correlation coefficient for CC and WFC is 0.383 indicating a positive correlation representing increase in WFC with higher degree of continuation commitment.

The correlation coefficient of JS with affective commitment and CC is 0.456 representing a moderate positive correlation between these variables. In simpler words, participants having higher levels of affective commitment and job contentment is associated with lower work-family conflict. There is a significant relationship among affective commitment, degree of job satisfaction and work-family conflict. Similar results are documented by (Yang et al., 2021) showing a positive relationship of job satisfaction with

affective commitment. According to Sun et al. (2015), employees exhibiting high affective commitment are more motivated, they not only feel an affinity with the organization's aims and ideals but also a strong sense of being a part and attachment to it and are willing to go beyond to meet expectations and put in efforts. Whereas contrary to our results, Anane (2018) documented a positive relationship between WFC and affective commitment in medical practitioners. Studies demonstrate that the variations in employee performance are linked to affective and continuance commitment.

Employees who were bound by a continuance commitment wished to leave their company but were unable to do so based on their circumstances (Tucker et al., 2005). Continuance commitment is taken into consideration by the employees when they are dissatisfied with their jobs (Thompson et al., 2005). Due to extra workload on employees and inflexible office timings the employees feels overburdened and thus could not take care of the work expectations. Work family conflict increases when people are unable to maintain reasonable boundaries between work and family (Karatape & Tenkinkus, 2006). Satisfaction with job and work place is a positive attitude associated with employees' judgments that their performance meets their necessities and that they like their work. Many employees have a high urge to grab a better opportunity being dissatisfied with their job demands, work-timings and pay scale. Job dissatisfaction harms productivity and thus, they find difficulty in fulfilling job and family obligations simultaneously; leading to work-family conflict (Ibrahim, 2019; Rhee, 2020).

Work Family Conflict and job satisfaction are inversely proportional (Lambert et al., 2017). Both affective commitment and job satisfaction are linked with yielding positive and negative emotions depending upon their work environments, hence a positive feedback widens an individual's working capacity and improves the thought process. It also helps in generating new ideas beneficial for the organization. It is well known that the negative emotions have a harmful effect on individual's mindfulness and thought process (Fredrickson 2001, 2004). Whereas a positive and calm contributes to a creative work environment. The hypothesis based on expectation that there will be more work family conflict in dual-earner couples in comparison to single-earner couples is rejected by our study results (Table 5). One of the possible justifications could be that the presence of strong support system minimizes conflict and stress (Afzal, 2010). Women who are working share responsibilities with families, neighbors, friends and colleagues (Banyard, 1993). In this study, participants were mostly those who live in joint families. Presence of family and friend's support along with individual's own determination are significant contributors in reducing work-family conflict (Wilson, 2004). A lot of research participants in current study had no children. Previous studies have concluded that working women's' first priority being motherhood/parenting responsibility (Rehman & Roomi, 2012). Work-family conflict is related to parent-child interaction. It suggests that the child care crisis, not being able to provide care, time, and attention makes parents guilty and that eventually contributes to work-family conflict. (Cooklin,2015; Dinh, 2017).

Organizations can initiate a system of conducting regular employee satisfaction surveys that can help them identify the areas of improvement. To build a harmony in work life and family life, the employers can invest in offering family-friendly benefits to their employees like on-site children day care facility, parental leave and subsidized facilities for child's schooling and health cover. These measures will strengthen the bond of workers with their organization. Employee Assistance and Training Programs can be initiated to offer them training to better manage their work by learning time management skills, stress handling and counseling. Above all, reasonable timelines should be set for achievable targets. The unrealistic deadlines create unease among the workers and adversely affect the mental health and work-

life balance. The impact of these policies needs to be monitored regularly and adjusted in the light of feedback and surveys.

Conclusion

Job satisfaction and affective commitment are negative predictors of WFC, but continuation commitment is found to be a positive predictor. The research further shows no significant difference in WFC of single-earner and dual-earner couples of healthcare professionals (doctors). The findings may be helpful for the policymakers to introduce some new policies that nurture the elements of work appreciation and recognition. The reward system and introduction of family-friendly benefits strengthens the workers commitment and job satisfaction, hence lowering the chances of WFC.

Limitations and suggestions

Although this research filled the gaps in the existing body of knowledge, there are some limitations to it as well. The study was carried out in Pakistan's twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi and hence does not cover wide geographical area; it is difficult to generalize the findings over whole of Pakistan. Secondly, the sample size was small that hinders the generalizability of results. Thirdly, self-report nature of questionnaires may have added some biases and tainted the results. For generalizability of results, data from different areas of Pakistan on larger representative sample is therefore suggested. Patterns of work-family conflict in different populations like engineers, teachers, architects, business entrepreneurs, and freelancers etc. would be interesting study to conduct. These findings can be used to design fruitful suggestions for the psychological outcomes as well as guidelines important for work attitudes and family adjustments. Other variables like personality type, decision making, marital adjustment, and marital satisfaction need to be studied along with present variables.

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