



Research Article

The Effect of Individual Antecedents on Work-Family Conflict: A Research on Employees Working from Home due to Covid-19 Pandemic

*Bireysel Öncüllerinin İş-Aile Çatışmasına Etkisi:
Covid-19 Pandemisi Nedeniyle Evden Çalışanlar Üzerine Bir Araştırma*

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ABSTRACT

Existing research on work-family conflict mostly focused on its consequences due to its negative effect on employees, their families and organizations; so that research about the factors which cause work-family conflict remained limited. Based on this limitation, this study focuses on the effect of individual antecedents on work-family conflict, determined as Big-five personality traits and emotional intelligence, as important indicators of work-family conflict. The sample of the research includes 220 employees working for public institutions and who experienced to work from their home first time in their work-life due to Covid-19 pandemic conditions. The research findings indicate that employees that have a high conscientiousness trait experience a low work-family conflict, whereas the ones that have a high neuroticism trait experience a high work-family conflict. In addition, the findings about emotional intelligence reveal an insignificant effect on work-family conflict. Limitations, contributions and suggestions are further discussed.

ÖZ

İş-aile çatışmasının, çalışanlar, aileleri ve örgütler üzerindeki olumsuz etkileri nedeniyle, mevcut araştırmaların çoğunluğu, iş-aile çatışmasının sonuçlarına odaklanmıştır; bu nedenle, iş-aile çatışmasına neden olan etkenler ile ilgili araştırmalar sınırlı kalmıştır. Bu sınırlılığa istinaden, bu çalışmada iş-aile çatışmasının önemli bireysel öncülleri olarak belirlenen, beş faktör kişilik özellikleri ve duygusal zekanın iş-aile çatışması üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemi, kamu kurumlarında çalışan ve Covid-19 pandemi koşulları nedeniyle iş yaşamlarında ilk defa evden çalışma deneyimi yaşayan 220 çalışmanı kapsamaktadır. Araştırmanın bulguları, sorumluluk kişilik özelliği yüksek olan çalışanların daha az iş-aile çatışması yaşadıklarını gösterirken; duygusal dengesizlik kişilik özelliği yüksek olan çalışanların daha fazla iş-aile çatışması yaşadıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bununla birlikte, duygusal zekanın iş-aile çatışması üzerindeki etkisinin anlamlı olmadığı belirlenmiştir. Araştırma ile ilgili sınırlılıklar, katkılar ve öneriler ilaveten tartışılmıştır.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Work and family are the two domains that dominate lives of majority of people (Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011) and conflict among these domains occurred as a significant research field due to dramatic changes in workforce, since more than five decades. There exists significant changes in work-family domains, which cause conflict among them. French and Johnson (2016) reviewed the evolution of work-family research, and they summarized some of the highlights according to time frames. Work-family field was inception in 1970s and during 1970s and 1980s entry of women into workforce and working couples were among the societal trends that formed the basis of work-family conflict research (French & Johnson, 2016). According to the authors, work-family conflict was a popular topic during 1990s and there had been a steady growth in research; in addition to expansion and diversity of workforce, work structure also changed due to new technology including home computers and internet. Such changes became the basis of work-family conflict since then. The authors suggested that 2000s were expansion years for work-family research; during these years work structure continued to change since the new norm was 24/7 economy which indicated that work and home boundaries became more blurred because employees were accessible continuously. In addition, working abroad and for different time zones due to globalization also resulted in rise in work-family conflict.

Moreover, since last few decades witnessed a rapid increase in the number of single parents, dual-earner couples, and householders who may live with aging parents (Bennett, Beehr, & Ivanitskaya, 2017); this situation forced people to look for additional jobs in the existence of instable economic environment. As an outcome, it resulted in a growing work demand which overloaded the responsibilities of those people. Due to this, there is no doubt that, managing of work and family roles and demands of each simultaneously is a challenging issue for most employees (Allen et al., 2012). The issues regarding modern work-life, such as dual-earner families or single parents with more responsibilities, remote-working, more work demands, working long hours or with non-standards (such as after 18:00) made work-family conflict still a prominent concern for organizations around the globe. Accordingly, as put forth by Michel et al. (2011) those challenges make the topic of work family conflict still keeping the attention of scholars and practitioners for long time. Work-family

conflict recently became a popular topic again among many employees around the globe, due to unexpected Covid-19 pandemic conditions. In Turkey starting from the mid of March-2020, most of the people employed both at public institutions and private companies begun to work from their homes for either all weekdays or some part of the week. This beginning of a new-era of work-life suddenly brought back work-family conflict to the agenda of employees and organizations. In case employees could not be able to cope with work-family conflict, quality and sustainability of organizational activities will be negatively affected due to employees' unproductive works. In accordance, with this study, it was aimed to understand the effect of two important antecedents of work-family conflict. This study focuses on individual antecedents of work family conflict rather than organizational antecedents. Since, organizations as well as individuals were unprepared for lockdowns and working from home, they were not able to undertake employee support programs. In the absence of such support, individual traits come to the fore. During such difficult times, some of the people cope better with conflict arising from work and family interferences; and for some others the interference of work and family domains and arising tensions made it hard to manage them.

In line with the purpose of the study, after this introductory part, the following part covers literature review about work-family conflict and the selected antecedents which are personality characteristics and emotional intelligence, the third part is about research methodology whereas the fourth part summarizes research findings, and the discussion of the findings is included in the final conclusion part. The primary motivation of this study is based on the fact that there exists limited studies about work-family conflict for employees working from home.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical background of the construct of work family conflict is grounded basically in the scarcity approach and role stress theory which suggests that individual's resources such as time and physical or mental energy may be drained by the demands of one role, which may leave other roles to be managed by insufficient resources (Marks, 1977; Grant-Vallone & Donaldson 2001; Nohe, Meier, Sonntag, & Michel, 2015). On the other hand Conservation of Resources (COR) theory argues that individuals aim to obtain, conserve, protect and foster important resources and keep them away from threats (Gao, Shi, Niu, & Wang, 2013;

Hobfoll, 1989). Derived from these theories, work-family conflict (WFC) identified as an umbrella construct which refer to the term in its general sense as an inter-role conflict (Allen, French, Dumani, & Shockley, 2015) and it is generally defined as “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The term of WFC has two directions; one of them refers to work to family conflict (W2FC) that flows from the domain of work to the domain of family, which means the degree to which participation to family role become more difficult because of participation to work role. The second one refers to family to work conflict (F2WC) that flows from the domain of family to domain of work, which represents the degree to which participation to work role become difficult because of participation to family role (Michel et al., 2011). There exists a wide research about these two directions, which suggests that the interferences of two domains with each other are distinct forms of conflict (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Amstad et al., 2011).

Scholars agree that the domain elements of WFC are the demand of the role, the time allocated to a given role, and the strain turned out by a given role (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). According to Netemeyer et al. (1996), the general demands of a role refers to the “*responsibilities, requirements, expectations, duties, and commitments* associated with a given role”. When the time or the attention devoted to one domain such as family (or work) role conflicts with performing work (or family) responsibilities, a time-based conflict occurs. When strain resulted from work (family) role responsibilities conflicts with family (work) responsibilities, a strain-based conflict occurs; and when behavior, general demands or role expectations of family (work) role prevents work (family) role performance, a behavior-based conflict occurs (Michel et al., 2011). Although there are different dimensions of WFC distinguished by researchers (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Carlson, Kacmar & Williams, 2000), related but distinct two dimensions which are work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005) are the two dimensions generally focused in literature (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

Without taking in consideration the direction of the conflict, there is no doubt that there are many negative consequences and strains for it. These negative consequences not only occur at the individual level, but drawbacks also become evident at the organizational level. At the individual level, depression and impairment of physical health

(Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1997), anxiety (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001; O’Driscoll et al., 2003; Mostert et al., 2011), emotional exhaustion and irritation (Nohe et al., 2015), burnout (Rupert et al, 2009; Mostert et al., 2011), increased stress-level (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001), are among the serious health symptoms related with WFC. The findings of the meta-analyses of Amstad et al. (2011) suggests that life satisfaction, health problems, psychological strain, depression, substance use, stress and anxiety are classified as *domain-unspecific outcomes*; whereas *family related outcomes* consists of marital and family dissatisfaction, and family-related stress. Moreover, job and career dissatisfaction, job burnout, absenteeism, lower job performance and turnover are the most known work related outcomes, which may lead to lower work productivity and financial costs incurred by organizations that may occur in work domain (Netemeyer et al., 1996; Amstad et al., 2011). Thus, the effects are at the organizational as well as at the individual level.

2.1. Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict

Due to its detrimental effects for both employees and employers, much of research about work-family conflict has concentrated primarily on the harmful consequences of the conflict and how it negatively effects the individual and organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment, absenteeism and turnover intentions (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Collins, 2001; Michel et al., 2011). However, over recent decades, scholars also paid considerable attention to causes of WFC. In the study entitled ‘Antecedents of WFC’, Michel et al. (2011) categorized WFC antecedents. According to authors, work domain stressors formed the larger part of causes of the conflict, and they investigated the effect of personality over WFC taking in consideration personality components of internal locus of control and negative affect. WFC can be caused by different variables, so antecedents in general are classified into three categories, which are work-domain related variables, family-domain related variables and individual or demographic variables. On the one hand, work-domain related variables include high job-demands or job-involvement, low flexibility; on the other side, number of children, low family support and high family stress are examples for family-domain related variables. Individual or demographic variables consists of coping styles, time-management skills and personality characteristics as well (Allen et al., 2012). In accordance to Allen et al.’s (2012) study based on meta-analysis; the effect of personality characteristics and emotional intelligence, which is correlated with coping styles, were taken into consideration in this study in order

to explain the effect of these individual factors on WFC.

2.2. Personality Characteristics as an Antecedent of WFC

As scholars and personality researchers recommended, the Big Five Model is the most considerable description of individuals' traits (McCrae & John, 1998). The basic characteristics of the factors tried to capture and organize individuals' personality traits suggested by researchers (McCrae & Costa Jr, 1991) to describe behavioral invariance among people (Wayne, Musisca & Fleeson, 2004). Personality literature and theory draws a valuable insight for understanding the relationships between personality traits and experiences in different life domains, especially work life (Wille, De Fruyt & Feys, 2013). Personality, has been reported as a key component that influences work-family conflict; and it was proposed that, personality as 'coping resources' can increase the individuals' ability to handle with life's situations (Selvarajan, Singh & Cloninger, 2016). This notion was supported by Allen et al. (2012) indicating that individual characteristics such as personality and its components may serve as resources for people, which may help them in experiencing lower levels of WFC while managing their roles.

In this research, the direct effects of Five Factor Model of personality characteristics on WFC are conceptualized. Doing so, we tried to answer the call of Michel & Clark (2009) and Michel et al. (2011) for more examination of personality in the scope of work and family relationships; where the majority of work-family literature paid more attention to negative affectivity/neuroticism and internal locus of control since these variables are more likely to effect the degree to which individuals perceive both work and life conditions. Rather than such variables, we employed the Big Five model of personality which is the most coherently studied model in organizational studies, as well as it is the most widely recognized way of explaining and measuring human personality (Selvarajan et al., 2016). Besides most personality psychologists accept Big Five model as adequate and necessary to explain the personality structure at a global level (Mount, Barrick, & Stewart, 1998). As resources interact together to influence the work-family domain outcomes; Big Five model has been proposed to associate the behavior patterns and the interpretation of situations in various domains of life (Wayne et al., 2004). In this study, Big Five personality traits conceptualized as personal resources, which are, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness (to experience) and extraversion (Mount et al., 1998).

Conscientious people are recognized as responsible, orderly, planned, careful, and hardworking (Mount et al., 1998). Conscientiousness also represents drive and persistence, and organization, meanwhile it is a symbol of dependability and individual achievement (Selvarajan et al., 2016). Conscientiousness is a critical personal resource, and individuals who are high on conscientiousness have faith in their personal abilities, and in their work and family routines they can more easily manage multiple roles than individuals who are low on conscientiousness (Witt & Carlson, 2006). Literature about conscientiousness argues that, conscientiousness increases the ability of individuals to solve problems in more creative way and help them to effectively manage their time and prevent them against stress, Conscientiousness also is negatively associated with WFC (Selvarajan et al., 2016; Witt & Carlson, 2006). Based on this evidence, we believe that this key personal resource of conscientious individuals would help them in accomplishing more in the time available, which may lead to lower levels of incompatible time pressure (Wayne et al., 2004), thereby lowering the perception of WFC. Therefore, we suggest that conscientiousness has a negative effect on WFC.

H1: Conscientiousness personality trait has a significant negative effect on WFC.

Agreeableness trait manifested in flexible, caring, tolerant, good-natured, cooperative, and trusted individuals (Mount et al., 1998). Agreeable people are highly cooperative, more likely to be sociable, and emphatic towards others (Selvarajan et al., 2016). Agreeableness may also help in determining the individuals' tendency to tangle with any kind of relationship conflict (Selvarajan et al., 2016; Wayne et al., 2004). Personality literature has shown that individuals with high levels of agreeableness are less emotional comparing with those who are on lower levels of agreeableness, thereby less agreeable individuals have high tendency to become more distressed (Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999). Less emotional people tend to manage their emotions in more controllable way, thereby buffer their emotions from damaging their interpersonal relations (Yang & Diefendorff, 2009). In the light of the above mentioned discussions, it is supposed that employees who have high agreeableness trait would exercise a better control over their valid times, and consequently, an agreeable employee would experience a lower level of WFC comparing with individuals who are low on agreeableness, leading to the following hypotheses.

H2: Agreeableness personality trait has a significant negative effect on WFC.

Neuroticism is associated with characteristics like being insecure, intolerant of stress, not self-sufficient, instable and anxious (Mount et al., 1998). Emotional stability is inverse name used to refer to neuroticism. Neuroticism is defined as the tendency of individual to experience negative emotions (Wayne et al., 2004). Moreover, neuroticism as a cognitive resource can interact with other resources to control WFC; although, high levels of emotional intelligence would help individuals with high levels of neuroticism to decrease tendency to conceptualize stressful situations, and accordingly perceive lesser WFC (Selvarajan et al., 2016); we propose the following hypothesis that neuroticism has a positive effect on WFC, without the interaction of other variables.

H3: *Neuroticism personality trait has a significant positive effect on WFC.*

Openness (to experience) trait is about individuals being curious, broad-minded, intellectual, cultured, and imaginative (Mount et al., 1998). This Big Five trait explains the tendency of an individual to be open to change and new ideas, also it helps people in managing conflicts and develop creative solutions for hard conditions (Wayne et al., 2004). Individuals with high levels of openness perceive conflicts and different situations as an opportunity to experience different situations and as a result on that big amount of useful resource that can help them in managing work-life pressure and different domains of their lives (Selvarajan et al., 2016). Thus, it is reasonable for open individuals to experience lower levels of WFC, suggesting the following hypotheses.

H4: *Openness personality trait has a significant negative effect on WFC.*

Extraverted people are more talkative, energetic, adventurous and assertive (Mount et al., 1998). The most known characteristics of extravert individuals are positivity and higher levels of energy, those characteristics helps them accomplish more tasks without being exhausted rather than unsocial people who may perceive those tasks with more strain and time pressure (Wayne et al., 2004). Thus we predict a negative relationship between extraversion and WFC.

H5: *Extraversion personality trait has a significant negative effect on WFC.*

2.3. Emotional Intelligence as an Antecedent of WFC

Scholars and other people have become unfulfilled with the traditional relationship that relates

intelligence with verbal performance and 'intelligence quotient' (IQ) beside some academic abilities. This forces researchers to the idea that intelligence is wider than this and it should be re-conceptualized to include 'emotional intelligence' (EI), these efforts resulted in with new concept for intelligence, lead to a new definition for intelligence, to be in general as the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one's emotions (Ciarrochi, Chan & Caputi, 2000). Today, EI is one of the topics that examined and approached by organizational and management scholars, and the reason for this is that EI is a key predictor of various organizational outcomes since it provides a framework for organizing personality (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). EI itself was at the initial time explicitly has a definition and a theory when Salovey and Meyer published two articles in 1990 and follow it with editorial studies in 1993 (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004). The authors defined EI as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The concept was then popularized by Goleman in 1998 who defined EI as, "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (Kushwaha, 2012). Mayer and Salovey's definition defined EI as interconnected abilities and skills concerning "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). As per the positive effect of EI on management performance and organizational outcomes (Suliman & Al-Shaikh, 2007), the concept is divided into four distinct dimensions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). *Self Emotional Appraisal* is related to experiencing and expression of emotion in the self, and it manifest in the individuals' potential of understanding their own emotions and the ability to express experience these emotions in smooth and natural way, which will result in individual's high acknowledge of his/her own emotions at the first stage. *Others' Emotional Appraisal (OEA)* dimension is related to the individual's potential of perceiving the emotions of other people and the ability to understand these emotions, which helps the individual in reading the minds of those people. So the ability of understanding one's own emotions is interconnected with the ability to understand the emotions of others. *Regulation of Emotion in the self (ROE)* is manifested in individuals' ability to

Table 1: Descriptive Information of Sample

		N	%
Gender	Female	143	65,0
	Male	77	35,0
Marital Status	Single	76	34,55
	Married	144	65,45
Number of Children	No children	109	49,5
	One child	45	20,5
	Two or more children	66	30,0
Education Level	High-School	17	7,8
	University	92	41,9
	Masters and PhD	111	50,5
		m	ö
Age		36,33	7,548
Tenure		10,90	7,633

coordinate their emotions, which may prevent the individual from psychological distress. *Use of Emotion (UOE)* facilitates performance, and it is identified in individuals' ability to manage and direct their emotions effectively to the aim of their personal performance (Wong & Law, 2002).

EI is identified as an important cognitive resource (Gao et al., 2013). Scholars found that the role of EI was important in buffering the causes of WFC (Gao et al., 2013; Suliman & Al-Shaikh, 2007). According to COR theory personal characteristics can be considered as resources that prevent individuals from negative effects of stressful events. Thus, people with more personal resources can manage the loss of other resources, such as the loss resulted from WFC (Hobfoll, 1989). When people face threats to their personal resources, the evaluation process and the reaction would be different relating to their emotional regulation capacity. For instance, those individuals who are better at perceiving their emotional and behavioral reactions may experience lower levels of WFC as well as they do it in more efficient way. Meanwhile people with lower levels of EI may not react in the same way (Gao et al., 2013). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H6: *EI level has a significant negative effect on WFC.*

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Method and Information about Participants

In accordance to the research purpose, a quantitative research methodology was applied to test the proposed hypotheses. Data was collected via online survey by convenience sampling in April-2020, from 220 employees working in public institutions in Ankara. As demonstrated in Table-1, most of the participants within the sample are female (65%) and married (65,45%) and most of them do not have children (49,5%), the ones with a graduate degree accounts for more than half of the sample (50,5%). The average of participants age is 36 years ($\bar{m} = 7,548$) and their average tenure is approximately 11 years ($SD = 7,633$).

The applied questionnaire consists of two parts, items about demographic information are included in the first part of the questionnaire, and second part includes the scales to measure WFC, Big-Five personality and EI. In order to measure participants' WFC level, the scale developed by Netemeyer, McMurrian and Boles (1996) was applied; this scale consists of two dimensions, each of which are measured by five items, and named as W2FC and F2WC. High levels of scores indicate high levels of conflict. A sample item for W2FC is "The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life", and a sample item for F2WC is "The demands

Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analyses

	CFI	GFI	X^2/sd	<i>p</i>	RMSEA
WFC	0,954	0,900	1,946	0,000	0,066
Personality Traits	0,900	0,790	1,718	0,000	0,057
Emotional Intelligence	0,916	0,868	1,678	0,000	0,056

CFI (Comparative Fit Index)
GFI (Goodness of Fit Statistics)
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)

of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities”.

Participants' personality traits were measured with the scale developed by Benet-Martínez and John (1998). This scale consists of 44 items which identifies the five dimensions of personality traits that are conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness (to experience) and extraversion. Sample items are “makes plans, follows through with them” (for conscientiousness), “is considerate and kind to almost everyone” (for agreeableness), “is depressed, blue” (for neuroticism), “is original, comes up with new ideas” (for openness) and “has an assertive personality” (for extraversion).

Emotional intelligence levels of participants were assessed with the Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence developed by Schutte et al. (1998). 33 items of the scale measures three dimensions of emotional intelligence, which are ‘appraisal and expression of emotions’ (sample item: “I am aware of my emotions as I experience them”), ‘regulation of emotions’ (sample item: “when I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them”) and ‘utilization of emotions’ (sample item: “when my mood changes, I see new possibilities”).

WFC scale was adopted to Turkish by Efeoğlu

(2006); the adoption of big-five personality scale was undertaken by Sümer and Sümer (2005); and emotional intelligence scale was adopted to Turkish by Göçet (2006). All of the scale items in Turkish were measured by using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The survey data were analyzed by AMOS v.21 and SPSS v.21 statistical programs.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted in order to identify goodness of models. Among the values of the model, X^2/sd value below 3, RMSEA value below ,05 and CFI and GFI values above ,95 indicates a perfect fit; whereas X^2/sd value below 5, RMSEA value below ,08 and CFI and GFI values above ,90 indicates a good fit (Çokluk et al., 2010). As shown in Table 2, the results prove that the scales have a good fit.

For normality statistics of the sample, we tested the values of skewness and kurtosis. In accordance, it was observed that skewness and kurtosis values range between $\pm 2,0$ which imply that the sample has a normal distribution for parametric analysis (Mallery & George, 2003; Spisito et al., 1983).

3.2. Findings

The average and standard deviation values of research variables and Cronbach Alpha (α) reliability coefficients are demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Average, Standard Deviations and Reliability Values

	<i>m</i>	<i>s</i>	α
W2FC	2,74	1,05	0,903
F2WC	1,97	0,86	0,889
Extraversion	3,23	0,42	0,908
Agreeableness	3,44	0,39	0,851
Conscientiousness	3,48	0,36	0,840
Neuroticism	2,83	0,46	0,824
Openness	3,65	0,64	0,769
Emotional Intelligence	3,64	0,36	0,852

Table 4: Regression Analysis – Effect of Personality Traits on WFC

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
W2FC	<---	extraversion	-0,078	0,193	-0,405	0,686
W2FC	<---	agreeableness	0,757	0,374	2,025	0,043
W2FC	<---	conscientiousness	-0,467	0,205	-2,284	0,022
W2FC	<---	neuroticism	0,423	0,132	3,197	0,001
W2FC	<---	openness	0,032	0,142	0,225	0,822
F2WC	<---	extraversion	0,283	0,188	1,508	0,132
F2WC	<---	agreeableness	0,349	0,348	1,001	0,317
F2WC	<---	conscientiousness	-0,632	0,197	-3,217	0,001
F2WC	<---	neuroticism	0,352	0,123	2,87	0,004
F2WC	<---	openness	0,115	0,135	0,854	0,393

According to the findings, the mean of W2FC is above the average ($m=2,74$) and more than the average of F2WC ($m=1,97$); which indicates participants face a conflict from work to family; whereas family to work conflict is low for them. Besides, emotional intelligence of participants is high ($m=3,64$). In terms of personality traits, the average score for openness trait ($m=3,65$) is higher compared to other traits and neuroticism trait has the lowest average score ($m=2,83$); however, all of the average scores of other personality traits is above average. Cronbach alpha reliability values of research variables are above 0,7 which shows a high consistency for research instruments.

To test the hypotheses about the effect of personality traits and emotional intelligence on W2FC and F2WC, regression analysis is conducted with AMOS 23 program. The findings demonstrated in Table 4, indicate a significant positive effect of agreeableness trait and neuroticism trait, and a significant negative effect of conscientiousness trait on W2FC. On the other hand, the findings also indicate a significant

positive effect of neuroticism trait, and a significant negative effect of conscientiousness trait on F2WC. In accordance, since only two of personality traits, that are neuroticism and conscientiousness, effect both W2FC and F2WC; hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 3 is supported. When the regression analysis are conducted for two sub-samples divided according to the gender of the participants, the findings indicate that the positive effect of neuroticism on W2FC is stronger for male participants ($\beta= 0,569$; $p=0,018$) compared to female participants ($\beta= 0,335$; $p=0,020$).

The regression analysis results of the effect of emotional intelligence on W2FC and F2WC is demonstrated in Table 5. According to the findings, the effect of all of the dimensions of emotional intelligence is found to be insignificant. As a result of these findings hypothesis 6 is rejected. The only significant finding, in case the regression analysis is conducted only for male participants, is that, appraisal of emotions has a significant negative effect on F2WC ($\beta= -2,166$; $p=0,041$).

Table 5: Regression Analysis – Effect of Emotional Intelligence on WFC

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
W2FC	<---	Utilization of Emotions (UOE)	2,044	2,285	0,895	0,371
W2FC	<---	Appraisal of Emotions (OEA)	-0,381	0,618	-0,617	0,537
W2FC	<---	Regulation of Emotions (ROE)	-3,009	3,054	-0,985	0,324
F2WC	<---	Utilization of Emotions (UOE)	2,328	2,513	0,926	0,354
F2WC	<---	Appraisal of Emotions (OEA)	-0,72	0,682	-1,056	0,291
F2WC	<---	Regulation of Emotions (ROE)	-2,848	3,332	-0,855	0,393

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Although more than half a century it is on the agenda of the companies, work-family conflict is still an important challenge not only for organizations, but for employees and their families as well. This is mainly because that both forms of work-family conflict are associated with significant health and organizational outcomes. Change in demographic structure of organizations due to increase in women employment, aging employees, employees who take care of their elder or dependent relatives; in addition change in the way jobs are conducted because of technological developments or requirement to work longer or with non-standard hours, makes work-family conflict a prominent concern of modern work-life. Besides to these, many employees recently started to work from their homes, for the first time at their lives. This change in working structure occurred globally as a result of undertaken restrictions because of Covid-19 pandemic conditions. With ongoing pandemic conditions, it is expected that working from home will continue for an uncertain time-period. While working from home other family members being also at home, results conflicting demands. Employees across nations can find it struggling to juggle both work and family demands during such difficult times, yet they do so under a variety of individual traits. Since individual characteristics impact work-family conflict differently, some employees are more successful in managing work-family conflict; in accordance, this study is conducted with the motivation to determine the effect of important antecedents of work-family conflict, that are personality traits and level of emotional intelligence. It has been suggested that, personality traits influence patterns of behavior and influence individual reactions to variety of life domains; but as Zhang and Liu (2011) suggests the research on the relationship between Big-five personality theory and WFC is quite few. Furthermore, Greenhaus et al. (2003) pointed out that, employees who are emotionally invested in their work and family roles tend to be greatly affected by work family conflict and as a result experience a decrease in quality of life. Thus, with this study the effect of these variables were tested on both domains of WFC.

This study conducted with 220 participants working for public institutions in Ankara and who are working from their homes, for the first time in their work-lives. The findings reveal that among other personality traits, the participants that have a high conscientiousness trait experience lower W2FC and F2WC, and the ones that have a high neuroticism trait experience higher levels of W2FC and F2WC.

According to the results of the regression analysis, the effect is higher for conscientiousness trait when compared to neuroticism trait. The findings related to the negative effect of conscientiousness trait on WFC, contradicts to the findings of De-Fruyt and Feys (2013) who found a positive longitudinal relation between conscientiousness and WFC. However, Wayne et al. (2004) found similar results with this study about the effect of conscientiousness on WFC. The authors suggested that conscientious people may be able to separate the boundaries of work and family since these people can complete their tasks successfully in less time and they are less preoccupied with work while they are at home, and vice versa (Wayne et al., 2004). On the other hand, similar to the findings of this study, De-Fruyt and Feys (2013) in their longitudinal study, found neuroticism as an important risk factor for experiencing WFC; Allen et al. (2012) as a result of their meta-analysis suggested that neuroticism appear to make individuals more vulnerable to WFC. Additionally, Blanch and Aluja (2009), in their study found neuroticism as one of the most predictive variable of W2FC. With this study, it was also found that neuroticism effect is higher for male participants rather than females. This reveals the importance of gender differences for WFC research. On the other hand, although the related hypothesis is rejected due to its positive effect, agreeableness trait has the highest effect than conscientiousness and neuroticism on W2FC, which may be related to the reason that agreeable people will make extra efforts for balancing their duties in work and family roles, which accordingly will drive them more stressful and experiencing high levels of W2FC and F2WC. Bruck and Allen (2003) found that agreeableness has a negative effect on W2FC and F2WC to be insignificant after controlling for some variables. So that, it is necessary to control for other variables, in future studies. When the relation of emotional intelligence on both dimensions of WFC is considered, it was found that the effects of all of the dimensions of emotional intelligence on WFC are insignificant. The only significant negative effect was found for male participants for the appraisal of emotions on F2WC. The findings from the previous literature (i.e. Carmeli, 2003 for senior managers; Biggart et al., 2010 for fathers) also indicate that emotionally intelligent employees are better at handling WFC.

As discussed, most findings of this study are similar to findings from previous literature. The contradictory findings with some of the studies might have aroused because of the extraordinary pandemic related conditions; under such conditions, employees feel more anxious, nervous and fearful about their families and themselves. So that, it might be more difficult for them to manage the

conflicting demands of work and family domains. It is asserted that conducting similar studies after pandemic conditions are valuable for comparison of findings. With its findings, this study tries to add some contributions to the literature on antecedents of WFC and reveal which of the individual traits affect WFC. However, the study also has some limitations; the findings are based on the self-evaluation of 220 employees who are employed in public institutions in Ankara. In order for generalizability of the findings, the relations among the variables should be tested in other industries as well. Especially, with more job demands and working hours, employees working in private industries form an important research sample. Although this study has limitations, it has valuable contributions. First of all, with this study the effect of antecedents on WFC were analyzed, which there is limited literature. In the national literature, there exists an interest on understanding WFC but starting from the early research on the concept, most of the studies focused on outcomes of WFC, such as job stress, job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, turnover intention, job and life satisfaction (i.e. Efeoğlu & Özgen, 2007; Çarıkcı & Çelikkol, 2009). Besides, literature on WFC largely ignored its antecedents and as far as to our knowledge, there exists no research in national literature, which measures the effect of personality traits and emotional intelligence on WFC. The exploration of the effect of these variables in future research will bring new research fields to explore the suggested relations. Furthermore, the suggested research hypothesis were tested during a new period, started as a result of Covid-19 pandemic; this period indicates the beginning of a new work-life for many employees that most of them started to work from their homes first time. Since the future of work-life will be shaped by the experiences derived from these conditions, the findings are expected to contribute to the selection of new employees based on their personality traits, who will be able to cope with the conflicting demands of their work and family, while working from home.

ETHICS DECLARATIONS

Funding: No grant funding was obtained or utilized for the completion of this study.

Conflict of interest: The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to this study.

Ethical Approval: All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and

with the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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