

Work-Family Conflict's impact on children of working mothers

Saeeda Bano

Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar
saeedasoc@gmail.com

Abstract

The research was conducted to find out the effect of Work-Family Conflict on the children of working mothers in district Peshawar. A sample of 100 working mothers (with children between 12-17 years of age) from district Peshawar were included in the sample. Fifty of them were from urban colleges and the rest of them were from rural colleges. They were administered with Impact of WFI on children questionnaire. They were divided into upper and lower WFI groups and data were analyzed through SPSS. t-test was found to be significant at .01 level with a higher mean for upper WFI group, showing the negative impact of Work-Family Interface/Conflict's impact on children of working mothers in district Peshawar.

Introduction

Dating back to the European civilization, wives' were primarily responsible for maintaining the household and looking after their children, while the husbands earned a livelihood and provided for the family on their own until the early 20th century Shank (1988). However, as time went on, society's attitudes towards women who work outside the home shifted, welcoming a period of female breadwinners. A significant number of women entered the workforce in the late 1900s. Studies on female workers have become increasingly important in Pakistan. This is as a result of the Pakistan Federal Bureau of Statistics' declaration that the labor market is comprised of, on average, 45% female workers (2005-6). One groundbreaking aspect of this under study has been the Work Family Interface/ Conflict (Pakistan Federal Bureau of Statistics).

A USAID study explained that the number of homes headed by females has increased by 4 to 15% (Aroona Kamal & Lauren Woodbury, 2016). Nonetheless, women are still expected to fulfill domestic duties like caring for children and managing the kitchen. Working women are subjected to a great deal of pressure, what is commonly referred to as Work Family Interface/Conflict. "Whenever incompatible activities occur....one party is interfering, disrupting, obstructing, or in some other way making another party's actions less effective." States Deutsch (1973).

Role conflict is defined as "the simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make compliance with the other more difficult" by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinin, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964).

Work-Family Interface has been defined in the following terms by Higgins & Duxbury (1992):

"the unbearable interference of work role demands with family role demands". "It is a kind of inter-role conflict when both demands are mutually incompatible"

Numerous studies have been conducted across the globe to help mothers ensure fruitful relationships while also preserving a realistic balance between work and family. These researchers have been able to shed some light on the causes and realities of these contradictory circumstances, but they have not been able to fully consider the realities that exist in Pakistan.

The ideal balance between work and family should be upheld to prevent harm to either and to ensure that commitment to both is unaffected. Work-Family Fit is the term used to describe this idea, which is defined as employees' perception of their ability to successfully juggle the demands, responsibilities, and domains of work and family life.

Carlson et al. (2011) investigated how organizational factors affected participants' health, work-family experiences, and subsequent turnover in working mothers. Work to family enrichment was linked to job security, skill discretion, and schedule control. Psychological needs and irregular work schedules were linked to job demands. An irregular work schedule had a positive correlation with conflict, while work-family conflict had a negative correlation with physical and mental health, which in turn had a negative impact on turnover.

Pittman (1994) mentioned about work hours and marital relationships as mediated by perceived fit between work and family.

According to Bautell and Greenhaus (1982), women are under more pressure if their husbands' work hours are more, they have higher work demands and particularly if their families are large and include their husband's parents.

Working women is new concept in our society and is not widely accepted by our elders. In a conservative Pakistani Pakhtoon society working women are more under stress as they expected to take care of domestic chores too and take other social responsibilities. Their in-laws, husbands, children and even parents expect them to perform their social roles despite the fact that they are at times the sole bread-earners in a home setting. It becomes so difficult for working women in such a situation to work in a stress-free environment. When the stress prolongs it affects their behaviours both at work place and homes. Resultantly their children suffer because of no attention and harsh and unwelcoming behaviours.

METHOD

Sample

A purposive convenient sample of 100 working mothers was drawn from the women teaching at local colleges in District Peshawar. The decision to utilize this sampling approach was made as some of the participants did not meet the requirements for participation in the study, therefore probability sampling could not be used. Half of the sample (n-50) was selected from Peshawar's local urban colleges. These included Jinnah College Peshawar, College of Home Economics Peshawar, and the Government Degree College Hayatabad. These working mothers had worked in their respective institutions for at least four years and had dependent children of various ages, the majority of whom were adolescents.

To make the sample more representative, a comparable sample of working moms was chosen from Government College Abdara, Government College Mathani, and Government College Chagharmati, with the other half (n-50) working in rural colleges of District Peshawar. A diverse population was covered because fewer facilities are available in rural areas. The selection of participants for the sample and the observance of matching criteria, such as age, number of years of employment, and number of children, were conducted with the greatest amount of control under the given conditions.

When divided into upper and lower groups of WFI the lower group had 53 mothers and the upper group had 47.

Instrument

Impact of WFI on Children Questionnaire

To determine the effects of WFI on children of working mothers, a questionnaire was constructed about the impact of WFI on children. Items were created using a sample of five working mothers whose children ranged in age from 12 to 17 (adolescents). To ascertain the content validity of the scale, a team performed a qualitative item analysis following the creation of the items. To verify the content validity of the scale, a sample of working mothers participated in a field test. The scale also asks parents if their children exhibit criminal or delinquent tendencies.

Procedure

The research scholar personally contacted the female teachers and conducted a brief interview to determine their suitability and availability for the study. Before any scales were administered, it was confirmed via a few questions that they were impacted by work-family conflict. Firstly, WFIS was conducted on them following the necessary degree of rapport-building. Following this, they were also given the DVS and IWFICS scales, which were previously mentioned. Teachers encountered difficulties understanding certain terms and sentences in certain cases. The teachers were given necessary explanations where required to ensure that the data is unaffected. Data recording was done correctly in accordance with accepted research standards and ethics of research. Following data collection, the data was organized, coded and then into SPSS (V20) for additional analysis.

Results

Table showing differences in Mean scores of Lower and Upper Groups on Impact of Work Family Interface on Children Scale.

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p
Lower	53	30.69	9.36	---	-----	
Upper	47	43.90	12.08	98	6.15	.001

The table shows mean difference, standard deviation and t-value along with level of significance for the lower and upper groups that are made based on scores below and above the Median value on Work Family Interface Scale. t-value shows significant difference between the

two groups in their mean scores on the Impact of Work Family Interface on Children Scale. The Upper group shows significantly higher score depicting more impact of WFI on their children.

Discussion

The research aimed at finding the impact of Work-Family Interface (WFI) on the children of working mothers. The impact was assessed based on total score differences between the lower and upper group (formed on the basis of WFI scores of working mothers). The upper group with a mean of 43.90 against the lower group's mean of 30.69 was significantly higher at .001 level showing that children of the upper WFI group are more vulnerable and affected by the WFI of their mothers. The impact included effects like neglect in work related matters, irritability, proneness or involvement in criminal acts, effect on personality, addictive behaviours, siblings rivalry, spendthrift behaviour, lack of respect for parents, aggressive behaviour, and other negative behaviours.

Researches show that when mothers spend time at work place their children develop negative behaviour and their personality development is largely hampered. It is always better to distribute time and focus equally on work and family settings so that justice can be done at both places. Pakhtoon culture and traditions are such that in such situations the society expects that family should be preferred over work. That is the reason most of the working women leave their jobs due to family and social pressures and stay home. The best is to negotiate and keep a balance so that children do not suffer.

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