

THE IMPACT OF JOB DEMANDS, SUPERVISOR SUPPORT AND JOB CONTROL ON WORK-TO-PERSONAL LIFE CONFLICT AMONG THE EMPLOYED WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the impact of job demands, supervisor support and job control on work-to-personal life conflict. A cross-sectional design with a sample size of 112 employed workers from five different sectors in Klang Valley, Malaysia was used in this study. Factor analysis was performed to ensure the construct validity of the instruments. The model is found to be significant in general. Job demand was found to have significant positive relationship with work-to-personal life conflict. However, supervisor support and job control did not significantly relate to work-to-personal life conflict. Implications of the findings, limitation and direction for future research are discussed.

Keywords: *work-to-personal life conflict, job demands, supervisor support, job control*

1. INTRODUCTION

Studies related to the conflict between work and non-work domain or personal life has received numerous attentions from the researchers for the past three decades (e.g. Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Fu & Shaffer, 2001; Gutek, Searle & Klepa, 1991; Luk & Shaffer, 2005). The various changes in today society post greater challenge for individual to strike a balance between work and non-work or personal life requirements. The labour force nowadays is very much different as compared to last time (of which are dominated by the male). There is now more women participation in the labour force as well as higher percentage of workers who need to take of their children and/or the elders (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009; Riley & Bowen, 2005). Recent trends also revealed that among the dual-earner couples, there is increasing participation of men in performing household chores, daily routine child care, and increase desire to have more times with family members which may results to a rise in men's sense of work-life conflict (Mesmer-Magnus, 2009; Nomaguchi, 2009; Winslow, 2005). Moreover, with the advancement in technology and economic development, business world had become more hostile which may require workers to spend more efforts and time to deal with the increasing challenges in their works (Brough, O'Driscoll & Kaliath, 2005).

Until today the interference arises between work and personal life remains as one of the key issues that concerned employees, organisation and society. The consequences of work-life conflict can be severe as the pressure from the work place would spillover to the personal life, which not only affect individual's job performance (Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997) but also contribute to deteriorating health conditions of employees, burnout and psychological distress (Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton, 2000; Netemayer, Boles & McMurrian, 1996; Noor, 2002) and mental health (Jansen, Kant, Kristensen & Nijhuis, 2003; Grzywacz

& Bass, 2003). The negative impacts of work-life conflict were well documented in the literatures, such that greater work-family or work-life conflict are often associated with decline in job satisfaction (Kim & Ling, 2001; Michel & Clark, 2009) and organisational commitment (Netemayer et al., 1996). Empirical studies also revealed that work-life conflict is one of the major reasons that cause an increase in temporary withdrawal, such as lateness to work and absenteeism (Hammer, Bauer & Grandey, 2003) as well as turnover intention (Allen et al., 2000).

Earlier studies have conceptualised the relationship between an individual's work life and non-work life in different ways, with the presumption that the two domains are different. Initially, all the literatures investigated the relationship of work-family conflict or work-life conflict uni-directionally. With the paradigm shift, most researchers recognise the bi-direction of work-family conflict, i.e., work can affect family life and vice versa. Anyway, majority of the research concluded that there was higher work to family/personal life interference as compared to family/personal life to work interference (e.g. Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992; Gutek et al., 1991; Mennino, Rubin & Brayfield, 2005, Williams & Alliger, 1994). These findings suggest that individuals may bring back home with feelings and thoughts related to their works (Williams & Alliger, 1994). Besides, Mennino et al. (2005) claimed that workers adjust their family lives around their jobs rather than vice versa.

Nevertheless, prior studies on the antecedents of the conflict arise from the work to non-work domain tend to concentrate on "family" as the most crucial part of life in the non-work area. However, solely focusing on family alone resulted to the omission of other areas of non-work life. For this study, the term work-to-personal life conflict is used instead of work-to-family conflict. Although the terms work-to-personal life is closely related to the concept of work-to-family conflict, it provides a broader meaning. Non-work life should not only refer to the time with family members but also encompass other aspects, such as individual relationship with friends, and time for personal hobbies and leisure. In the same vein with the notion of bi-direction of work-family conflict, present study view that work-to-personal life conflict (WPLC) arises when workers have to sacrifice their personal time to complete their works.

On the other hand, Poelmans (as cited in Carnicer, Sanchez, and Perez, 2004) argued that there were relatively limited empirical studies that investigate the antecedents and outcomes of work-non work conflict from countries of which emphasise on the family bond with more women entering the labour market. Meanwhile, in general, many tend to have the perception that commercial sectors in Malaysia do not pay much consideration on the commitments and needs of their workers in the non-work aspects. As such, present study on WPLC among employed workers in commercial sectors in Malaysia would be able to add some values to the organisational behaviour literatures and to have some insights on the perception of employees on this issue.

Work characteristics or work domain predictors had often been described as the main causes of conflict between work and non-work domain (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley, 2005). As there are greater supports on the conflict arise from work to personal life domain, this study only focus on one direction of conflict. As such, this study intends to examine the direct effect of job demand, job control and supervisor support on work-to-personal life conflict.

The next part of this paper is the review of literature, followed by methodology and data analysis, findings, discussion and end with brief conclusion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of work-to-personal life conflict (WPLC) is theoretically very similar to work-family conflict, and the two are closely related. Nevertheless, WPLC provide a broader conceptualisation as compared to work-family conflict; both family life and other aspects of personal life, such as time with friends and other personal interests constitute important aspect of individual personal life. Since the construct of WPLC and work-family conflict have been inextricably linked by researchers, their outcomes greatly overlap, it is appropriate to suggest that the two have similar independents variables and effects. As there is very limited study specifically discuss about work-to-personal life conflict as compared to work-family conflict, this study includes the discussions on other related concepts such as “work-life,” “work-family” or even “work-nonwork”.

2.1 Work-to-personal life Conflict

Work and non-work domains (such as family, recreation and leisure) are two main fields of individual personal life (Wong & Lin, 2007). Work-to-personal life conflict refers to the inability of an individual to balance the demand from paid work and other non-work activities. Individuals are said to be encountering work-to-personal life conflict when they have no or limited time for their non-work aspect such as family, friends, hobbies, community service, leisure activities, etc. as a result of meeting high level of demand in work.

The most widely found studies on the interference between work to non-work domain was work-family conflict. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work-family conflict or interference as simultaneous pressures from the work and family domains that are mutually incompatible in some respect that meeting the demands of one role make it difficult to meet the demands of the other roles. Other researchers further explained this concept as situation where the demands and responsibilities of individuals' paid work were conflicting with their demands and responsibilities of non-work activities (Byron, 2005; Jang & Zippay, 2011; Messersmith, 2007; Reynolds, 2005). Gutek et al. (1991) explained that work-family role conflict was due to the fact that sometimes workers may not be able to carry out their roles at home due to the work commitment and vice versa. Conversely, family-to-work conflict happens when the worker's roles in family affect his work (Greenhaus and Powell, 2003).

This is consistent with Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory, which argued that time and energy are non-renewable resources that can't be used for other purposes if being used for one purpose. Many employees find that the requirements or responsibilities from their work and non-work activities are frequently incompatible and led to some degree of work-life conflict (Reynolds, 2005).

One of the theories that explained how performing a job influence work-life conflict is spillover theory. Spillover can be positive, but the concern of this paper is on the negative spillover, or what is known as work-life conflict. The “spillover” effect means that individuals may be faced with situation lacking of energy to perform one role due to the exhaustion of energy in playing other roles (Duxbury & Higgins, 2003). In this case, work-life conflict can be seen as feeling devastated or burdened due to the needs to play different roles (Duxbury, Higgins & Johnson, 1999). In addition, conflict theory explains conflict arises between work and personal life domains when energy, time and attention necessary for success in one domain result to a lack of that resource in the other domain. For example, as individual succeed in building its career by devoting his time and efforts, he would not have the same resources to build successful personal life activities (Stepanski, 2002).

2.2 Job Demands and work-to-personal life conflict

Job demands are one of the work domain variables that is related to work-life conflict (Yang, Chen, Choi, & Zou, 2000; Byron, 2005; Wong & Lin, 2007). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), job demands refers to various job aspects, such as physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspect that require sustained cognitive and emotional strength or skills to deal with long hours of work, difficult working environment and high pressure. Aziz, Nadzar, Husaini, Maarof, Radzi, & Ismail (2011) added that serious work-family conflict can evolve when people's time and energy resources are depleted due to over increasing demands from work or home domain.

According to Butler, Grzywacz, Bass, and Linney (2005), job demands were positively correlated with work-family conflict based on a sample of 91 parents who are working in non-professional jobs and Grönlund (2007) on 800 Swedish employees. In addition, the study carried out by Wong & Lin (2007) on 380 tourism industry service employees also confirmed the positive relationship between job demand and work-leisure conflict. Pereira (2011) and Yildirim and Aycan (2008) in their literature review pointed out that there was a great number of previous research found a strong positive relationship between work demands and work-family conflict.

From the literature analysis, the following hypothesis was extracted:

H1: Job demands are positively related to work-to-personal life conflict.

2.3 Supervisor support and work-to-personal life conflict

Several studies indicated that supervisory support was important in coping with the problems related to work-family conflict (Anderson, Coffee, & Byerly, 2002; Duxbury & Higgins, 1994; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Study by Duxbury and Higgins (2003) revealed that among the factors that resulted to the increased difficulties for Canadian workers to balance their work life include: supervisor fail to treat employees with respect, managers do not place priority on people management, and immediate managers and supervisors acting as barriers to the use of supportive policies in the organisation. In addition, Mennino, Rubin and Brayfield (2005) in their survey among the employed workers found that supervisors who are supportive about family issues can reduce job-to-family spillover. In addition, Pisarski, Lawrence, Bohle and Brook (2008) found that positive organisational effects (i.e. team trustworthiness, collaborative cohesiveness, and greater control over work environment) resulted from supervisor's social support had collectively reduced work life conflict and, in turn, improved health. Yildirim and Aycan (2008) concluded that supervisory support has a direct rather than a moderating effect on work-family conflict for the nurses in Turkey. On the other hand, Karatepe and Kilic (2007) found that supervisor support reduce work-family conflict that confronted by hotels' frontline employees.

Managerial or supervisory support had been consistently emphasised as a factor influencing work-life conflict (e.g. Allan, Loudoun, & Peetz, 2005; Duxbury & Higgins, 2003; Michel, Mitchelson, Pichler, & Cullen, 2010). Social support from supervisors, co-workers, and family members (particularly spouses) are some of the most common types of social supports that commonly found in the literatures. Nevertheless, much of the discussions in the literatures had emphasized on the role of immediate supervisor supports in predicting the well-being of families (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989). This is not surprising as supervisor support plays a critical role in workplace adjustment in view that supervisors have strong authority in determining the promotion, pay rises, and improvement of working conditions

of their staff (Beehr, 1985). Moreover, Argyle and Furnham (1983) further argued that the praise and encouragement from the superiors are important in the relief of work-family conflict of the subordinates. Supportive supervisors or managers usually engage in two way communication with their subordinates, provide positive feedback, mentor their employees, recognize that their employees have a life outside of work, and facilitate the completion of job tasks. That is, work-to-personal life conflict can be reduced if supervisors or managers can provide employees with sufficient time, resources and tools. Meanwhile, support and encouragement given by supervisors or managers when employees are facing difficulties is also equally important in this context.

Despite various sources support the argument on the positive relationship between managerial support and work-family conflict, some findings suggest that there may not be positive correlation between managerial support and work-family conflict (Kerrane & Buckley, 2004). Similar findings had been obtained by Luk and Shaffer (2005) and Hsu, Chen, Wang and Lin (2010). They found that the effects of work-domain support, such as supervisor support on work-family conflict were not significant.

Despite the inconsistent results observed, majority of findings support the idea that supervisor support in the work place is essential to mitigate the conflict arise between work and personal life domain. As such, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H2: Supervisor support is negatively related to work-to-personal life conflict.

2.4 Job Control and work-to-personal life conflict

Job control is typically examined in terms of decision latitude, which is defined as the working individual's potential control over job-related decision making (Karasek, Baker, Marxer, Ahlbom, & Theorell, 1981). The decision latitude refers to the authority to make decisions regarding work, and skill discretion, or the ability to apply one's skills at work (McNaughton, 2001). In other words, individual is having more job controls when he has more autonomy to decide on his own work schedule and can skills to be used in work. On the other hand, Duxbury et al. (1999) defined control as the ability to exert some influence over the environment.

Allan et al. (2005) conducted a research on the employees of several organisations in Queensland, Australia found a negative relationship between employee control and work-nonwork/work life conflict. However, Allan et al. (2005) claimed that the relationship on this issue is more complicated. They concluded that workers are more concern on the important issues (that they are more interesting in such as time to take holidays) that they have control rather on the other issues (such as the working hours).

There are important links between lack of autonomy and work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Lack of control often relates to the sense of having little control over work environment and work behaviour (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This seems to be more common in lower-level jobs or highly structured organisations. This is because workers with more authority are normally able to avoid potential work-life conflict by amending the work schedules or to delegate tasks to others (McNaughton, 2001). In a study of 800 Swedish employees, Grönlund (2007) shows significant negative relationship between job control and work-to-family conflict.

According to Keene and Reynolds (2005) and Allan et al., 2005, workers need flexibility at work (such as to take time off work) so that they can meet different requirements in job and family. Employees' ability to gain control over choices regarding their work and personal life helps them to strike a balance between the two domains, increasing life and work satisfaction and creating a more productive and successful employee.

Based on the literature analysis, the following hypothesis is formed:

H3: Job control is significantly related to work-to-personal life conflict.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

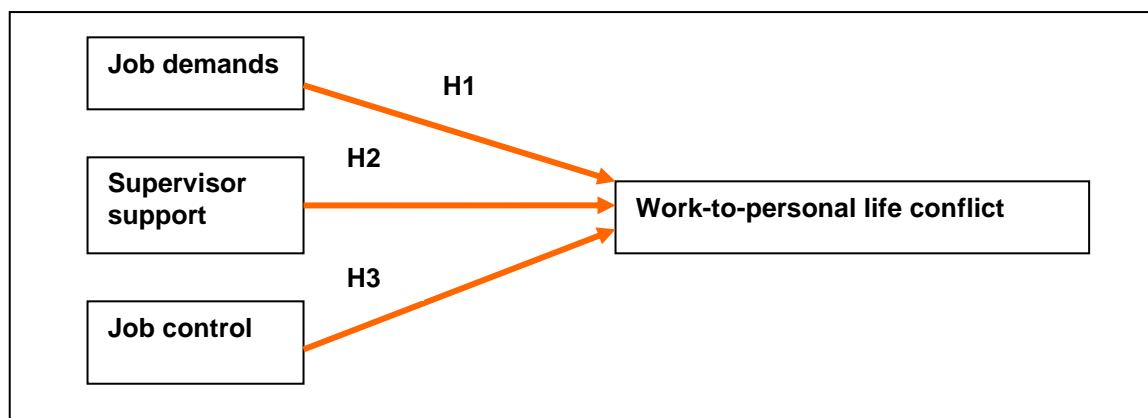


Figure 1

Theoretical framework of the study

Above is the conceptual framework that has been developed for this study. As discussed earlier in this paper, the intention of this research is to investigate the impact of job demands, supervisor support, and job control on work-to-personal life conflict. Hypotheses were tested in order to investigate the relationship between the three predictor variables and dependent variable (i.e. work-to-personal life conflict).

4. METHODOLOGY

This section explains the sample of study, questionnaire design, data collection procedures, and operational measures of key variables used in this study.

4.1 Sample and data collection procedure

This study focus on employed workers in Klang Valley as it is the most important commercial area in Malaysia. In view of the difficulties in determining the size of population and sampling frame,

convenience sampling method was adopted in this study. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 155 employees from different sectors, such as information technology (IT), securities, insurance, hotel, and retail industry in Klang Valley. A total of 112 usable questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 72.3 percent.

4.2 Measures

In this study, work-to-personal life conflict is the dependent variable while job demands, supervisor support, and job control are the independent variables. Questionnaire was designed to capture all the information required for the purpose of this research. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: Section A comprised of questions related to the background information of the respondents, such as gender, marital status, job position, and work hours. In addition, another two questions required respondents to indicate whether they have any dependent care responsibilities, which include child care and elderly care. Section B comprised of questions related to Work-to-personal life conflict. Section C comprises of questions measuring the three independent variables of this study, which are job demands, supervisor support, and job control.

4.3 Work-to-personal life conflict (WPLC)

Work-to-personal life conflict is operationalised by using eight items, adapted from Gutek et al. (1991) and Netemeyer et al. (1996). Five points Likert scale was used with response options ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items include “My work takes up time that I’d like to spend with family/friends,” “I do not have time to spend in my leisure activities” and “On the job I have so much work to do that it takes away from my personal interests.”

4.4 Job demands

The measurement for job demand is comprised of six items, adapted from Karasek (1979) and Boyar, Carr, Mosley, Jr., and Carson (2007). The job demands item encompass the psychological stressors, such as time pressure and workload. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the statement through Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items include “My job requires all my attention” and “I always feel that I do not have enough time to complete my work.”

4.5 Supervisor support

Supervisor support was operationalised by using five items, adapted from Oldham and Cummings (1996). Sample items include “My supervisor helps me solve work-related problems” and “My supervisor encourages employees to speak up when they disagree with a decision.” The response option to the items were ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

4.6 Job control

Job control was measured by using four items, adapted from Frese, Kring, Soose and Zempel (1996). Sample items include “As a whole, my job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own,” and “I have chance to participate in decisions of my superior (e.g. the superior asks me for my opinion and asks for suggestions).” A Likert-type response format was provided with response options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

4.7 Pilot Test

Pilot test was conducted on the instrument developed for this study. The purpose is to check the face validity and reliability of the questionnaires. The pilot tests were conducted on 30 participants. A total of 32 questionnaires had been distributed to the respondents; however two were discarded due to incomplete information. During the pilot study, respondents were encouraged to provide their feedback directly to the researcher or by writing down their comments on the questionnaires. These efforts would help to identify possible ambiguous statements in the questionnaire. As shown in Table 1, the reliability coefficient for all the key variables ranged from 0.774 to 0.897, which were considered good to very good (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

Table 1
Reliability of Key Variables based on pilot test result

	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Number of items
1. Job Demands	0.897	6
2. Supervisor Support	0.842	5
3. Job Control	0.774	4
4. Work-to-personal Life Conflict	0.805	8

5. Data Analysis and Findings

Data screening was conducted prior to factor analysis and hypotheses tests. The data was checked for missing values and outliers. Factor analysis was performed to determine the construct validity of the measures used in this study. There were no severe violations of multiple regression assumptions, thus multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and work-to-personal life conflict.

5.1 Profile of Respondents

Table 2 presents the summary of respondents' profile. There were a total of 112 respondents in this study, who were employed workers in different sectors at Klang Valley, such as information technology, securities, insurance, hotel, and retail industries. The respondents comprise of 57 (50.9%) male and 55 female (49.1%). Out of this group of respondents, 36 (32.1%) are single and 75 (67%) are married and only one (0.9%) was divorced. Meanwhile, those with childcare responsibility consisted of 46 (41.1%) of the total respondents. About 57.1% or 64 respondents have eldercare responsibility. Approximately 54% or 60 respondents were non-managerial group employees. 38.4% of the respondents' worked between 46-55 hours per week (43 respondents), only 7 respondents (6.3%) worked less than 35 hours per week, while another 38 respondents (33.9%) work between 36-45 hours per week.

Table 2
Summary of respondents' profile

		Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	male	57	50.9
	female	55	49.1
Marital Status	Single	36	32.1
	Married	75	67.0
	Divorced	1	0.9
Childcare	Yes	46	41.1
	No	66	58.9
Eldercare	Yes	64	57.1
	No	48	42.9
Position	Managerial	52	46.4
	Non-managerial	60	53.6
Working hours	≤ 35 hours	7	6.3
	36 – 45 hours	38	33.9
	46 – 55 hours	43	38.4
	56 hours or more	24	21.4

5.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using principle components with Varimax rotation was performed in order to determine the dimensionality of the construct used in the present study. According to Gorsuch (1983), minimum absolute sample size required to run factor analysis is 100 or based on a ratio of 5 participants per variable. The appropriateness of factor analysis was determined through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The criterion for factor retention is based on the eigenvalue of greater than 1.0 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). On the other hand, Item with factor loading at least 0.5 and no cross loadings above 0.5 were retained.

The first factor analysis was performed on eight items of the dependent variable (i.e. work-to-personal life conflict). As indicated in Table 3, the value of KMO MSA was 0.902, exceeding the minimum requirement of 0.5 (Hair, Money, Page & Samouel, 2007) and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant with χ^2 value of 364.89 ($p = 0.0001$), thus it is suitable to use factor analysis. Table 4 showed that all the eight items of work-to-personal life conflict were loaded on a single dimension with the eigenvalue reported at 4.34 and factor loadings ranged from 0.666 to 0.817, thus no elimination of item was necessary. The single factor explained 54.29% of the total variance. Factor loadings, communality estimates, total variance explained, eigenvalue, mean and standard deviation for the eight items were presented in Table 4.

Table 3

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	364.890
	df	28
	Sig.	.000

Table 4

Factor loadings, communality estimates, total variance explained, eigenvalue, mean and standard deviation for work-to-personal life conflict

Item	Factor loadings		mean	SD
	Factor 1	h ²		
WPLC1	.670	.448	3.13	.885
WPLC2	.668	.447	3.06	.980
WPLC3	.779	.607	2.79	.882
WPLC4	.771	.594	3.11	.863
WPLC5	.764	.584	2.83	1.030
WPLC6	.666	.443	2.79	.924
WPLC7	.742	.551	3.17	1.021
WPLC8	.817	.668	2.92	.882
Total variance explained (%)		52.286		
Eigenvalue		4.343		

Note. h² = communality estimates, SD = standard deviations

The subsequent factor analysis was conducted on items that measured independent variables, which are job demands, supervisor support and job control. All the 14 items were entered simultaneously into factor analysis. Table 5 indicated that the value of KMO MSA was 0.823, surpass the criteria of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2006) and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant with χ^2 value of 849.92 ($p = 0.0001$), thus the result indicated that there is no problem with the use of factor analysis. Three components were extracted from the principal component analysis and all the items that are expected to measure the relevant construct were loaded on the desired factor (Table 6). Factor loadings found in these three factors ranged from 0.661 to 0.877. Eigenvalue for factor one, two and three were 5.35, 2.38 and 1.94 respectively. The total variance explained for the three factors were 35.69% (Factor 1), 15.85% (Factor 2) and 12.95% (Factor 3) respectively. Factor one refers to job demands, whereas factor 2 and 3 represent the construct for supervisor support and job control. The factor loadings, communality estimates, means and standard deviation for the items of each construct were presented in Table 6.

Table 5

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.823
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	849.925
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

Table 6

Factor loadings, communality estimates, total variance explained, eigenvalues, mean and standard deviation for job demands, supervisor support and job control

Item	Component			h ²	mean	SD
	1	2	3			
JD1	.777			.664	2.71	.974
JD2	.819			.693	2.96	.894
JD3	.618			.484	2.96	.853
JD4	.750			.603	3.15	1.067
JD5	.874			.801	3.18	.997
JD6	.775			.609	2.87	.925
SS1		.712		.525	3.22	.846
SS2		.661		.556	3.15	.872
SS3		.746		.621	3.33	.776
SS4		.782		.663	3.34	.742
SS5		.788		.667	3.29	.905
JC1			.877	.828	3.22	.898
JC2			.805	.707	3.13	.840
JC3			.831	.712	3.30	.909
JC4			.678	.542	2.96	.890
Total variance explained (%)	35.688	15.853	12.949			
Eigenvalue	5.353	2.378	1.942			

Note. h² = communality estimates, SD = standard deviations

Table 7
Reliability, Descriptive Statistics, Correlations Matrix of Key Variables

	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Job Demands	0.881	2.97	0.76	-		
2. Supervisor Support	0.809	3.27	0.63	- 0.302**	-	
3. Job Control	0.852	3.15	0.74	- 0.380**	0.314**	-
4. Work-to-personal Life Conflict	0.877	2.90	0.65	0.609**	-0.219*	-0.215*

Note. N = 112, SD = standard deviation

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 7 showed the descriptive statistics, containing mean and standard deviation of each variable. The highest mean was reported by supervisor support (M = 3.27, SD = 0.76), followed by job control (M = 3.15, SD = 0.74), work-to-personal life conflict (M = 2.90, SD = 0.65) and job demands (M = 2.97, SD = 0.76).

The summary of Cronbach's alpha (α) for each scale is also presented in Table 7. Cronbach's alpha is a measurement of reliability that reflects how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another (Sekaran, 2003). Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.7 is considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). Cronbach's alpha for the job demands, supervisor support, job control, and work-to-personal life conflict are 0.881, 0.809, 0.852, and 0.877 respectively. Thus, all the constructs have very good reliability (Hair et al., 2007). As all the variables are above 0.80, thus the internal consistency reliability of the measures used in this study was considered as good.

5.3 Correlation Matrix

Table 7 illustrated the correlation coefficients between the key variables in this study. The correlation coefficient indicates the strength of the association between the variables. A correlation coefficient is considered significant if the p-value is less than 0.05. Supervisor support was negatively associated with work-to-personal life conflict ($r = -0.219$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, job control also found to have a significant negative association with work-to-personal life conflict ($r = -0.215$, $p < 0.05$). This means that the availability of both supervisor support and job control would be beneficial in reducing the level of work-to-personal life conflict that confronted by the employees. Nevertheless, the strength of association either between supervisor support and work-to-personal life conflict or job control and work-to-personal life conflict was relatively weak. On the other hand, job demands, which are significantly and positively related with work-to-personal life conflict, showed a moderate strong association with work-to-personal life conflict ($r = 0.609$, $p < 0.01$). Employees who are confronted with higher job demands would experience greater work-to-personal life conflict.

In addition, examining correlation matrix may serve as a preliminary analysis tool to indicate whether multicollinearity problem exist prior to performing multiple regression analysis. The presence of high correlations between the independent variables (generally 0.60 and above) indicates potential problems

with multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2007). None of the independent variables as shown in Table 7 exhibited high correlation of 0.60 or above.

5.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression assumptions were examined and no obvious violations of the assumptions were found. The absence of multicollinearity was further supported by the value by variance inflation factor (VIF) value, which ranged from 1.16 to 1.232 as indicated in Table 8, which are well below the cut-off value of 10 (Sekaran, 2003). No violation of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were observed based on the visual examination of the residual scatter plot and Normal P-P plot of Regression Standardized Residual. The residuals were fall along the diagonal line of identity indicating normality was assumed and no definite pattern of residuals was found in scatter plot diagram. No multivariate outliers were detected based on case wise diagnostic; data points falling outside the range of three standard deviations from the regression line were considered outliers (Hair et al., 2006). Following is the result from multiple regression analysis.

Table 8

Result of Multiple Regression Analysis for the impact of job demands, supervisor support and job control on work-to-personal life conflict

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.417	.456		3.106	.002	
JD	.521	.072	.607	7.214	.000	1.222
SS	-.046	.085	-.045	-.545	.587	1.160
JC	.027	.075	.030	.356	.723	1.232
F value	21.463					
df ₁ , df ₂	3, 108					
p value	0.0001					
R	0.611					
R ²	0.374					
Adjusted R ²	0.356					

Note. N = 112, JD = Job demands, SS= Supervisor support, JC = Job control

Based on the results stipulated in Table 8, the model is significant (F = 21.463, p-value = 0.0001). with R² of 0.374 and adjusted R² of 0.356. This means that 35.6% of the variation in work-to-personal life conflict is explained by the independent variables of the study. Among the three independent variables, only job demands showed significant positive relationship with work-to-personal life conflict ($\beta = 0.607$, $t = 7.214$, $p = 0.0001$). No significant relationship was found between supervisor support ($\beta = -0.045$, $t = -0.545$, $p = 0.587$) and job control ($\beta = 0.030$, $t = 0.356$, $p = 0.723$). As such, hypothesis 1 was supported, whereas hypotheses 2 and 3 were not supported.

6. Discussion

Based on the findings in the earlier part, a further discussion on the result of hypotheses testing is presented as follow:

Table 9
Summary of hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Results
H1: Job demands are positively related to work-to-personal life conflict.	Supported
H2: Supervisor support is negatively related to work-to-personal life conflict.	Not supported
H3: Job control is significantly related to work-to-personal life conflict.	Not supported

This study found a significant positive relationship between job demands and work-to-personal life conflict. The finding was consistent with those obtained by previous researchers (e.g. Butler et al., 2005; Grönlund, 2007; Wong & Lin, 2007). The results of this study provide further evidence to prove that job demands, which stem from the work-domain, is one of the causes of work-life conflict. In short, job demands would cause negative spillover from work to family, friends and other personal activities. Besides, results obtained from this research is also in line with the findings of Ahmad and Skitmore (2001) which indicated that as an employee's situational stressors within a domain increase, work-life conflict resulted as one domain begins to interfere with the other. On the other hand, the moderate influence of job stress on work-life conflict might due to the various stress coping strategies that has been taken by individual employee, which can help to reduce the negative spillover from work to family members and friends.

The current study indicated that there is no significant relationship between supervisor support and work-to-personal life conflict. The result contradicts with quite a number of work-family researches, such as Yildirim and Ayca (2008), and Karatepe and Kilic (2007). Though surprising, some researches indicated contradicting findings (e.g. Hsu et al., 2010; Luk & Shaffer, 2005). Luk and Shaffer (2005) conducted a study among 248 Hong Kong employees, but they found that there was no direct effect between supervisor support and work-family conflict. Similarly, Hsu et al. (2010) also did not find significant relationship between supervisor support and work-family conflict among Taiwan and China employees. It may be due to diverging job characteristics in different industries of the respondents in this study.

Job control is found to have no significant relationship with work-life conflict. This is obviously different from the previous findings, which highlight the negative relationship between these two variables (e.g. Allan et al., 2005; Grönlund, 2007; Keene & Reynolds, 2005). The reasons of such contradicting findings are not clear, however, it could be due to less autonomy to decide on one's workload over the past 10 years (Allan et al., 2005). Possible explanation for such results is that employees might gain control only on certain aspects that do not have any significant impact in reducing spillover from job to personal life. For example, though employees can have control over when they want to apply for holiday, they might not have any control over the workload that they need to perform (Allan et al., 2005).

7. Practical Implications

Job demands have been identified as important factor in work-to-personal life conflict. To strike a balance between WPLC, individuals can improve their work-life balance by choosing to work fewer hours and spend more time with their family. They can take on a different job roles or titles, typically with less pressure or responsibilities and often for less monetary rewards. It is crucial for the management of the organisation to understand the impact of job demands on employees' behaviour. Conflict that arises between work and personal life may lead to negative consequences such as health problem, poor performance, job dissatisfaction, and high turnover intention (Burke, 2002; Duxbury & Higgins, 2003). To reduce work-to-personal life conflict, guidelines to handle problems should also be established to reconcile the needs of business and personal life. In addition, employers need to examine employees' workloads and clarify their roles within the organisations. As the causes of job stress are being diagnosed, actions need to be taken by employers to reduce the level of work pressures of each employee so that they can achieve a better balance between work and non-work activities.

In addition, the management of the organisation need to consider adopting more pragmatic job design in response to changing work-to-personal life environment. This can include a more flexible working arrangements and family-friendly working arrangement such as flexi hours, work from home, subsidised childcare service. The flexibility of job arrangement will help the workers to balance the needs of the organisations and their personal life (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvara, 2009).

8. Limitations and Future Research

This research only took into account three antecedents of work-to-personal life conflict. The predictors explain only 35.6% of the variation in the dependent variables, left another 54.4% that is unexplained. This means the future researchers can incorporate other possible predictors of work-to-personal life conflict, such as personality of the workers and the corporate culture. The research pertaining to the work-domain support needs to be further evaluated as the results in this area are inconclusive. There is also possible that work-domain supports (i.e. supervisor support) do not have a direct effect on work-to-personal life conflict, but rather serve as moderator between job demands and work-to-personal life conflict. Future research should look into various aspect of social support in organisation, and not merely focus on supervisor support. Due to the contrary findings between the job control and work-to-personal life conflict in this particular sample as compared to the previous findings, further investigation should be done as well.

The results of the current study cannot be used to generalize on other industries. In the present study, only respondents in private sector of the five industries as mentioned above have been selected. There is an absence of information and data on the effects of work-to-personal life conflict on public sector as well as other industries in the private sector.

The study was based merely on self-response questionnaire and there was no confirmatory data available from other sources such as from supervisors, colleagues, and spouse. Thus, in general, the self-response questionnaires are subject to social desirability problem. Besides, convenience sampling is subject to some biases due to the nature of the research which is based on peoples who are conveniently available such as the possible under representation or over representation of some sub-

groups in the sample. In addition, convenience sampling resulted in biased data as the selection of sample may not represent the population and thus will limit the ability to generalise the results obtained from sample on the population (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, Griffin, 2010).

9. Conclusion

The current research confirms the notion that high job demands contribute to increased level of work-to-personal life conflict, suggesting that this is still a relevant issue for workers nowadays. Based on observation, not many organisations in Malaysia pay much attention on the issue of work-to-personal life conflict, even though there might be certain degree of awareness among the management, but not much effort has been done to ensure a work-life balance among employees. This study analysed on the antecedents that might lead to work-to-personal life conflict.

Thus, there is a need for organisation to develop programs or revamp the job design to facilitate the workers to strike a balance between work and their personal life. The results also suggest that the explanations usually used to explain the negative effects of supervisor support and job control on work-to-personal life conflict may not be accurate. Therefore, more investigations need to be carried out to better understand about both the antecedents and consequences of work-to-personal life conflict, especially in the context of Malaysia.

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