

IMPACT OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT ON WOMEN'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT: MEDIATING ROLE OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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INTRODUCTION

The career development of women is the most trending concept in the Sri Lankan context. Today, women are more concerned about their careers than before, and numerous career opportunities have emerged (Yasmin & Husna, 2020). Yusuf and Hasnidar (2020) stated that, especially in the twenty-first century, there is a rapid transfer in the role of women outside the home as career women. Lindstrom et al. (2020) stated that few studies have examined gender-specific career interventions. Zhou and Wen (2016) investigated the "impact of work-family conflict on women's career development" using women in the hotel industry, suggesting more research should be conducted in the hotel field and other service sectors. Similarly, Bombuwel and Alwis (2013) stated that much research on women's career development has been conducted using various topics, but less research has been conducted in Sri Lanka on the glass ceiling. Then an empirical gap can be identified from all these statements, which helps to carry out this study.

In many organizations in Sri Lanka, a few women are represented at the top level. When it is concerned about state commercial banks in Sri Lanka, relatively a few numbers of women employees are represented at the top level. In one of the state commercial banks in Sri Lanka, there are 115 number of employees representing the top level and 53 of them are women. Similarly, considering other state commercial banks in Sri Lanka, the number of employees representing its top level is 332, of which 166 are female employees. As well, women are not represented in some top positions in the banking sector (Annual Reports of People's Bank, 2021; Annual Reports of Bank of Ceylon, 2020).

Accordingly, the objectives of the current study can be divided into two parts:

General Objective: To assess the impact of work-family conflict on women's career development in the selected state commercial banks in Colombo district, Sri Lanka.

Specific Objectives:

- I. To identify the impact of work-family conflict on employee performance.
- II. To identify the impact of employee performance on women's career development.
- III. To assess the mediating effect of employee performance on work-family conflict and women's career development.

This study is crucial to all women in service or non-service sectors, such as female employees in the banking sector, higher education sector, health care sector, hotel field, and field of manufacturing etc.

The benefits of concerning and resolving these issues are related to both the organization and individual employees' family lives. It serves to motivate employees, increase job satisfaction,

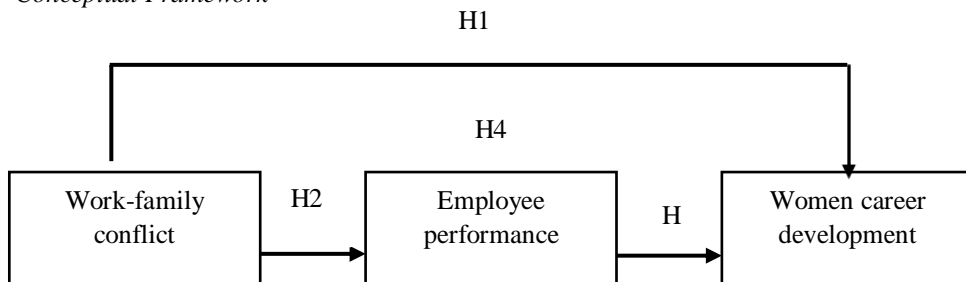
boost productivity of the employees, increase well-being, and decrease burnout of its employees. From the employee' side, women's career development in the workplace is vital for balancing work and family life contributing a happier working environment around the employee. It also aids in achieving personal targets and enjoying life with their families. Accordingly, the main purpose of this study was to examine the impact of work-family conflict on women's career development in selected state commercial banks in the Colombo district, Sri Lanka.

METHODOLOGY

This study considers the independent variable as work-family conflict, mediating variable as employee performance, and the dependent variable as women's career development.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



H₁: There is a significant impact of work-family conflict on women's career development.

H₂: There is a significant impact of work-family conflict on employee performance.

H₃: There is a significant impact of employee performance on women's career development.

H₄: Employee performance significantly mediates the impact of work-family conflict on women's career development.

This study adopts a cross-sectional descriptive research approach. To describe the results of the statistical analysis for each independent variable and its effects on the dependent variable, a purposeful sample size of 291 women employees of the selected state-commercial banks in the Colombo district were selected based on simple random sampling technique. Descriptive statistics, regression analysis, correlation analysis, and the Sobel test were used to analyze the data and make conclusions. The primary data were obtained using a Google form and a standard questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Table 1, there is a significant impact between work-family conflict and women's career development (work-family conflict $\beta = -0.632$); this relationship is significant at a 95% confidence level (Sig. $T < 0.05$), thereby supporting *H₁*. Based on the stepwise regression analysis results, the researcher has concluded that work-family conflict significantly impacts women's career development.

Table 1*Regression Statistics*

	Work-family conflict and women's career development	Work-family conflict and employee performance	Employee performance and women's career development
R	-0.632**	-0.506**	0.693**
R Square	0.399	0.256	0.480
Adjusted R Square	0.397	0.254	0.478
Standard Error	0.259	0.331	0.241
Observations (N)	280	280	280
F	184.808	95.787	256.448
Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	-0.632	-0.506	0.693
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000
Regression Method	Linear Enter	Linear Enter	Linear Enter

In the present study, the R square value is 0.399, so it can be concluded that the model has fit 39.9% of women's career development depending on the work-family conflict. The work-family conflict explains 39.9% of the total variation in women's career development. The work-family conflict further supported the results mean and standard deviation ($m=4.2564$, $SD = 0.33437$). Several empirical studies over the past decade have shown a negative correlation between work-family conflict and women's career development. Yusuf and Hansider (2020) suggested a negative effect on work-family conflict and women's career development. Nurak et al. (2018) found that family conflict negatively impacts women's career development. According to Wang and Cho (2013), the work-family conflict has a negative impact on career development and causes women to make less progress in their careers.

When data for work-family conflict and employee performance were analyzed, it was additionally identified the significant impact of work-family conflict on employee performance ($\beta = -0.506$, $p= 0.000$). This relationship was significant at a 95% confidence level (Sig. $T < 0.05$), supporting H_2 . The finding coincided with the existing literature. According to Nur and Zain (2019), work-family conflict was negatively connected with hospital employee performance. Ling and Jane (2014) found a negative but significant correlation between work-family conflict and employee performance. The current study also found similar results since the correlation between work-family conflict and employee performance is strongly negative.

This study investigated that there was a significant impact on employee performance and women's career development. This study also identified a significant impact on employee performance and women's career development ($\beta = 0.693$, $p= 0.000$). Both the results were significant at the 95% confidence level (Sig. $T < 0.05$), helping the accepted H_3 hypothesis. This finding was supported by an earlier study. The completion of performance also impacts an employee's career development (Kurniawan et al., 2018). A positive correlation exists between career growth and job performance (Dialoke & Nkech, 2017).

This study investigated how employee performance significantly mediates the impact of work-family conflict on women's career development. It also identified a significant negative impact of work-family conflict on employee performance, significantly mediating work-family conflict and women's career development (sig-0.000).

Figure 2
Sobel Test

Input:		Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p-value:
a	-0.630	Sobel test: -7.39532034	0.0372276	0
b	0.437	Aroian test: -7.37875406	0.03731118	0
s _a	0.064	Goodman test: -7.41199871	0.03714383	0
s _b	0.039	Reset all	Calculate	

Further, employee performance could be considered as a partial mediation. Yusuf and Hansidar (2020) found that employee performance significantly mediates the effect of work-family conflict and women's career development. The current study also found similar results for mediating effects.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study on the career development of women in the banking sector is crucial, not only for the banking sector but also for other service and non-service sectors. A group of effective female employees can be created by providing the necessary facilities and opportunities for women's career development. Once they feel that top-level officers care about women's career development, their interest and commitment increase, and they perform their duties efficiently. Additionally, the various norms accepted by society can also change the ideology. The gender gap can be reduced by providing equal opportunities for women and men for higher positions. The organization can contribute to the country with a more skilled and efficient workforce.

This study is more useful for the organization's top managers in making decisions regarding women's career development. The researcher concludes that state commercial banks want to improve women's career development through better training and development programs, providing opportunities and necessary facilities for its employees to achieve higher education, providing promotion opportunities, and providing opportunities to go abroad for special training programs for women. Similarly, by giving flexible work hours, giving necessary leave, and not assigning over workload for the women. After they work satisfactorily and tend to career development. However, the establishment of childcare facilities and pre-schools for mothers' women for their career development and the easy fulfillment of duties.

As study limitations, firstly, it does not get an accurate result for the whole banking industry since this research considers only 291 women employees in the commercial banks in the Colombo region. Hence, future studies can focus on other state banks and private banks in other districts in terms of sample selection. Secondly, this study focused on one independent variable and one mediate variable. Hence, future researchers are encouraged to deploy one or more independent variables with mediating or moderating variables. Thirdly, this study used the quantitative approach and cross-sectional field for the study design. Hence, the researcher recommended using qualitative or mixed approaches and conducting longitudinal research in the future.

Keywords: Employee performance, women's career development, work-family conflict

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