

The Impact of Demographic Factors on Family Interference with Work and Work Interference with Family and Life Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT: *Work and family are seen as a very important aspect of human life. In our society today there is an increase in dual earner couples thereby creating an imbalance between work and family. This study investigated the influence of work-family interference and family-work interference on life satisfaction. Data were obtained from two hundred and forty-five participants. Work interference with family and family interference with work were measured using the family with interference work scale while life satisfaction was measured using Life Satisfaction Scale. Findings reveal a significant effect of work interference with family as a predictor of life satisfaction but no significant effect of family interference with work as predictor of life satisfaction. Age and occupational type also predict life satisfaction but sex was not a good predictor of life satisfaction neither were there sex difference in the perception of work and family interference.*

KEYWORDS: *work-family, family-work, life satisfaction, interference.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Technological advancement has contributed toward making people work longer hours and also at a faster pace. This has had made the contemporary way of work “more satisfying and compelling” (Gambles, Lewis, & Rapoport, 2006, 48). As work offer psychological satisfaction to some employees, others are physically drained from working longer hours because they “feel obliged or compelled to give more energy, emotional labour, or ‘more of themselves’ to their paid work activities” (Gambles, et al., 2006, p. 51). Similarly, dramatic changes in the composition of families have resulted in a rise in dual earner, single parent family and growth in the number of working mothers. Also, the increase in the number of women in the formal employment sector may be related more with an increase in the number of highly educated women and the need to enhance family economy due to high cost of living (Karimi & Nouri, 2009) rather than a change in the traditional way of thought. This might have resulted in men and women role changes in the workforce, as well as in the family domain. Likewise, labour market has become highly competitive and organizations are sourcing to reduce labour costs. As a consequence, employees feel impelled to put in longer hours to achieve and possibly exceed the employers’ expectations in order to secure their jobs (Naithani, 2010).

Managing multiple roles is a challenge for individuals as well as for organizations. Moreover, when roles are incompatible, a conflict between work and family can arise, generally referred to as work-family conflict (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). According to Yavas, Babakus and Karapte (2008), this relationship is explicitly recognised as “bidirectional”, as they are intertwined with each other as “work interferes with family” and “family interfere with work”. Work-family conflict have been defined as “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible so that participation in one role [family] is made more difficult by participation in another role [work]” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). In other words, work-family conflict occurs when experiences in a role interfere with meeting the requirements and achieving effectiveness in the other role (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Difficulties in meeting demands from the two settings work-family conflict, might be due to the amount of time spend at work (Åkerstedt, Ingre, & Eriksen, 2003; Van Rijswijk, Bekker, Rutte, & Croon, 2004) or a result traditional sex roles (Lindfors, Berntsson, & Lundberg, 2006). Work interference with family (WIF) occurs when time devoted to a work role makes it difficult to function in a family domain role or behavioural requirements in a work role are incompatible with behavioural requirements in a family domain role (Weckström, 2011). For example bringing work home and trying to complete it at the expense of family time. While Family interference with work (FIW) arises when responsibilities in family life interfere with responsibilities in the work domain (Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991).

For instance, having to cancel an important meeting because of a child sudden illness. The specific antecedents of the WIF conflict lie in the work domain whereas the domain specific antecedents of the FIW conflicts lie within the family domain (Fu & Shaffer, 2001). Evidence abound that some workers struggle with combining work and family demands (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2003; Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh, & Houtman, 2003). The family-work literature also suggested that family matters might conflict with work due to a shortage in time and energy, resulting in feelings of burnout at work (Ten Brummelhuis, Van der Lippe, Kluwer, & Flap, 2008). The commonly used theory in treating the relationship between family and work is the conflict approach. The conflict approach suggests that employees have a limited amount of time and energy that they need to allocate over family and work tasks (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Time and energy spent on family tasks cannot be spent on work and vice versa. Work-family literature have also been linked as a spillover issue (Shimazu, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2009). Spillover theory, according to Fredriksen-Goldsen and Scharlach (2001), revolves around the conceptualization that the work sphere can have a positive or negative impact on the family sphere, meaning that attitudes and behaviours (such as distress from working long hours) can create distress at home with family members (p. 56). This is what Googins (1991) termed as “negative spill-over”. To him, “negative interference is the result of experiencing problems in [the work domain] which affect the performance in [the familial domain]” (p. 23). Spillover also occurs from the family domain to the employee's work domain (Ten Brummelhuis, Bakker, & Euwema, 2010). These theories can psychologically and physically influence a worker to experience either interference with work or interference with family.

For a better understanding of work interference with family, Kreiner, Hollensbe and Sheep (2009) suggest the use of actionable knowledge, which is well emphasised in boundary theory. According to Cummings and Jones (2004), actionable knowledge allows individuals to make informed choices about practical problems and to implement solutions to them effectively. This is because individuals play a crucial role in affecting work-home outcomes. Boundary theory centres on the modes in which people create, maintain, or change boundaries in order to streamline and organize the world around them (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). This boundary can be constructed along a continuum from “thin” (weak) to “thick” (strong). Thin/weak boundaries are “permeable” (open to influence), whereas thick/strong boundaries are “impermeable” (closed to influence) and “segmenting” (prone to dividing aspects of categories) (Ashforth et al., 2000; Hartmann, 1991). For instance, a “segmenter” prefers to keep the two domains (e.g. work-family interference; family-work interference) as separate as possible, creating and maintaining a boundary or “mental fence” (Zerubavel, 1991).

Research report by Bellavia and Frone (2005) showed that men report higher but not statistically significant level of interference than women in two national surveys, while some other researchers found significantly lower level of interference (Grzywacz, Almeida, & McDonald, 2002; Mennino, Rubin, & Brayfield, 2005; Winslow, 2005). Further studies showed that WIF occurred more than FIW among male employees due to commitment to work responsibilities in relation to family responsibilities (Eby, et al., 2005; Geurts, Taris, Kompier, Dijkers, van Hooff, & Kinnunen, 2005). Just as studies from Berntsson, Lundberg and Krantz (2006) disclosed that men focused mainly on their work role, which seemed to be fairly resistant to feelings related to conflicting demands. Although, women are not fully exempted with this type of conflict, they however continue to spend more time on childcare and housework, while men have generally increased their contributions and reduced the gap with women as FIW is conversely more related to well being (Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie, 2006). Nonetheless, FIW is seen as “a threat to maintaining a desired job-related self-image which has direct implications for an individual’s overall sense of well-being” (p. 74), it is more significant to women than “the threat of not being the caretakers of the family” (Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992). Age as an indicator of life stage; seem to influence the meaning and conditions of work roles (Mirowsky & Ross, 2003; Moen & Yu, 2000). No wonder studies on the influence of age showed that age is associated negatively and linearly with work-non-work interference (Mennino, et al., 2005; Voydanoff, 2007; Winslow, 2005) while workers in middle adulthood showed the highest levels of interference (Bellavia & Frone, 2005; Grzywacz, et al., 2002). Further studies by Schieman, Milkie and Glavin (2009) also revealed that average levels of interference rise and peak among men in the 45- to 54-year-old age group and then decline in the later years; in contrast, the average levels rise and peak among women in the 35- to 44-year-old age group and then fall in later adulthood.

In their review, Schieman, et al. (2009) reported that individuals in high status occupation categories (executives, professionals, and managers) tend to report higher levels of work-non-work interference than do their peers in lower status occupations. These might have been as a result of greater responsibilities and demands in workplace which could require them to take work home, thus seen family responsibilities as an impediment to work tasks completion. Thus leading to feelings of time squeezing (Hochchild, 1997). Likewise,

Andreassen, Hetland and Pallesen's (2013) findings showed differences in work sector reaction to work-family spillover. For instance, they revealed that respondents from the Human Resource sector reported more positive work-to family spillover than respondents from the Television sector. Just as Patel, Govender, Paruk, and Ramgoon (2006) reported significant differences in the family to work conflict between the different work categories with supervisors recording while the till packers showing the lowest score. Similarly, Mennino, et al., (2005, 118) study indicated that the type of occupation only affects job-to-home spillover, specifically that executives and managers experienced more job-to-home spillover than do service workers.

Life satisfaction according to Weckström (2011) refers to a judgmental process in which an individual compares her/his life circumstances to her/his own standards. When these life circumstances or conditions match these standards, the person reports high life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Researches on WIF showed weak negative effect on life satisfaction (Wallace, Pichler, & Hayes, 2007); and that workingwomen were less satisfied with their life compared with housewives (Matysiak, Pailhé, Solaz, & Vignoli, 2010). Study also indicated decreased life satisfaction is likely to occur when an individuals that try to combine work with and family roles (Perrone, Aegisdottir, Webb, & Blalock, 2006, p. 288). Nonetheless, Martikainen (2009) observed that the highest levels of life satisfaction were among women whose job did not require them to compromise their loyalty to their family. Similarly, Noor (2004) study revealed that FIW conflict impacted significantly on well being than WIF conflict. Clark (2001) study revealed that the flexibility of the work was associated with the increased work satisfaction and increased family wellbeing. The gender differences have diverse impact on WIF and perceived job-life satisfaction. For instance, WIF has significant and negative effects on job-life satisfaction among male employees than female employees (Karimi, 2009). For women relative to men, conflict between work and family roles is higher because women spend more combined time on work and family activities (Frone, et al., 1992; Hammer, Allen, & Grigsby, 1997). The aim of this research is to examine the following hypotheses:

1. There will be significant interaction of WIF and FIW on life satisfaction
2. There will be significant sex difference in perception of WIF, FIW and life satisfaction.
3. There will be a significant effect of age on WIF, FIW and life satisfaction.
4. There will be a significant effect of occupation type on WIF, FIW and life satisfaction.

II. METHODS

Participant

The study based on survey design used non-probability purposive sampling method where the individuals form the unit of analysis. This is because the odd of selecting an individual is not known because the population size is not known. Non-probability sampling is economical and it involves participants who are the most accessible (DeVos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delpert, 2005). The sample consisted of 245 participants {130 men (53.1%) and 115 women (46.9%)}. The respondents were in professions of Health (34.7%), civil servants (33.9%) and teaching (31.4%). Nearly 78% were married and 35.9% were in early adulthood life stage (20-35 years), 35.9% in age bracket 36-45 years, and 28.2% in ages 46 – 60 years. According to Schein (1996), this group has well-established internal career preferences and values. The sample had high educational level having attained minimum of diploma to postgraduate educational qualifications. The sample is made up of one hundred and thirty males and one hundred and fifteen females. They are all resides and work in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Measures

Work Interference with Family Scale (Netemeyer, Boles, & Mcmurrin, 1996) was used. It was design to assess the extent of both WIF and FIW. Each section of the scale contains 5-items which are measured in Likert scale format. WIF fulfilled the requirement for standardization of psychological test providing internal reliability of .88, while FWI had internal reliability of .89. The higher the score on each measures, the higher the perception of interference. A 5-item, Satisfaction with life Scale by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) was used to measure life satisfaction. Participants score showed the extent of their agreement with each items on a 7-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The higher score reflects grater level of life satisfaction while the lower score reflects the lower level of life satisfaction.

Procedure

Questionnaires were administered to volunteer respondents at their various places of work through the drop and collect method. In this study the scales were presented within a single questionnaire package. The respondent then chose one from a set of responses listed for each of the items; the responses took about ten minutes to complete as the questionnaire is set in a self-completion format. Psychometric and standardization data were recalculated. The difficult items were discussed with the respondents and they were also informed that the data is for research proposes. Of the 300 copies of the questionnaire administered, 245 (81.67%) copies were

properly completed and returned while 44 were returned but not properly completed and 11 were not returned. Therefore, the 245 copies properly completed and returned were used for analyses and testing of the hypotheses.

5.4 Statistical Analysis

The statistical procedures chosen for this research was based on their applicability to the nature of research design. First, Descriptive statistics were computed to present the main characteristics of the subjects just as Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the constructs measured in this study. In terms of research hypothesis, 2 x 2 ANOVA is used in analysing hypothesis one, independent t –test is used in analysis of hypothesis two, while one- way ANOVA is used in the analysis of hypothesis three and four.

III. RESULTS

The result from two by two analysis of variance showed a significant main effect of WIF on life satisfaction ($F \{1, 244\} = 3.90, p < 0.05$) and no main significant effect of FIW on life satisfaction ($F \{1, 244\} = 1.43, p > 0.05$). There was also significant interaction effect of WIF and FIW on life satisfaction ($F \{1, 244\} = 3.9, p < 0.05$). The result is presented in the tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Table of mean score showing participant score on WIF and FIW

	Work interference with family		Family interference with work	
	High	Low	High	Low
Mean	23.39	22.45	24.42	22.53
SD	5.86	6.69	4.81	6.59
N	84	161	31	214

Table 2: A 2 x 2 ANOVA table showing the effect of WIF and FIW on life satisfaction

VARIABLES	SS	Df	MS	F	P
WIF	158.25	1	158.25	3.90	< 0.05
FIW	57.89	1	57.89	1.43	> 0.05
WIF X FIW	160.65	1	160.65	3.96	< 0.05
Error	9769.05	241	40.54		
Total	10051.74	244			

Hypothesis two which state there would be significant sex difference in WIF, FIW and life satisfaction which was tested using Independent t- test showed no significant sex difference in WIF ($t = df \{243\} = 0.32, p > .05$); FIW ($t = df \{243\} = 0.12, p > .05$) and life satisfaction ($t = df \{243\} = 0.15, p > .05$). The results are presented in the table 3 below.

Table 3: An independent t-test table showing sex differences in perceived WIF, FIW and life satisfaction

VARIABLES	SEX	N	Means	SD	df	T	P
WIF	Male	130	18.62	7.69	243	-.32	> .05
	Female	115	18.93	7.47			
FIW	Male	130	15.33	6.34	243	.119	> .05
	Female	115	15.24	6.13			
Life satisfaction	Male	130	22.71	6.21	243	-.154	> .05
	Female	115	22.83	6.67			

Table 4 showed that there were statistical significant effects of age on WIF ($F \{2, 244\} = 5.69, p < .01$), FIW ($F \{2, 244\} = 3.68, p < .05$) and life satisfaction ($F \{2, 244\} = 8.69, p < .01$), thus confirming the hypothesis.

Table 4: Table showing Age grouping descriptive score on WIF, FIW and Life satisfaction

	Age grouping	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
WIF	20-35	88	17.30	6.990	.745
	36-45	88	20.88	7.703	.821
	46-above	69	17.94	7.617	.917
FIW	20-35	88	14.85	5.599	.597
	36-45	88	16.60	5.201	.554
	46-above	69	14.30	6.246	.752
Life satisfaction	20-35	88	21.23	6.743	.719
	36-45	88	22.75	5.517	.588
	46-above	69	25.30	5.944	.716

Table 5: A one-way ANOVA table showing effect of age on WIF, FIW and life satisfaction

VARIABLES		SS	Df	MS	F	P
WIF and Age	Between groups	628.56	2	314.28	5.69	< .01
	Within groups	13357.71	242	55.20		
	Total	13986.27	244			
FIW and Age	Between groups	235.11	2	117.56	3.68	< .05
	Within groups	7732.77	242	31.95		
	Total	7967.88	244			
Life satisfaction and Age	Between groups	646.96	2	323.48	8.69	< .01
	Within groups	9006.56	242	37.22		
	Total	9653.53	244			

Table 5 showed there were statistical significant effect of occupation on WIF ($F \{2, 244\} = 62.01, p < 0.01$), FIW ($F \{2, 244\} = 4.92, p < 0.01$), and no statistical significant effect of occupation on life satisfaction ($F \{2, 244\} = 1.47, p > 0.05$).

Table 6: Table showing Occupational type descriptive score on WIF, FIW and Life satisfaction

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
WIF	Teaching	77	14.99	4.830	.550
	Health profession	85	24.76	6.017	.653
	Civil servants	83	16.12	7.352	.807
FIW	Teaching	77	14.58	4.736	.540
	Health profession	85	16.87	5.589	.606
	Civil servants	83	14.43	6.371	.699
Life satisfaction	Teaching	77	23.92	6.249	.712
	Health profession	85	22.32	5.788	.628
	Civil servants	83	22.61	6.768	.743

Table 7: A one-way ANOVA table showing effect of occupational type on WIF, FIW and life satisfaction

VARIABLE		SS	df	MS	F	P
WIF	Between groups	4739.19	2	2369.60	62.01	< .01
	Within groups	9247.08	242	38.21		
	Total	13986.27	244			
FIW	Between groups	311.21	2	155.61	4.92	< .01
	Within groups	7656.66	242	31.64		
	Total	7967.88	244			
Life satisfaction	Between groups	115.91	2	57.95	1.47	> .05
	Within groups	9537.62	242	39.41		
	Total	9653.53	244			

IV. DISCUSSION

In accordance with attitude shared by scientist across the ages, this study was designed to examine the influence of demographic factors on WIF, FIW and employee life satisfaction. The result of the findings showed a significant effect of work interference with family on life satisfaction while there is no significant effect of family interference with work on life satisfaction. The different effects of WIF and FIW on life satisfaction is contradictory to (Noor 2004) which showed that family-work conflict impacted significantly on well being than work-family conflict. A plausible explanation for difference in result of WIF and FIW can be derived from the boundary theory which state that individual creates, maintains, or changes boundaries in order to organize the world around them (Ashforth, et al., 2000). This is because the two domains of WIF and FIW could be kept as separate as possible in order to create and maintain a boundary or “mental fence” according to Zerubavel (1991).

The significant of the findings of WIF on life satisfaction confirmed some past findings by (Wallace, et al., 2007; Matysiak, et al., 2010), however, Perrone, et al.'s (2006) findings showed that there might be decrease life satisfaction when work is combined with family roles while highest levels of life satisfaction were observed by Martikainen (2009) among those whose work did not compromise loyalty to the family. This study finding seems to indicate that the more the work affects the performance of home responsibility, the lesser the life satisfaction. This confirms Cinamon (2006) postulation that work usually has a more deleterious impact on family life than family having a more deleterious impact on work life. In other word, work appears to play

crucial role interference related activities. Although, work has become an important aspect life in the 21st century to the detriment of family thereby affecting life satisfaction due to the need for material wealth which has been on the increase for both men and women. The result that showed there was no significant sex difference in WIF, FIW and life satisfaction. This contradicts the works of researchers (such as Grzywacz, et al., 2002; Mennino, et al., 2005; Winslow, 2005) which showed significant lower level of interference and that of Bellavia and Frone (2005) which revealed that men report higher score on level of interference than women although not statistically significant in two national surveys. The results also negate Eby, et al. (2005) and Geurts, et al. (2005) studies that WIF occurred more among male employees than FIW. Similarly, Clark (2001) found that gender differences had diverse impact on WIF and job - life satisfaction, though WIF had significant and negative effects on job - life satisfaction among male employees than female employees. Conversely, Collette (1984) study of sex differences on life satisfaction in Australia revealed that men and women had similar levels of financial satisfaction and subjective social integration with little or no differences in causal processes that determine life satisfaction.

The results of hypothesis three showed that, there is significant effect of age on WIF, FIW and life satisfaction. The result is consistent with the findings of Namayandeh, Yaacob, & Juhari, (2010) which successfully recognized that respondents with older age perceived lower level of WIF and FIW. It is also in line with the rational view that the workingwomen, with increasing age, gaining more years of job experience and additionally after passing of a few years of marriage, are more stable and able to develop strategies to prevent their family life from interfering with their work and vice versa. It also confirmed the views of Mirowsky and Ross (2003) and Moen and Yu (2000) that age influence conditions of work roles. It additionally confirmed the work of Bellavia and Frone (2005), Grzywacz, et al. (2002) and Schieman et al. (2009). Findings from the last hypothesis showed that there is a significant effect of occupation on WIF, and FIW, but no significant effect on life satisfaction. Thus, confirming Andreassen, et al. (2013), Mennino et al. (2005) and Patel, et al. (2006) findings, although there were more prior findings supporting work-family interference than family-work interference. In this study, health workers significantly scored higher on work interference with family and family interference with work. This might be because working in the health sector involves shift-work-time as against what is obtainable in the civil service and teaching jobs. The shift-work-time might have created role pressure which, in turn leads either work interferes with family or family interferes with work roles. Similarly, in Nigeria, health workers are generally respected and this might also explain the wide disparity in their condition of service as compared with other work sectors. This might increase the centrality of work, which in turn aggravates the WIF. However, because this study is carried out in a sub-urban environment, the traditional role requirements must also have played significant factor in FIW.

These research findings have the potential to understand how to increase psychological well-being- job satisfaction, family satisfaction, and life satisfaction of organizations and family members through the provision of alternative work and family arrangements, which would allow the employer to balance the conflicting demands from multiple roles. Based on observation, many organizations in this part of the world paying attention to the issue of whether work interferes with family or family interfere with work. Although, there might be certain degree of awareness, much effort needs to be in place to ensure a work-life balance among employees.

Limitations and future study

The present study is not immune from limitation arising with any self-report measures, as these measures are subject to social desirability problem, a situation that might contribute to measurement error. There are also no confirmatory data available from other sources such as supervisors, colleagues, and spouse. Besides, the use of non-probability sampling is subject to some biases as it involves participants who are the most accessible. In addition, it might result in biased data thus limiting the ability to generalize the results obtained from sample on the population (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, Griffin, 2010).

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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