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## ARTICLE REVIEW

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### It Takes Two to Tango: How Large the Effects of Job Factors on Wife's Work-Family Conflict?

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#### ABSTRACT

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<b>Received</b>	4 August 2017
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<b>Introduction</b>	Married couples often do influence each other's emotions and behaviors. The effect of this interpersonal marriage relationship on emotional job demands and job performance toward work-family conflict (WFC) is still under research. This article aims to determine the effects of married couple's job factors (emotional job demands and job performance) on wife's WFC.
<b>Methods</b>	A total of 120 dyads in private sectors were recruited via private invitations to social gatherings. Packets of self-administered questionnaires were given included emotional domain of Demand-Induced Strain Compensation, Spielberger Trait Anger Scale, work-family conflict and job performance measures. Dyadic analysis using Actor-Partner Interdependence Model was used.
<b>Results</b>	The emotional demand of wife significantly contribute higher effect (ES= 0.34 (95%CI: 0.23, 0.45); p<0.001) compared to emotional job demand of husband on wife's WFC (ES= 0.14 (95%CI: 0.03, 0.25); p=0.011). The job performance of wife significantly contribute higher effect (ES= 0.29 (95%CI: 0.17, 0.40); p<0.001) compared to job performance of husband on the wife's WFC (ES= 0.17 (95%CI: 0.06, 0.29); p=0.003). Both wife and husband influenced each other pertaining to emotional job demands (r=0.35, 95%CI: 0.22, 0.48) and job performance (r=0.51, 95%CI: 0.38, 0.64) on the wife's WFC. Overall, the APIM model explains of 22.9% and 25.1% of the total of non-independence of emotional job demands and job performance toward WFC, respectively.
<b>Conclusions</b>	Wife's WFC was influenced by both herself and her partner's emotional job demands and performance. All resources should be channeled to working wives to prevent any health and job outcomes resulted from the work-family conflict.
<b>Keywords</b>	Work-family conflict - job performance - emotional job demands - Dyadic analysis.

### INTRODUCTION

Women become increasingly important in many job activities in the world of employment enlightened by higher education that has given them vigorous careers.<sup>1</sup> Due to this situation, men were no longer considered as sole wage earner in the family since past two decades. Therefore, flexible working hours, family-friendly work practices such as family-related leave and telecommuting, especially for employees with young children, are increasingly essential especially for women.

Recent studies have highlighted the conflict experienced by individuals between their roles in the family and at work. These experiences called work-family conflict.<sup>2</sup> The conflict can be concluded as a barrier in fulfilling the demands in work and family settings that happened to the single or dual-earner couples. This conflict stands for the essentials related to the work and roles of the family and studies proved that there is significant correlation between this roles.<sup>3</sup> The traditional NIOSH Job Stress model<sup>4</sup> demonstrated that family conflict act as moderator between job stressor and health consequence on workers. However other studies showed that WFC act as stressors<sup>5,6,7</sup> for job stress and burnout. Some studies even found WFC influenced husband and wife's job performance.<sup>8</sup> Clearly, WFC is a very important factor that influenced both health and job consequences.

However, this article has twisted the previous model by Bakker and Demerouti<sup>9</sup> who propose the effect of WFC on employees' job performance. The focus of this study is the investigation of the effect of marriage couples' emotional job demands and job performance on wife's WFC. Since the information is still lacking, dyadic study design and analysis were used to demonstrate the effect of husband's job demands and performance on the wife's WFC in a sample of married couples among various private workers. Women will be the focus in this study because it was reported that, they experienced greater emotional stress than men in juggling between work and family matters,<sup>8</sup> contradict to common traditional belief.<sup>10</sup> Hopefully, this finding may give further insight, especially in marriage life, whose attributes gives more influence on WFC.

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Study design*

This research was conducted by using a cross sectional, standard Dyadic design. Dyadic

design was adopted to tie between two person's data.

#### *Participants*

A total of 120 dyads from multi-worksites in private services and manufacturing industries of Selangor and Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur were recruited purposively based on the inclusion criteria of Malaysian citizen dual-earner working couples, have at least one child and been in service for at least one year in the current company. The dyad members were derived from a personal and professional list of name from December 2015 to February 2016 via private invitations to social gatherings.

#### *Instruments*

A packet of self-administered questionnaire was given to each dyad member simultaneously to measure emotional job demand, job performance, work family conflict and anger trait as a personality trait. Emotional job demand was measured by using Malay version Demand-Induced Strain Compensation questionnaire (DISQ 2.1).<sup>11</sup> It consists of 3 items that required responses on a Likert-type scale (1= Never, or very rarely to 5= Very often or always). Emotional demands measurement items refer to the effort needed to deal with job inherent emotions and/or organizationally desired emotions during interpersonal transaction. For example, "*Saya perlu berurusan dengan orang yang mempunyai masalah yang menyentuh emosi beliau (contohnya pelanggan, rakan sekerja atau penyelia)*". In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for emotional demand was 0.82.

A Malay version of Spielberger Trait Anger Scale (STAS)<sup>12</sup> was used to measure the anger trait of the respondents. It consists of 10 items which measure angry temperament (individual tendency to experience anger in general) and angry reaction (tendency to experience anger when provoke) in relationship to its frequency and intensity. The items for angry temperament measurement are "I am quick tempered", "I have fiery temper" and "I am hot headed person". While the item used to measure the angry reaction are "I feel annoyed when I am not given recognition for doing good work", "it makes me furious when I am criticized in front of others" and "I feel infuriated when I do a good job and get a poor evaluation". All the items required responses on a Likert-type scale (1=Almost never to 4=Almost always). Range of the score is 10 to 40. The cut-off

point score of 10 to 14, 15 to 21 and 22 to 40 are categorized as low, moderate and high trait anger based on previous study.<sup>13</sup> In this study, the Cronbach's alpha was 0.91.

Work-family conflict scale was measured by five items from previous study.<sup>14</sup> The items are "The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life" and "The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities". All the items required responses on a Likert-type scale (1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha was 0.91. Higher score indicates higher work-family conflict. It was categorized into 2 groups, i.e. high and low WFC based on mid-point cut off value of 15.

Self-evaluation of job performance from previous study<sup>15</sup> was used to report job performance. It consists of five items to measure respondent's accomplishment in their services towards the current company that they are working. The items are "I always perform to an acceptable standard" and "I often perform tasks which are outside of my job description". Five point Likert scale was used (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). In this study, the Cronbach alpha was 0.94.

Emotional job demands and anger trait had used previous validated Malay version.<sup>16</sup> The latter two had used back to back translation method replicate previous work of Brislin.<sup>17</sup>

*Data collection*

The pairs of marriage couple were informed of the study objectives prior to distribution of paper-and-pen questionnaires. A letter explaining the purpose of the research accompanied the questionnaire. The couples were kindly requested to fill in the questionnaire in private and send it to the

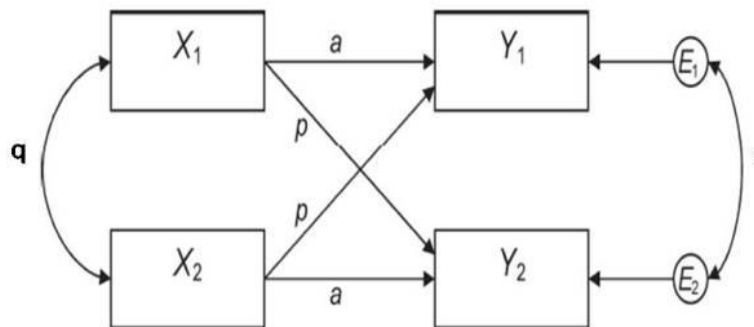
researcher by hand on the same day. The researcher checked the questionnaires to ensure its completeness. Participation was voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity of the answers were emphasized. The collected data were coded as distinguishable pairs based on gender and pair sequence number.

*Data Analysis*

A database structure that integrated the various measures was developed for further analyses. All the Likert scale response items were converted into interval data summation score using Rasch model analysis<sup>18</sup> before it was submitted to SPSS analysis. The formula of conversion as follows:

- i.  $USCALE = \frac{\text{wanted range}}{\text{current range}}$
- ii.  $UMEAN = \frac{\text{wanted low} - (\text{current low} \times USCALE)}{USCALE}$

IBM SPSS version was used for descriptive and correlation analysis. A web-based package using R program<sup>19</sup> for estimating the effect size of dyad members influence each other pertaining to job factors (emotional job demands and job performance) on wife's WFC with two controlled variables (wife's service duration and wife's anger trait). All the continuous data were Z-standardized prior to the analysis. Prior to submission of data to APIM analysis, the data from IBM SPSS had been converted from individual data to pairwise data structure (one record for each wife with the data from the wife and the wife's partner on the record) in excel.csv form by using website resources.<sup>19</sup> The interpersonal relationship effect estimation toward wife's WFC was demonstrated by using multilevel modeling Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) for distinguishable dyad members as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM)

## Effects of Job Factors on Work-Family Conflict

Where,

X<sub>1</sub> = Predictor 1 = wife's emotional job demands, job performance

X<sub>2</sub> = Predictor 2= husband's emotional job demands, job performance

Y<sub>1</sub>= Outcome 1 = wife's work-family conflict

Y<sub>2</sub>= Outcome 2 = Husband's work-family conflict

a = actor effect

p = partner effect

q = covariance represents association between dyad members' scores on the predictor variable, mutual influence of both people on the actor's outcome

r = covariance represents the residual dependence between dyad members on the outcome variable i.e. the dyadic dependence that remains unexplained by X<sub>1</sub> and X<sub>2</sub>, how do actor similar or different from their spouse.

This model provides relational data i.e. the measurements reflect not only the characteristics of the wives who provide the score but also the characteristics of their husbands. The effect of a wife's emotional job demands and job performance on her own WFC is called an actor effect, and the effect of her husband's emotional job demands and job performance on wife's WFC is called a partner effect. If the value of *k* ratio i.e. the ratio of husband effect over the wife effect is equal to -1, 0 and 1, it is called as Social Comparison model, Actor or Partner-oriented model and Couple-oriented model, respectively.<sup>20</sup> In this analysis, interdependence value between 0.1 and 0.3 was considered as small effect size, 0.3 and 0.5 as moderate effect size, and value that are

more than 0.5 was considered as large effect size.<sup>21</sup>

## RESULTS

A total of 120 from 160 dyads have been returned the sets of questionnaires with no missing data, giving response rate of 75%. All of the respondents were from services and manufacturing industries. A range of the occupations was represented such as occupation related to safety, occupation related to money management, occupations related to vehicle services, occupations related to information technology, occupations related to health and beauty services and occupations related to administrations.

**Table 1** Descriptive Statistics of the Individual Data (n=240)

	Wife	Husband
Socio Demographic Profile		
Age, median (Q1, Q3)	32 (29, 36)	32.5 (30, 38.75)
Service Duration, median (Q1, Q3)	4 (3, 8)	6 (3, 10)
Leading Responsibility		
Leader	65 (54.2)	99 (82.5)
Non-leader	55 (45.8)	21 (17.5)
Race, n (%)		
Malay	114 (95.0)	116 (96.7)
Non Malay	6 (5.0)	4 (3.3)
Education Level, n (%)		
Not Completed Primary School	1 (0.8)	1 (0.8)
Completed Primary School	27 (22.5)	1 (0.8)
Completed Secondary School	-	24 (20.0)
Completed Tertiary	59 (49.2)	60 (50.0)
Doctorate/PhD	33 (27.5)	34 (28.3)
Average Income Per Month, n (%)		
RM2000 and below	23 (19.2)	10 (8.3)
RM2001-RM4000	39 (32.5)	45 (37.5)
RM4001-RM6000	34 (28.3)	32 (26.7)
RM6001-RM8000	13 (10.8)	17 (14.2)
More than RM8000	11 (9.2)	16 (13.3)
Anger Trait, mean±SD	20.50±5.74	23.57±5.97
Emotional Job Demand, mean±SD	9.57±1.91	10.78±2.06
Self-evaluation Job Performance, mean±SD	18.71±3.38	18.97±3.32
Work-Family Conflict, mean±SD	14.22±4.71	13.78±4.45

The socio-demographic profile is presented in Table 1. Most of them was in late 20s, had been work in their current organization for at least 3 years (19.6%) with income more than RM4000 (51.3%). Marriage duration for the couples in this study was between 1 to 36 years, which some of them has been married for 2 years (34%), had only one child (47.5%) and the children aged below than 5 years (78.3%). The prevalence of wife experience high WFC was 31.7%. Both wives and husband recorded to have

moderate and high anger trait, respectively. Both wives and husband recorded high mean self-evaluated job performance that is more than 70% if the mean converted into 100 marks.

The correlation matrix between wives and husbands individual data is presented in Table 2. The correlation values range from 0.19 to 0.62 indicates the responses were answered by wives and husband, respectively.

**Table 2** Correlation matrix between Job Demand, Anger Trait, Self-evaluation Job Performance and Work-family conflict (n=240)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. EDW	1						
2. EDH	0.344**	1					
3. ATW	0.106	0.138	1				
4. ATH	0.001	0.185*	0.274**	1			
5. SEJPW	0.263**	0.161	-0.364**	-0.237**	1		
6. SEJPH	0.282**	0.243**	-0.168	-0.152	0.505**	1	
7. WFCW	0.481**	0.215*	0.015	0.078	0.268**	0.343**	1
8. WFCH	0.315**	0.347**	-0.019	0.351**	0.268**	0.343**	0.624**

EDW= Wife's emotional demand, EDH= Husband's emotional demand, ATW= Wife's anger trait, ATH= Husband's anger trait, SEJPW= Wife's self-evaluation job performance, SEJPH= Husband's self-evaluation job performance, WFCW= Wife's work family conflict, WFCH= Husband's work family conflict. \*\*Correlations is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) and \* at the level of 0.05 (1-tailed)

Figure 2 shows the APIM analysis for emotional demand and work-family conflict. There is a wife and husband interdependence effects of emotional demands towards of wife's WFC with two controlled variables (i.e. wife's service duration and wife's anger trait). The emotional job demand of wife contribute significantly higher on wife's WFC (standardized actor effect size =0.34 (95%CI: 0.23, 0.45); p<0.001) compared to emotional demand of husband (standardized partner effect size = 0.14 (95%CI: 0.03, 0.25); p=0.011). The ratio of husband effect to wife effect equals to 0.41 (95% CI: 0.11, 0.75). It can be concluded that the model is in between the actor-only (k =0) and the couple (k =1) models. Emotional demands of wives have significantly moderate effect on wife WFC compared to husbands' emotional demands on wife WFC. There is moderate mutual effect of both wife and husband emotional demands on the wife's WFC is 0.35 (95%CI: 0.22, 0.48). The model explains of 22.9% of the total of non-

independence. Figure 3 shows the APIM analysis for job performance and work-family conflict. There is a wife and husband interdependence effects of job performance towards of wife's WFC with two controlled variables (i.e. wife's service duration and wife's anger trait). The job performance of wife contribute significantly higher on wife's WFC (standardized actor effect size = 0.29 (95%CI: 0.17, 0.40); p<0.001) compared to job performance of husband (standardized partner effect size = 0.17 (95%CI: 0.06, 0.29); p=0.003). The ratio of husband effect to wife effect equals to 0.60 (95% CI: 0.22, 1.16). It can be concluded that the model is the couple (k = 1) models. Job performance of wives has significantly higher effect on wife WFC compared to husbands' job performance on wife WFC. There is large mutual effect of both wife and husband job performance on the wife's WFC is 0.51 (95%CI: 0.38, 0.64). The model explains of 25.1% of the total of non-independence.

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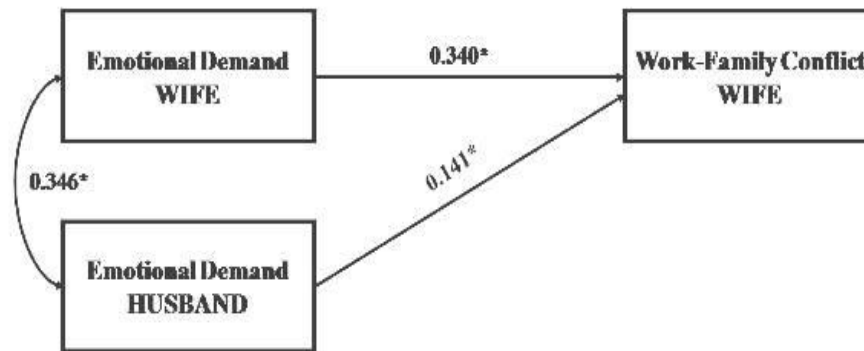


Figure 2 Emotional job demand on work family conflict

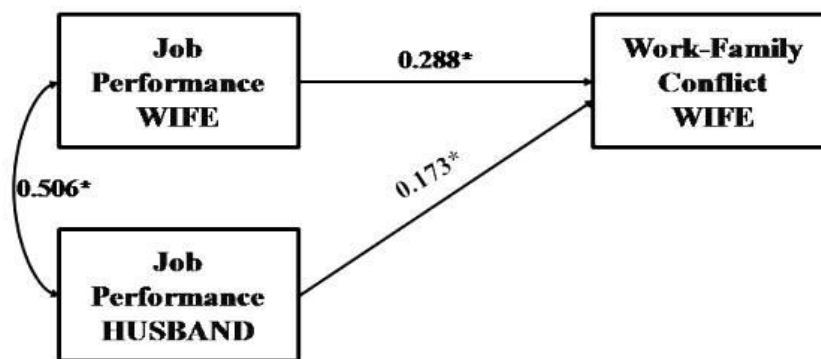


Figure 3 Job performance on work family conflict

## DISCUSSION

This study has highlighted the key factors that contribute to the expansion of WFC of the past decade until now. When many of previous studies had focused on the effect of WFC towards job performance, this current study had explore the vice versa scenario. This study aims to demonstrate the effects of married couple's job factors (emotional job demands and job performance) on wife's WFC. This study demonstrates that emotional job demand has influenced the WFC among the wives. The result was consistent with the previous studies.<sup>22, 23</sup> Emotional demands dealing with especially; abusive people at a workplace require surface acting of emotional labor. It is characterized by outward displays of emotion that do not match the actor's true feelings but they require to create dissociation between felt and displayed emotions by regulating emotional responses or faking emotional expression in order to express expected behaviors in their job nature.<sup>24</sup> Surface acting may cause depletion of inner individual resources if they continue to face similar amount or more emotional labor in daily job activity.<sup>25</sup> Hence, the individual is less resilient and more vulnerable to stressors in their life either in a job or marriage life.

The literature concerning gender role expectations suggests that men and women could experience job and home demands in different ways, where women were tend to experience burnout higher than men as a consequence of emotional demand and exhaustion.<sup>26</sup> Although in our data, wives had lower score in emotional job demand compared to husbands' score, they reported higher score in WFC compared to their partner because women have shifted away from their satisfying work paradigm toward a quest of finding a haven home which is more rewarding.<sup>27</sup>

In this study, mean scores for job performance of the wives and the husband does have minimal differences but wives demonstrated higher effect on WFC. This situation was believed to have a relationship with leading responsibility and the type of personality; especially among women. More than half of the respondents were holding a leader type of job duty which require them dealing with emotional transaction and cognitive demands in their job scope. As leaders that require to increase the level of subordinates' awareness for valued organizational outcomes by nurturing and enhancing their needs and encouraging them

to expand their self-interests.<sup>28</sup> This contextual performance is having a significant impact on organizational, social, and psychological contexts rather than task performance. It is because the contextual performance elements include persisting with enthusiasm and extra effort to complete one's task activities; volunteering to carry out task activities that are not part of one's job; helping and cooperating with others; following organizational rules and procedures; and endorsing, supporting, and defending organizational objectives are easily observable and measurable.<sup>29</sup> This performance may enhance by presence of type A personality. Type A personality is characterized as impatience, aggressiveness, an intense achievement drive, a sense of time-urgency, and a desire for recognition and advancement. Although in this study did not directly measure type A personality, hypothetically high anger trait, as proxy for type A personality, may reflect a competitive, self-critical and workaholics employee explains high self-evaluation job performance score. Being women, they have to strive harder to maximize their chances for successful organizational outcome<sup>30</sup> additional to their inter-roles conflict in family setting<sup>31</sup> which is equally challenging and demanding further reinforce Type A behavior. Therefore, professional women have higher impact of job performance on their own work-family conflict.

#### *Strengths and limitations*

This study presents three major contributions; the consequences brought by job factors towards WFC among the working women, the use of Dyadic method as data collection and Actor-Partner Interdependence Model as a research analysis in defining the relationship between job factors and WFC among working women, and practical contributions. Pertaining to the data collection and data analysis, each couple was given the same set of questionnaire but to be answered on their own. Participation was voluntary and confidentiality and anonymity has been emphasized. Answers given by the respondents were then analyzed by using APIM which give the interdependence analysis between husband and wife in regards of their work-family conflict, especially among the wives.

In terms of practical contributions, the findings of this study can be used as a guideline in identifying emotional job demands that leads to WFC and also providing information for employer, as a good

management team needs to understand their employee's perspective, and needs to listen and identify their necessities. Identification of potential threats to the employee wellbeing will enable individuals and their organizations to adopt precautionary measures and make use of resources to prevent negative outcomes.

This study was cross sectional in nature, which precludes the causality and may not adequately capture the time sequence of the relationship between job factors (emotional job demands and job performance) on wife's WFC. However, this study design was acceptable to assess the inter-individual effect on the studied variables and reverse analysis were done to confirm the unidirectional relationship. Common method biases may largely arise as the primary researcher measure job factors (emotional job demands and job performance) and wife's WFC at the same time. But the bias was diluted by separating the job factors (emotional job demands and job performance) and wife's WFC items by demographic items. Lastly, the study was restricted in focus, evaluating only job factors toward wife's WFC and neglecting other stress related health outcomes such as wife's mental health.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In this study, wife's WFC was influenced by both herself and her partner's emotional job demands and performance. A more comprehensive cause of WFC has been 'discovered'. WFC may acts as a double sword on job performance. Future organization plan should create a conducive working environment and working conditions to prevent the WFC especially among working women.

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