Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Role Overload: The Strains of Work-Family Conflict

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Abstract: Work-family conflict has become a modern-day issue. It is the result of the roles involved in two domains that require a higher need to be focused on one domain as compared to the other. When the needs of one domain are fulfilled and not the other, the result of a conflict may occur. This study highlights on three of the many reasons that have contributed to an overwhelming rise in work-family conflict among urban families. This is an explorative research studying both the genders, of men and women in Malaysia. The presence of role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload have caused work-family conflict which in turn has an adverse effect towards all those involved. With the knowledge of how this can gravely affect the individuals and how the relationship with the business and co-workers and their family members can be affected as well, businesses should know well and take the initiative to grant a support system to their workers and strengthen and recruit their employees so that they are well-versed with their job scopes and what is expected out of them and not to be dealt with overwhelming roles that they cannot cope.

Key words: Role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, work-family conflict, overwhelming roles

INTRODUCTION

Work-family conflict is seen to be a rather complicated situation amongst the urban families these days. The trend has been picking up on a fast pace as compared to years before where families relied on a traditional perspective that is either one of the partners contributes to the sole purpose of being the only bread-winner in the family whilst the other partner, stays at home and carries out the household responsibilities. Work-family conflict is defined by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) as the conflict that arises due to the clashing of multiple roles in which both the confines of work and family exhibit pressure that coincides with each other. It is an interrole conflict that comes to play in such a way that the tensions from these various roles that stems from both the work and family territories are not harmonious to one another, making it difficult to be involved in a given role when there is already participation in another role (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). The rise of work-family conflict has sparked interest in many researchers with them investigating the causes of it and how this in turn can cause other negative repercussions to an individual as well as to an organization. When a conflict occurs this leads to negative repercussions towards those involved such as a heightened risk in the health of the individuals (Frone et al., 1997a, b), a much decreased participation towards the conduct of family obligations, a decreased

job performance as well as a much decreased life contentment (Higgins et al., 1992). Kalliath and Brough (2008) have said that the conflict that comes in between work-family relationships has caused negative side effects towards the health and the performance of every individual, family as well as organization. This conflict has become a concern as it involves in the pressuring roles every working parent has to cope with in juggling between the needs of their work as well as the needs of their family. The pressuring roles that are required within each given domain, results from the constraint of the already available resources such as time, energy and effort. To fulfill the demands of either one domain, a much needed attention is given towards acquiring resources to fulfill that domains' needs and wants to fulfill the domain's obligations, thus, rendering it short of resources to be given to the next domain. This is how it can cause a conflict. The work-family conflict has caused adverse effects inflicting upon the lives of these dual-income families. The health of these individuals are affected as well as the relationships among the couples thus, causing negative effects too towards their relationship with every member of their families. Many researchers (Higgins et al., 1992; Thomas and Ganster, 1995; Boles et al., 1997; Frone et al., 1997a, b; Kinunnen and Mauno, 1998; Kossek and Ozeki, 1998; Allen et al., 2000) have defined that an increase in work-family conflict has led to a much decreased job, life, marriage as well as family contentment

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and also an increased level of stress inflicting upon these individuals. Work-family conflict can also cause stress and strains coming in between married couples as well as causing negative consequences towards an individual. Besides, Frone *et al.* (1992), Kossek and Ozeki (1998), Greenhaus and Parasuraman (1999), Burke and Greenglass (1999) and Frone have discovered that individuals affected by work-family conflict exhibit a much poorer job behavior, unproductive work conduct, discontentment towards their family life as well as physical and behavioral deterioration. Even Kahn *et al.* (1964), Netemeyer *et al.* (1996), Kossek and Ozeki (1999) and Magnus and Viswesvaran (2005) have explained that these working individuals facing work-family conflict are highly expected to experience absenteeism as well as tension or exhaustion from work. Tetrick and Quick (2003) have proposed that with these negative consequences being exhibited from the work-family conflict domain this has encouraged many researchers to extend their research into discovering the ways to minimize the conflict and its negative consequences. The occurrence of work-family conflict is the result of the variables involved which are role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload otherwise in summation is referred to as role pressures. Role pressures have a direct relationship with work-family conflict. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), Beehr and Newman (1978), Cooper *et al.* (2001) have concluded that what leads to work tension in an organization, stems from three variables namely; role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload. This study discusses on how these three variables, role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload have a linkage towards work-family conflict and why these three variables were chosen for the conduct of this study. Role Ambiguity refers to the scenario where an individual has a rather vague clarity towards their work objectives their job scope their superiors' expectations and their responsibilities. This, in turn, can lead to a high job exhaustion. Role conflict on the other hand, refers to when an individual is faced with overwhelming demands sourcing from their jobs with regards to, whether the individual has any interest in doing them or even when those things that need to be done are not fulfilling the job's criteria. Thus, an individual face a dilemma between conflicting demands and they will also be overwhelmed with stress as they will have to deal with the pressure on what is expected of them to perform a job at a certain way that causes conflict with other demands from other domains. Role overload sums up the definition that an individual is overwhelmed with too many responsibilities in a domain restricting the individual to perform well due to insufficient resources to fulfill them. Researches made

from past theorists have found there to be a direct relationship among these role pressures towards causing a work-family conflict.

In developed countries such as North America, Britain and Japan, statistics showed a higher percentage in which employees worked for extended hours in comparison to the employees in European countries, like France, Italy and Germany and these countries are blessed with the opportunity in work-life balance (Burke and Kot, 2009). Malaysia is currently facing the negatives of work-family conflict. In Malaysia, study was conducted towards a sample of Malaysian entrepreneurs. There is an increase in the number of people who are self-employed, in both small and medium enterprises, here in Malaysia and this in total has contributed to a percentage of 99.2% of business developments run by entrepreneurs and has also allocated of about 56.4% of the total number of employment here in Malaysia. An example of a famous Malaysian entrepreneur who is working successfully with his greatest innovations yet is Jimmy Choo who designs shoes for women. He is currently based in United Kingdom and is married with two children. According to Noor (2002, 2006) and Nasurdin and Hsia (2008) they have stated that the work-family conflict observed in Malaysia has been rather sparse. Hence that is why it was evident as to why more research should be emphasized in the confines of the society here in Malaysia, in studying the presence of work-family conflict amongst families, what are the root causes of them and how they can greatly affect the well-being of these individuals. A study was conducted to observe how the work overload can significantly cause work-family conflict among Malaysians and throughout the generalization of this study, the past researchers have first narrowed down their scope and done a research on a smaller scope that is towards a group of young doctors residing in Malaysia who were faced with emotional tensions. The results of it justified the other results made by other theorists with regards to how the overwhelming responsibilities being torn between work obligations and family obligations can cause work-family conflict. Sultana also found that in Peninsular Malaysia, working women experienced job stress more compared to non-working women. And this is due in part to being that these working women were not able to interact as well as not spend quality time with their family. They also faced the pinch of this stress when they too were dealing with a troubled relationship with their husbands due to the overwhelming demands of their job as well as the incapability to complete their job tasks at their workplaces. According to Kaye and Gray (2007), those working individuals who tried to balance their work

responsibilities with their family responsibilities see themselves struggling with work-family conflict and this will ultimately cause them to be facing the negative repercussions of the tensions of work-family.

Significance of study: The significance of this study is to understand the variables involved in causing the work-family conflict among couples in dual-income families. Role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload were taken as the main subjects of this study to be given notice as to how they relate with one another towards causing work-family conflict. Cooper and Marshall (1976) and Singh and Dubey (2011) have proposed that role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload are three of the significant parts of role stress. Role ambiguity is defined as the vagueness explained in the role a person portrays in his or her organization or when the individual is clueless as to what conduct is expected out of them or how to conduct their given role. Role conflict is defined as the expectation towards varying roles that an individual has meaning when the given roles are conducted at the same time or even when the conduct of one role, prevents the conduct of the other role. Role overload, on the other hand is defined as when the conduct of a given role is restricted due to time, effort or given resources that are available. Widmer has said that with these three role stressors, various repercussions are expected to occur such as discontentment, decreased confidence in individuals' organization, stressful social relations, decreased efficiency, decreased job conduct, decreased accomplishment and decreased personal relationships. Work-family conflict is the result of the conflicting interests that both couples now carry that disrupt their daily routine, making it a hindrance towards their personal lives. Traditional social norm defines the roles both husbands and wives used to carry in their daily lives before. However, with the evolving diversification and modernization in today's global network, it has ultimately changed the lifestyles and well-being of many individuals in the world. With that one of the current trends that can be observed now is the gravitational pull of not only men but women as well into the workforce to support their families. This transition has seen various changes impacting the lives of families where both couples now resort to the working world to bring food to the table for their families. To start off the objective of this study this study has taken a look as to how Malaysia too is being accustomed to this changing trend. These three role stressors were identified to being the causes that lead to work-family conflict among couples in dual-income families.

However, with the conduct of similar researches leading to the conduct of this present study, there were several research gaps that were found by previous researchers. Among some that were discovered were the framework formed by past researchers on how role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload have a direct link to work-family conflict have proposed that a new framework formed should be experimented on different settings and different class of occupational respondents to grasp a clearer understanding of the relationships formed between the variables to work-family conflict. The framework that was proposed by these researchers was based by the concept of role theory, formed by Allen (2001) which contains the most significant theoretical views. This theory shows the direct link between work-family conflict to the other variables such as role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload. Moreover, researchers also suggest the need for using a sampling methodology to study the real-time activities and decision choices made by couples. This is due to the reason being that from their experimentation done towards these couples in identifying the cause of the their variables towards causing work-family conflict, only studied the fraction of these respondents in general questioning but in regards as to when this conflict actually occurred. What should be delved into in more detail is to how given many years from now with the course of the varying activities in the lives of these couples, may deviate the demands of these families as the result of these activities. Thus, according to Robinson, he proposed that by using this sampling methodology this would aid the studying of the independent experience and time usage which are vital towards understanding the nature of the work-family conflict element. Due to the varying results garnered by past researchers collected from the data of respondents from different cultures on their definition and viewing towards work-family conflict foundation, it was suggested by Aryee and Ling and Powell that future research should conduct the same study towards different cultures to exhibit the differences towards the potential relationships of the respondents compared to the ones studied before. With that this study has progressed to taking off from where the researchers have left with their studies welcoming more novel. The purpose of this study has looked into the variables that have caused the work-family conflict and the foundation on how these variables can be formed by observing and questioning every respondents of their daily activities that have prompted the results of these variables. Not only that this study has also taken a look into the Asian perspectives of these variables and how they can affect and cause work-family conflict. The context of experimenting towards the Malaysian respondents, brings a diverse range of views as Malaysians themselves come from a multiracial ethnic

community thus, different perspectives on these variables and how they can lead to work-family conflict are collected on a various range of platform.

With the conduct of this study, investigating the primary concerns that can lead to work-family conflict, plants a foundation on how it can benefit the society. The study of what variables and how these variables can cause work-family conflict, prompts the effort to be taken to suppress the possible conflict from further expanding among many other families in the near future. How this study can help benefit businesses is that with this study, it can be seen how the struggle of work-family conflict can have an adverse effect towards individuals. For those working individuals this can substantially affect their performance at work, thus bringing low productivity and efficiency towards their work conduct. This can ultimately affect the business productivity. With this in view, businesses can do what they can to suppress it to enable smooth flow of business conduct that is by encouraging a support system that would support the individuals in all ways thus, better understanding their struggles and difficulty, so as not to cause or aggravate the conflict they are going through. The government can do well by passing on a policy and making it mandatory in all businesses that they do not exploit the work conduct of every individual, thus, making a stance on work-life balance among all families to encourage a harmonious well-being among the citizens. The study on what can cause work-family conflict and how work-family conflict is formed prevents the occurrence of potential novel ideas that can cause work-family conflict. Thus, with this in mind this can help sustain the well-being of individuals and ensure a lasting harmonious relationship among couples with each other as well as their relationship with their families and co-workers.

The major variables that were identified to be linked to work-family conflict are namely role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity which have been studied by many scholars, regarding these variables to be the significant causes leading to work-family conflict (Fisher and Gittelson, 1983; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Barling and Macewen, 1992; Carlson and Perrewe, 1999; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1992; Carlson and Kacmar, 2000). Further elaborations on why these three were chosen as the three causes for work-family conflict, can be seen in greater depth to guide the purpose of our study.

Literature review: This study highlights on the theories made by past researchers with a collection of journals and theories to elaborate further on the variables taken into light in this study. The independent variables involved in this study are role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload, whilst the dependent variable is work-family conflict.

Role conflict: Role conflict is defined as the predicament faced by working individuals, who are facing two or more sets of conflicting roles and strains that are happening at the same time (Kahn *et al.*, 1964; Katz and Kahn, 1978). Role theory defines it as being the situation in which individuals are faced with roles that coincide with their beliefs as well as when they undertake two or more roles that coincide with each other According to Spector (1997), role conflict forms from the very basis of coinciding multiple roles and emotional conflicts like, for example when a working individual's role coincides with the role of their own personal life. On another definition, roleconflictis the differing role demands that coincide one another and affect the outcome of it as put forth by Spector (1997). When there are complications arising from the distribution of resources between the work territory and family territory this is called as a role conflict.

Role conflict is seen to have been linked towards causing a "high level of work-family conflict" (Kopelman *et al.*, 1983; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Bedeian *et al.*, 1988; Greenhaus *et al.*, 1989). Miles (1976), Katz and Piotrkowski (1983) and Burden (1986) explained the positive relationship that exists between the effects of role conflict towards causing strains to an individual. Role conflict can also be seen to have caused negative consequences such as a low job contentment, low dedication towards a job and its conduct as well as a high resignation intention (Fisher and Gittelson, 1983; Jackson and Schuler, 1985). Kahn *et al.* (1964) have studied the negative effects that role conflict has on the work-family domain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The conduct of this study has gone through a thorough research made in reference towards conducting multiple studies on many journals made by past theorists. Work-family conflict has been observed as a wide topic and a recurring topic of discussion over the years. Hence, it has been molded and remolded and carved into something new without missing out its main essential that is the root, the gist of the topic. With each modification done to the topic, newer and newer elements are being discovered by past theorists and this has led to the expansion of the topic on a whole new basis. This gives a whole new wave of further research for future researchers as there are always room for improvement and

modification, eradicating and justifying the minor mistakes, thus welcoming a more novel research framework. The conduct of this study has prompted multiple researches to be done towards finding the variables involved in this study. First off, the topic of this study highlights on two factors that were proven to be connected to work-family conflict. To obtain the result to the theories of these variables, thorough research was made through different online portals to delve into different contents that would expand the study's research work. Upon obtaining the detailed journals to reflect on the contents of this study, keywords were looked up such as role ambiguity and role conflict, respectively to first off, explain the definitions of these two in general without having to narrow its definition from a specific subject.

Once an overview is made on the generalization of these two variables, the next search is done for the dependent variable which is work-family conflict. This is also done the same way as how it was done towards the independent variables. Once the generalization of definitions is done for these three keywords, next is to search deeper on how these two variables can significantly cause work-family conflict. Hence, the search was started by looking up for any journals that contain the contents to how role conflict and role ambiguity affect work-family conflict. This has resulted in multiple journals containing the contents of these search results. For a more extensive and elaborative search to focus only on one of these variables to see how it can strongly affect work-family conflict articles were looked up on each of these variables respectively such as role conflict being the cause of work-family conflict and so forth. Keywords were played at every search to get a more definite search and a unique one compared to the rest to test the research framework of this study.

The conduct towards the collection of the data was done through a thorough methodology of conducting an interview and drafting a survey which was then given out to a targeted sample group. This survey outlines the questions portrayed in each elements of the variables to test the reliability and the relevance of the study in assuring the validity of the topic of the research that is to hypothesize the role conflict and role ambiguity as being the direct sources of work-family conflict. Once the outcomes of the research have been attained, a discussion was then conducted to analyze the results of the study. Survey instruments were also designed to collect the data. Then, the method of measure that is taken for each variable was discussed. Analytical tools were also used. A study sample was conducted and it has taken a total number of 41 families who participated in the

study to test the relevance of role conflict and role ambiguity as the cause of work-family conflict. The sample includes a group of parents who on average are, of 42 year old. The families (n = 41) were selected voluntarily and randomly. The respondents who participated in the conduct of this survey were all found to be racially or ethnically and socio-economically varied. The data of this survey was collected through interview conducts as well as the distribution of surveys. For the parents who were interviewed personally they were done in separate rooms, so as not to influence or affect the results of the other parent. The interviews lasted for about thirty minutes to an hour, depending on the elaboration and the details of the contents and the responses being given by each parent. The interviews have all been recorded. The tape-recorded interviews included the category of parents who are either from a single or dual-headed household and their results obtained are then, coded. A deductive ground theory approach was used to obtain the code of the results. This enables a researcher to start with the research question and formulate the hypothesis, based on the previous literature reviews and the theories as the initiation for conducting the analysis. Each transcript was coded according to three types, namely; uncluttered, axial and restrictive coding. In the uncluttered programming phase, the step-by-step programming was used to compare and note the wide-response theme based on four particular questions in which these parents were asked throughout the study. The wide themes were divided into smaller sub-categories using the axial coding to systematically arrange the respondent's response across all content dimensions. A self-ministered questionnaire was also conducted, in which each questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section has of about 18 statements to measure the relevance and the validity of these variables towards measuring the work-family conflict. These statements were taken from Carlson, Kacmar and William's study, from 2000 and it was edited to fit the suitability of the present study. Section two was used to discuss the employee's or parent's desire to leave their jobs. The next section are the questions drafted to assess role conflict and role ambiguity which were taken from the measure drafted by Rizzo et al. (1970). A likert-type seven-point measure was used in these sections, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The follow-up section which is the last section was used to attain the data on the respondent's demographic details and their job characteristics. The privacy of the respondents have been duly respected and were restricted from being questioned in the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- H_1: role conflict has a direct relationship with work-family conflict

Role ambiguity: Spector (1997) has said that "role ambiguity is the extent to which working individuals are sure of their responsibilities and what are they capable of". When an individual is unclear regarding how to make decisions or what is expected out of their job performance, role ambiguity can occur. Role ambiguity means the vagueness that fall under what to expect from a given role. The role theory defines role ambiguity as, various roles that an individual would have to face, in which the individuals face ambiguity in the clarity of roles expected or required of the individuals, in terms of what behavior should be portrayed or what responsibility is expected of the individual (Sell *et al.*, 1981). Hence, when there is an absence in the concise information of what to expect from the given roles this can in no doubt cause tension and anxiety (Sell *et al.*, 1981). A negative relationship existed between the effects of role ambiguity towards dedication, participation and contentment towards work (Fisher and Gittelson, 1983). Baron (1986), Kantas and Koustelios *et al.* (2004) have proposed that working individuals who face vagueness or lack of clarity regarding what is required from their work are faced with the condition known as role ambiguity. Spector (1997) states that role ambiguity is the extension to which working individuals are uncertain with what is demanded of them or required of his or her job and what the obligations are.

According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) and Carlson and Perrewe (1999), role ambiguity is also seen as the root cause of work-family conflict. Many researchers (Greenhaus *et al.*, 1987; Loerch *et al.*, 1989; Bacharach *et al.*, 1990; Barling and Macewen, 1992; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1992; Bedeian *et al.*, 1998; Lance and Richardson, 1998 and Voydanoff, 1998), identified role ambiguity as having a direct relationship towards work-family conflict. According to Beehr *et al.* (1976), role ambiguity is presumed to lead a much reduced performance in certain work tasks due the fact that these working individuals are not aware in utilizing and aiming their efforts efficiently which in turn can lead to them leaving the organization (Beehr and Newman, 1978). From the research made by Chin they found that there is a positive relationship between role ambiguity and the work-family conflict.

- H_2: role Ambiguity has a direct relationship with work-family conflict

Role overload: Role overload is defined as when an individual participates in a territory filled with multiple of roles, each one emanating their very own demands, all against to what the individual can fulfill due to him or her having no sufficient resources to meet these demands (Goode, 1960). Role overload is defined as the situation in which individuals have to meet the high demand of roles, obligations or tasks that need to be fulfilled within a specified period of time and it is more than what they could perform (Rizzo *et al.*, 1970; Cooper *et al.*, 2001). When working individuals face more workload than they could cope at any single period of time they will face a higher work-family conflict. And this in turn, will lead to negative feelings, exhaustion, stress and other psychological health issues (Lingard and Francis, 2006). However with regards to this, researchers have also discovered that "increased adaptable work arrangements" may also increase work-family conflict, due to reasons being that it will lead to more interdomain conversions which in other words can lead to more work-family conflict.

Boundary theory (Ashforth *et al.*, 2000) and a conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1998), discuss the idea of how role overload relates to work-family conflict. They suggest that with these theories they explain the concept that when these individuals face role overload they undergo a phenomenon, known as 'interdomain transition' which occurs when these individuals adjust their resources from one role to the other role. Frone *et al.* (1997a, b) have proposed that the relationship that existed between role overload and work-family conflict are in due to the fact of resource constraint.

- H_3: role overload has a direct relationship with work-family conflict

Work-family conflict: Cinnamon and Rich (2002), Maunno and Kinnunen (2000) and Parasuraman *et al.* (1992), proposed that work-family conflict occurs in both ways namely when work coincides with family and another when family coincides with work. Now with more women shifting towards the working lifestyle, the traditional belief that revolves around the work style of men and women before has finally seen a setback in that trend and has seen itself going on a different route with the current trend of both men and women joining the workforce (Botkins *et al.*, 2000). Due to the rapid globalization, both working individuals and organizations are being pressured into being adaptable and exposed towards the change in the trend that has been happening in workplaces and affecting the working

lifestyle. Work-family conflict reflects the individual's capability to conduct their work with an overwhelming demand stemming from their work as well as from their family obligations (Boles *et al.*, 2001). The pressure involved in juggling between the obligations required to fulfill the needs of both work and family territories, would ultimately lead to work-family conflict. Kahn *et al.* (1964) and Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have mentioned that role theory is used in the explanation of the work-family conflict and how various roles can result in the occurrence of an interrole conflict when individuals face pressure into fulfilling the demands of each role due to the role pressures that are conflicting towards one another. Scarcity hypothesis, predicts that an individual has a secured amount of resources accessible to them on their plate such as effort and time and this is where interrole conflict stems from. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined that when the demand from one domain coincides with the demands of another domain this can result in work-family conflict. They also suggested that with the shifting forces revolving around the career and family course this can produce role conflict and pressure known as work-family conflict. However, results showed that from previous researches made from past theorists, individuals in the working line as well as those who possess a dual identity in the form of contributing their effort into their work life and those contributing their effort into their family life, experiences a much higher work-family conflict as compared to those individuals who only dedicate their effort into their family lives and vice versa. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) have said that work-family conflict will have an influence towards the work roles and family roles with regards to having high demands from every role thus, lowering the performance output of every individual.

The conflict that occurs between the work and family territories will eventually become a strain towards the physical and emotional well-being of working individuals, thus upsetting their capability to form and invest on their family foundation. Due to the concept of work-family conflict, involving the excessive demands that one territory demands over the other, causing constraints in resources to be used for the other territory. Burden (1986) has said that the varying demands resulting from these work and family roles have put single mothers on a high stake of strain and deterioration in physical and psychological health. Work-family conflict has caused strains towards all these working individuals, affecting their well-being. Not only affecting the individuals, themselves but the organizations they work at as well. Work-family conflict can cause truancy and resignation
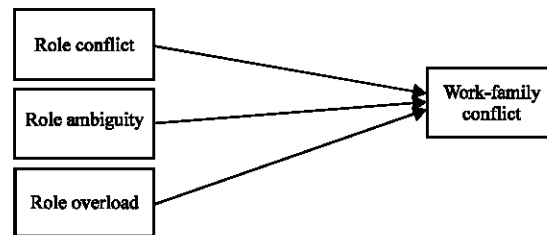

Fig. 1: A conceptual framework of how role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload cause work-family conflict

and a decreased dedication towards the company and a lower efficiency at work (Kossek and Ozeki, 1998). They result in lower work behavior, insufficient work conduct, discontentment towards their family territory and physical and attitudinal effects of stress and reduced emotional well-being (Frone *et al.*, 1992; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999; Burke and Greenglass, 1999). Work-family conflict can also cause resignation intentions (Greenhaus *et al.*, 1989, 1987). Netemeyer *et al.* (2005) also said that it can cause work tension. Peluchette and Martins, also said that it can cause lower contentment towards their job and reduce the concepts towards achieving success at work, respectively. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), also put forth that work-family conflict can cause increased health consequences, insufficient conduct as a spouse and a parent, reduce life contentment and lower flexibility towards marriage and family role conduct. Thus with these negative consequences brought about by work-family conflict this has led researchers towards further discussing and investigating the conflict that incurs and ways to inhibit or to suppress the effects of this conflict (Tetrick and Quick, 2003).

Hypothesized model: From the research made from previous literature reviews, two hypotheses were formed in conjunction with the validity to prove their relationships with the work-family conflict. The hypotheses among the relationships between role conflict and role ambiguity were proposed and the hypothesized framework is shown in Fig. 1 role conflict and ambiguity lead to the cause of work-family conflict.

CONCLUSION

This study has showed the comprehensive view on the factors affecting the work-family conflict. Many researchers from before have found that these two variables accounted the most to the work-family conflict. Many similar researches can be found with the factors of role conflict and role ambiguity causing work-family conflict. This is so because the occurrence of a

work-family conflict stems from the results of when the two domains require a specific set of resources to fulfill their needs. And because these two domains are conflicting towards one another as they both require their own set of resources this increases the role strains in each domain. This is so, because each of them will be conflicted with the differing demands and roles required from each of these domains. That is why role pressures are highly associated with work-family conflict. Still, however, in depth research should be done towards discovering the many more causes of a work-family conflict. As this research was only narrowed down to role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload there are still other leading causes to work-family conflict that need further study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has seen the main causes leading towards the occurrence of a work-family conflict affecting many dual-income earners. With role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload being present this can ultimately cause strains and pressures to an individual. Role conflict as such is defined as when individuals are faced with overwhelming responsibilities being thrown at them with the involvement of too many roles in a particular situation that can inherently cause role-conflict. Time management plays a vital role towards the care of moderating the effects of role conflict. Time management would enable an individual to be efficiently aware and to productively organize their time, particularly when they are juggling two or more distinct roles in their hands. For those dual-earner couples, moderation should be given to both work as well as family responsibilities without one dominating the other, in order to avoid role conflict from occurring. Time management is very vital in order to ensure that resources are used in moderation and in a balanced amount between their roles as well as to ensure that the responsibilities are achieved in these roles. Every individual should also take the initiative to know and to accept the responsibilities of their roles, so that they know what is required of them to be able to perform their job functions effectively. When there is vagueness in the information assigned unto a person's role, the person would be oblivious on what is expected of them to do. Hence, this will decrease their productivity at work. Clarity of what needs to be done and given unto these individuals is very important. These individuals play a role in making sure that what is given to them is fully grasped and understood and they should take the initiative to enquire more of what is needed and expected of them.

When roles are interacted effectively, the communications resulting from these roles are more articulately expressed and this would increase the trust level in an organization (Mayer *et al.*, 1995).With trust this will lead to better interaction, content sharing and learning (Argyris, 1976). When roles are not clearly expressed, communications are harder to interpret and trust too will be more difficult to form in an organization. Thus, Gross *et al.* (1958), Kahn *et al.* (1964), Biddle and Thomas (1966), Hirschman (1970), van de Vliert (1981) and Grover (1993), mentioned that when these roles are less clearly expressed, stress is created as a result of role conflict with individuals using deliberate aversion and conceit to cope with the stress. Ashforth and Saks (1996) have proposed the use of methodical socialization approach to minimize role conflict. Merchant (1985), Green and Welsh (1988), Hoskisson and Hitt (1988) and Hoskisson *et al.* (1993) have suggested that organizational controls refer to the means in which organizations express clarity and arrange what they expect from these roles being formed towards their cohorts. This means that they will state which behaviors would be deemed suitable and also what outcome is preferred. With this control at hand this reduces ambiguity on each other's roles. Another method to hinder or block out role conflict and role ambiguity is the invention of bureaucratic control which follows the use of regulations and a standard written documentation to highlight on the behavior and the conduct of performance. When there is reliance unto the rules formed, behaviors need to be articulated in advance. This is to ensure that the behaviors follow with what is required of the organization. Another control is called the clan control. Clans minimize the ambiguity by creating both answers and questions. Clan controls create the most effective cooperation with regards to ambiguity, thus enabling them to be used suitably in situations where in which, conditions deem it impossible for the clarity of the behaviors involved as well as expected level of outcome. With regards to suppressing the burden that every individual would have to bear, one should keep in mind to segregate their tasks and roles well, in order to avoid complications and the overbearing overload of different roles and tasks, too much for one to handle. When this is done and individual will not be overwhelmed with the activities that they need to do, thus, giving a better concentration on things for them to cope.

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