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Some major antecedents of work-family conflict among married male and female professionals

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this study was to explore some major antecedents of work-family conflict among married male and female professionals (Medical doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Professors and Directors). In addition, this study attempted to develop the Myanmar version of the Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFC) based on a translation of Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams' (2000) original instrument. Specific hypotheses (5 in number) were derived from the general proposition and then they were tested using a sample of 209 professionals from Mandalay and Magway. Regression results indicated that work role conflict, family role conflict and family role ambiguity were positively correlated with work-family conflict and family-work conflict. Furthermore, external locus of control was positively related to work-family conflict. However, work role ambiguity, social support and Type A personality were not associated with work-family conflict. These findings are presented together with the suggestion that future research should further examine the role of WFC and its influence on the well-being of Myanmar professionals.

Key words: role conflict, role ambiguity, social support, personality, locus of control

Introduction

Over the last 25 years there has been a proliferation of research examining the intersection of work and family (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999). Economic and social changes over the last 70-80 years have increased the number of women working outside the home, dual career families, divorce rates and the prevalence of single mothers (Ferber, O'Farrell, & Allen, 1991). As a result more families have to juggle the demands of caring for dependents with the demands of work.

The influx of woman into the workplace began in the late 1960s. Balancing the demands of the work and family role has become primary daily task for many employed adults (Williams, & Alliger, 1994). As the demands of roles increase, it is unavoidable that one role will either interrupt or intrude in some way into the activities of other role. Work and

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family are central component in people's lives and thus demands a great deal of time and energy spent managing multiple responsibilities.

Research in the area of work and family originates from the variety of disciplines (Geurts and Demerrociti, 2003). Research examined negative aspects of multiple roles and there was an emergence of literature on work-family conflict. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) stated that work-family conflict occurs when "participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role".

More research is needed to explore the systematic investigation of the work-family conflict in Myanmar. Therefore, the present study attempted to develop the Myanmar version of work-family conflict scale based on a translation of Washington's (2006) original instrument. In addition, to contribute the understanding of the nature of the work-family conflict in Myanmar, the antecedents (role conflict, role ambiguity, personality, locus of control) of work- family conflicts were explored.

The Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict

A large amount of research in the area of work and family has explored the antecedents to work-family conflict including personal characteristics (e.g., age, gender, income, and etc.) and situational role variables (role conflict, role ambiguity, social support) and dispositional factors (i.e., Type A personality, external locus of control).

Personal Characteristics

The research examining age as an antecedent to work-family conflict has been mixed. Frone et al., (1997a) did not find any significant associations between age and work-to family conflict or family-to work conflict. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) reported that younger men reported more work-to family conflict and family-to-work conflict than older men. They also reported that younger women reported more family-to work conflict than older women.

Pleck (1977) asserted that men may adhere to the socially defined role of a "provider" and therefore may be more likely to experience work-to-family conflict. Conversely, women may be more likely to juggle the primary responsibilities of home and family responsibilities along with work responsibilities. Therefore women may be more likely to experience family-to work conflict.

Situational Role Variables

Role conflict and role ambiguity are two of the most widely studied situational determinants of work-family conflict. Role conflict is the simultaneous occurrences of two or more sets of pressures, such as having demands from different superiors at the same time. Role ambiguity is the lack of necessary information available to a given organizational position or the lack of role clarity (Kahn et al., 1964). Each of these stressors occur within a single role (e.g., work or family), rather than across domains. A review of the research will show that these variables have often been considered in the work-family conflict literature as antecedents to an individual's perception of conflict.

Work-related role conflict and role ambiguity have been found to directly and indirectly work-family conflict (Barling & MacEwen, 1992). Bedeian et al. (1988) found that work role stress was positively correlated with greater amount of work-family conflict for both men and women. Jones and Butler (1980) reported a positive relationship between role ambiguity and work-family conflict for a group of male sailors. Thus, as individuals perceive ambiguity in situations they experience more stress and work-family conflict.

Family role conflict and ambiguity have been found to lead to work-family conflict. For example, role conflict within a family role has been associated with high levels of work-family conflict (Kopeman et al. 1983). Furthermore, Frone, Russell, and Copper (1993) found that family stressors (pressures and ambiguity) had a significant and positive impact on family interference with work conflict. Thus, previous research has found that family-related role variables may lead to work-family conflict.

Carlson and Perrewe (1999) found that family support was negatively associated with work-family conflict. Conversely, Leiter and Durup (1996) found conflict with family members to be a predictor of work-family conflict over time. Social support from co-workers has been found to be negatively associated with work-to-family conflict (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999). These researchers argue that social support be viewed as an antecedent to perceived stressors and suggest that individuals who acquire social support systems at work perceive less work-family conflict.

Dispositional Variables

While some variables have been found to be valid predictors of work-family conflict, another potential predictor of work-family conflict might be the personality or disposition of an individual. Thus, including both situational and dispositional variables as predictors of work-family conflict may be a better strategy. That is, a more interactional-based approach to studying the determinants of work-family conflict may be appropriated. This study is designed to examine the effect that two personality variables (Type A, external locus of control) have on work-family conflict.

The characteristics of Type A person may lead them to work longer hours, make more demands of themselves and place greater importance on work than Type B persons (Ganster.1987). Type A persons have a propensity for creating stressful environments for themselves and for maintaining a life style that seriously constrains the time, energy and attention they devote to nonwork activities. Furthermore, Type A persons are more likely to be preoccupied and over involved in work. This behavior pattern often has the cost of work-family conflict by limiting the time spend on nonwork activities and the strain that is brought home after working excessively long hours.

Less research has been done relating Type A directly to work-family conflict. Burke (1988) found that individuals with greater Type A characteristics reported more work-family conflict. As such, the available research directly measuring work-family conflict in relation to Type A suggests that the two concepts may be positively related.

Several studies have examined the relationship between locus of control and work family conflict. Noor (2002) investigated the effect of locus of control on work-family conflict and found that individuals with an external locus of control (those who attribute the causes of events in their lives to factors other than themselves) reported experiencing more work-family conflict. Similarly, Andreassi and Thompson (2007) found that internal locus of control was negatively related to work family conflict.

To this researcher's knowledge, this study will be among the attempts to understand the antecedents of work-family conflict for married male and female professionals in Myanmar. Therefore this study will merge and integrate work-family literature by exploring the relationship

between antecedent variables and work-family conflict. More specifically, the purpose of the current study was to explore the relationship between the antecedent variables (role conflict, role ambiguity, social support, personality, locus of control) and work-family conflict was explored. More specifically the current study will investigate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Work role conflict and work role ambiguity will be positively related to work-family conflict.

Hypothesis 2: Family role conflict and family role ambiguity will be positively related to work-family conflict.

Hypothesis 3: Social support will be negatively associated with work-family conflict.

Hypothesis 4: Type A personality will be positively related to work-family conflict.

Hypothesis 5: External locus of control will be positively related to work-family conflict.

Method

Participants

A group of 209 subjects used for the multiple regression analysis under study included married male and female professionals (Medical doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Professors and Directors) who were employed full time and worked for a variety of organizations in Mandalay and Magway. Subjects were 132 married male and 77 married female professionals ranged in age 30- 60.

Procedure

This study used a random sample of married male and female professionals working in general organization units. Two hundred and thirty three married male and female professionals in Mandalay and Magway were pooled, and surveys were administered. Valid responses were obtained from 90% of the respondents- 209 married male and female professionals.

Measures

Work-Family Conflict. The Work-Family Conflict Scale was originally developed by Carlson, Kacmar, and William (2000). It consists of two

subscales: Work-to-Family Conflict and Family-to-Work Conflict. The Work-Family Conflict Scale consists of 18-item that measures three forms of Work-Family Conflict (i.e., time, strain, behavior) and both directions of Work-Family Conflict (i.e., Work-to-Family and Family-to-Work). Work-to-Family Conflict was measured with 9 items and Family-to-work Conflict was measured with 9 items. Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement/disagreement on a 5-point scale: 1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree. The descriptions were translated into Myanmar by the researcher and checked by the supervisor against the original version to ensure the conceptual equivalence of the Myanmar version to the original version. Cronbach's alpha indicated acceptable reliabilities for all scales in the current study: .89 for Work-Family Conflict (total), .86 for Work-to-Family Conflict, and .85 for Family-to-Work Conflict.

Role Conflict and Ambiguity. The Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scale (Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman, 1970) is a self-report measure of role conflict and ambiguity. The 14-item Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scale consist of two subscales: work role conflict, work role ambiguity. Participants responded on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The Work Role Conflict Scale contains eight items and measures a person's role conflict can arise when one's job-related role interferes with his / her family or personal life. The same eight items were used to measure family related role conflict after each item was modified to reflect the family domain. The Work Role Ambiguity Scale consists of six items and measure individuals perceive ambiguity in situations they experience more stress and work-family conflict. The same items adjusted for the family domain were used to measure family role ambiguity. Cronbach's alpha indicated acceptable reliabilities for all scales in the current study: .84 for Work Role Conflict, .82 for Work Role Ambiguity, .90 for Family Role Conflict, and .81 for Family Role Ambiguity.

Type A Personality. The Type A Personality Scale was developed by Glazeer (2010). It is a 20-item measure of the degree to which an individual exhibits Type A behaviors. Responses were made on a seven-point scale. The alpha of this scale was found to be .75.

Locus of Control. Locus of control was measured with the Locus of Control Scale (LOC) developed by Nowicki and Strickland (1973). The LOC Scale consists of 40 items. The participants were asked to circle T (True) and F (false). The alpha of this scale was .75.

Data Analysis

Creation of Scales and Coding

Separate scale scores were created for work role conflict and ambiguity, family role conflict and ambiguity, Type A personality, locus of control, work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict. Higher scores indicated that a participant experienced more of the particular outcome being measured. Gender was coded as (1) for male and (2) for female. Number of children was coded as (0) no children, (1) one to three children, (2) 4 or more children. Education was coded as (1) bachelor's degree, (2) master's degree, (3) doctorate. Correlations were run to determine the relationship between demographic variables, situational role variables, dispositional variables, and work-family conflict.

Data Analysis Plan

To test Hypothesis I, II, III, IV and V that personal characteristics, situational variables and dispositional variables would be associated with work-family conflict, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed. The personal characteristics (sex, age, education, number of children, husband and wife's occupational status, tenure and industry), situational variables (role variables, partner support, family support, supervisor support, co-worker support) and dispositional variables (Type A personality and locus of control) were then entered into the model as an independent variables. Work-family conflict (WFC-total), work-to-family conflict (WFC) and family-to-work conflict (FWC) were the dependent variables.

Results

Correlations

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to identify the relationships between demographic variable, independent variables and the outcomes measures. Table 1 presents the correlations among the demographic variables, the situational variables, the dispositional variables, WFC, FWC. Age range was negatively correlated with family-work conflict ($r=-.16$, $p<.05$) and family role ambiguity ($r= -.21$, $p<.001$). Thus, the older the individual the less likely they were to report WFC and family role ambiguity. Education was positively correlated with work role ambiguity ($r=.15$, $p<.05$). Thus, the higher the individual's levels of education the more likely they were to report work role ambiguity.

Number of children was negatively correlated with Type A personality ($r = -.25, p < .001$) and external locus of control ($r = -.16, p < .05$). Thus, individuals with more children were less likely to report Type A personality and external locus of control than individuals with fewer children. Partner support was negatively correlated with WFC ($r = -.16, p < .05$), FWC ($r = -.17, p < .05$), family role conflict ($r = -.25, p < .001$) and external locus of control ($r = -.14, p < .05$). Thus, the individuals with more partner support were less likely to report work family conflict, family work conflict, family role conflict and external locus of control than individuals with less partner support.

Table 1. Pearson Correlations for Demographic Variables

	Sex	Age	Ed	No. Child	Tenure	Partner Support
WFCtol	.02	-.11	-.05	-.02	.06	-.16*
WFC	.01	-.04	.00	-.02	.03	-.10
FWC	.02	-.16**	-.09	-.02	-.02	-.17**
WRC	-.08	-.11	-.10	-.00	-.03	-.08
WRA	.07	-.06	.15*	.00	.06	.04
FRC	-.01	.12	-.04	.05	.08	-.25***
FRA	-.03	-.21**	-.00	-.11	-.06	-.07
Type A	.12	.13	-.03	-.25***	-.06	.05
ELOC	.04	-.11	-.04	-.16**	.02	-.14*

Note. *** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). For sex, age and education, at least 1-3 children respectively. WFC = work-family conflict, FWC = family-work conflict, WRC = work-role conflict, WRA = work-role ambiguity, FRC = family role conflict, FRA = family role ambiguity, Type A = Type A personality, LOC = locus of control

Regression Analyses

Hypothesis I- Work Role Conflict, Work Role Ambiguity and Work-Family Conflict

Hypothesis I stated that work role conflict and ambiguity would be positively associated with WFC and FWC. Work role conflict and ambiguity was entered into the model as the independent variables and WFC (total), WFC, and FWC were dependent variables. Findings presented in Table-3 suggest that work role conflict was significantly related to WFC (total) ($\beta=52, p<.001$), WFC ($\beta=53, p<.001$), and FWC ($\beta=35, p<.001$). But work role ambiguity was not significantly related to WFC (total), WFC and FWC, which partially supports hypothesis I. This indicates that when male and female professionals are asked to enact multiple roles in work, work-family conflict is higher.

Table 2. Pearson Correlations for all Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.WFCtotal	-							
2.WFC	.87***	-						
3.FWC	.84***	.48***	-					
4.WRC	.62***	.57***	.49***	-				
5.WRA	.18**	.20**	.11	.17**	-			
6.FRC	.35***	.19**	.41***	.36***	.11	-		
7.FRA	.28***	.23**	.26***	.10	.41***	.15*	-	
8.Type A	.11	.11	.07	.18**	-.04	.04	-.04	-
9.ELOC	.29***	.23**	.26***	.19**	.15*	.21**	.21**	.01

Note * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$

Hypothesis II- Family Role Conflict, Family Role Ambiguity and Work-Family Conflict

Hypothesis II stated that family role conflict and ambiguity would be positively associated with WFC. Family role conflict and ambiguity was entered into the model as the independent variables and WFC (total), WFC, FWC were dependent variables. Findings presented in Table 3 suggested that family role conflict was not significantly related to WFC (total), WFC, but family role conflict was alone significantly related to FWC ($\beta=23, p<.001$). Family role ambiguity was significantly related to WFC (total) ($\beta=21, p<.01$), WFC ($\beta=16, p<.05$), and FWC ($\beta=20, p<.01$). Hypothesis II was partially supported.

Table 3. Summary of regression for conflict levels as dependent variables

Independent variables	Dependent Variables(Conflicts Levels)		
	WFC (total)	WFC	FWC
<u>Personal characteristics</u>			
Sex	.19*	.19*	.13
Age	-.02	.16	-.21*
Education	.01	.07	-.06
Number of children	.03	-.02	.07
Y.Os	-.15	-.09	-.17*
Tenure	-.02	-.07	.05
Industry	.03	.13	-.09
R ²	.05	.06	.06
Adjusted R ²	.01	.02	.01
R ² Change	.05	.06	.06
<u>Situational variables</u>			
WRC	.52***	.53***	.35***
WRA	.02	.07	-.05
FRC	.06	-.12	.23**
FRA	.21**	.16*	.20**
R ²	.46***	.37***	.38***
Adjusted R ²	.42***	.33***	.34***
R ² Change	.41***	.32***	.33***
<u>Dispositional variables</u>			
Type A personality	.03	.04	.00
ELOC	.17**	.16*	.13
R ²	.48*	.39	.40
Adjusted R ²	.44*	.34	.35
R ² Change	.02	.02	.02
<u>Support</u>			
Partner support	-.02	.01	-.05
Family support	-.06	-.11	.01
Supervisor support	.05	.10	-.01
Co-worker support	-.02	-.05	.02
R ²	.48	.40	.40
Adjusted R ²	.43	.34	.33
R ² Change	.00	.01	.00

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p< 0.001

Hypothesis III- Social Support and Work-Family Conflict

Hypothesis III stated that social support would be negatively associated with WFC. The types of social support (partner support, family support, supervisor support, co-worker) was entered into the model as the independent variable and WFC (total), WFC, FWC were dependent variables. Although correlation analyses supported a negative relationship ($r=-.16$, $p < .05$), regression analyses failed to find support for the relationship between partner support and work-family conflict. The hypothesis III was therefore not supported.

Hypothesis IV- Type A personality and Work-Family Conflict

Hypothesis IV stated that Type A personality would be negatively associated with WFC. Type A personality was entered into the model as the independent variable and WFC (total), WFC, FWC were dependent variables. Findings presented in Table 3 suggested that Type A personality trait was not significantly related to WFC, thus hypothesis IV was not supported.

Hypothesis V- External Locus of Control and Work-Family Conflict

Hypothesis V stated that external locus of control would be positively associated with WFC. External locus of control was entered into the model as the independent variable and WFC (total), WFC, FWC were dependent variables. Findings presented in Table 3 suggested that external locus of control was significantly related to WFC (total) ($\beta=.17$, $p < .05$), WFC ($\beta=.16$, $p < .05$), FWC ($\beta=.13$, $p < .072$). This indicates that the individuals with the higher in external locus of control lead to increase in work-family conflict. Thus, these results supported the hypothesis V.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the demographic factors, dispositional factors, situational role and work-family conflict. As was hypothesized, results indicated that work-family conflict was associated with work role conflict, family role conflict and family role ambiguity as well as external locus of control.

Hypotheses I suggested that work role conflict and ambiguity would be positively associated with WFC and FWC. In partial support of this hypothesis, results indicated work role conflict was positively related to WFC and FWC. But work role ambiguity was not related with WFC and

FWC. Thus, those individuals that were more conflict were more likely to experience one role (e.g., work role) interfering with or causing difficulty in the other role (e.g., family role). These findings are consistent with the previous research findings that when individuals simultaneously occupy two positions whose roles are antagonistic, they experience role conflict. The individual may experience difficulty and unable to perform either role adequately.

According to Marks' scarcity hypothesis (1977), there is a finite stock of physical and psychological energy in human being. Having multiple and diversified roles, an individual is drained out of energy which causes stress and conflict thus, lowering the level of satisfaction. These men and women who have sequential duties have to play simultaneous roles. Thus, men and women in two roles can neither escape from their socially determined role of homemakers, providers nor can they disregard their role as a professional. This increases the likelihood of work-family conflicts for them. Voydanoff (1988) have identified several variables related to Work- Family Conflicts, for instance, work hours and schedules, work load pressure, role conflict and role ambiguity, job involvement and job autonomy, time, expectations at work, marital satisfaction, number and ages of children.

Hypotheses II suggest that family role conflict and ambiguity would be negatively associated with WFC and FWC. In partial support of this hypothesis, results indicated family role conflict was significantly positively related to FWC but not for WFC. However, as predicted that family role ambiguity was positively related to WFC and FWC. These results were similar to findings of Spector (1997) and suggest that family also need to clarify family members' role, so that they are clear about their role expectations, and know what his or her functions and responsibilities are.

Furthermore, family role ambiguity had the greatest level of impact on family to work conflict. It appears that role ambiguity not only affects the family satisfaction of participants but may also cause them to experience greater levels of conflict. A lack of clarity at home leads to frustration at home as tasks may be missed or not done correctly. These errors may be pointed out by spouse and leading to conflict.

Family role conflict is also important for professionals, because their job is very demanding and requires making many quick decisions. If their roles dare conflict, thus may affect the effective functioning of

operations. This in turn will result in professionals' dissatisfaction with their roles. This group of researchers (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Crosby, 1991) believes that multiple roles are good for both men and women in terms of more social support and less depression and stress. However, it should be noted that there is a limit for the multiple roles that an individual could hold. When the roles are too excessive, psychological stress may occur (Bekker et al., 2000). How much is too much, however should be individually specific.

Hypothesis III suggests that social support would be negatively related to WFC. Contrary to the hypothesized, social support was not significantly associated with WFC. Result of correlation analysis showed that partner support was significantly negatively related to family–work conflicts. However, the regression analyses did not show any significant negative effect of social support on family–work conflicts. When other dimensions of workplace are included in the multivariate model, some of these relationships between social support factors and the two forms of work-family conflict do not emerge as significant. It is not clear why social support was not associated with WFC and FWC.

According to Grandey and Cropanzano's (1999) conservation of resources theory, individuals are motivated to acquire and maintain resources (i.e., social support networks) while coping with stress. This implies that social support has a direct effect on WFC (cf. Allen, 2001). Carlson and Perrewé (1999) studied social support from family and work as an antecedent, an intervening variable, and a moderator in the relationship between role stressors and WFC, and concluded that social support could be best conceptualized as an antecedent of perceived stressor.

One of the most widely cited theoretical frameworks proposed by Frone et al. (1997) also portrayed work demands and work support as independent antecedents of work–family conflict. According to this model, work–family conflict is the result of a mismatch between demands and support; the higher work demands and lesser social support, the higher the interference of work with family. Thus, more research is needed to clear the role of social support on work family conflict.

Hypothesis IV suggests that Type A personality would be positively related to WFC. This hypothesis was not supported because results indicated Type A personality trait did not play a significant role in WFC. This would be not consistent with the previous research findings that higher

jobs involvement was related to work-family conflict (Greenhaus et al., (1989). One explanation for the lack of findings may be that the involvement in one role is so strong that individuals become absorbed by the role (Keenee & McBaiin, 1979) and do not perceive the interruption of the other role, thus avoiding this form of work-family conflict. Another explanation of these unique findings is that research has begun to show that Type A may be a multidimensional construct and that certain aspects of Type A are more predictive than other (Greenhaus & Burke, 1999; Matthews & Hanyses, 1986).

Hypothesis V suggests that external locus of control would be positively related to WFC. In full support of this hypothesis suggests that external locus of control and its association with WFC, this study found that an increase in external locus of control led to an increase in WFC. These findings are consistent with the findings of Noor (2002). Noor (2002) found that a greater intensity of work-family conflict was experienced by individuals with an external locus of control whereby these individuals attribute the cause of events in their lives to factors other than themselves.

Furthermore, similarly Andreassi and Thompson (2007) and Noryati *et al.* (2009) found that internal locus of control was negatively related to work-family conflict. The significant effect of locus of control and work-family conflict also supports the results of a study by Andreassi and Thompson (2007). Locus of control is a stable personality trait which reflects beliefs concerning the degree to which an individual has control over various aspects of their lives and more specifically, it refers to an individual's perception of the locus of events as determined internally by his/her own behavior versus fate, luck, or external circumstances (Rotter, 1966).

This finding has important implications for organizations. The findings demonstrated locus of control is an important individual for resource organizations that is related to employees' experiences of work family conflict and job satisfaction. During the screening process of potential recruits, people should take into consideration locus of control as one of the important dispositional characteristics of candidates. People should look into the possibility of designing training programs to assist professionals in taking more controls of events in their work situations.

Limitations and Further Research

There are a numbers of limitations in this study. Firstly, the present study was conducted with professionals. Therefore, the results of the study cannot necessarily be generalized to other groups of individuals. Professionals may have unique characteristics related to their work that other individuals may not have. For example, professionals have higher education levels than the average person, as well as above average incomes. Both of these may be related to personality characteristics, as well as coping strategies employed in dealing with WFC.

Second, the cross-sectional design of the study does not allow us to make causal inferences. As a consequence, common method variance may have impacted upon the results (Jansen, Kant, kristensen & Nijuis, 2003). Due to the nature of a cross-sectional study, it would be possible to test alternate models that may fit the data equally well. Future researchers should continue to refine the methodology used in work-family research in order to more fully understand the nature of work-family conflict.

Furthermore, future study should also examine the long-term effect on working professionals' individual experiences work-family conflict. A longitudinal survey might be a more appropriate approach; that type of study could allow for stronger causal interferences and a better understanding of the time associated with the development of such conflicts (Luk & Shaffer, 2005). Future research should address the limitations raised from the present research, and continue to refine the methodology in order to more fully understand the nature of work-family conflict. Specifically there is a need to include in the design an assessment of outcomes before and after the implementation of family- friendly policies, to assess gender differences, to take account of the diversity of the organizations and occupational groups, to consider differences in family structure, to study the diversity of coping mechanisms (e.g., co-worker support and family resources and support), to develop alternative models of work-family interference, and to conduct cross-national research in the future.

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