

## GENDER EFFECT ON WORK FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG MANAGERS

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### Introduction

Work–family conflict can be explained as the mutual interference of work and family roles and cause significant personnel and organizational problems. So, antecedents and results of work family conflicts must be known for the work family balance of workers. Work family conflict is most commonly defined as “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1989:77) Some studies questioned whether the patterns of this incompatibility are the same for women and men. According to Lambert (1990:253) gender differences must be studied in depth. Literature suggests two hypothesis concerning gender differences in domain sources conflict: domain flexibility and domain salience. The domain flexibility hypothesis predicts that the work domain is a greater source of conflict than the family domain for both women and men. The domain salience hypothesis predicts that the family domain is a greater source of conflict for women than the work domain and the work domain a greater source of conflict for men than the family domain. (Izraeli, 1993) Evans & Bartolome (1984) claims that work domain is less flexible, so work affects family life more than reverse and there is no gender differences. But as to Cooke & Rousseau (1984) conflict is greater from the domain that is more salient to the person’s identity. Then, women will experience more conflict from the family domain and men from the work domain. Hall (1972) noted that women may experience more role conflict as a result of simultaneity of their multiple roles. Along with gender, some family domain pressures like the effect of presence of young children (Lewis & Cooper,1988; Greenhaus & Kopelman, 1981), spouse time in paid work (Coverman & Sheley,1986; Voydanoff, 1988) and work

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domain pressures like number of hours worked per week (Voydanoff,1988; Burke,Weirs & Duwors,1980) are associated with work family conflict.

Most of the research on work family conflicts has been conducted in Western societies (Ahmad, 1996:663) like European countries, US, Canada etc., but as more women in non Western societies join the work force, understanding the effects of work family conflicts has become increasingly important. Women in non Western societies have been participating in economic activities increasingly in professional roles like managers, but relatively little is known about work family relationships in these societies. (Aryee, 1992:814)

The present study examines gender and domain differences in work family conflict among women and men managers in Turkey. In other words; it tries to clarify which of the two domains generates more conflict for men and women and examines gender differences in the predictors of conflict within each domain. At last, scales that can measure the work family conflict and role salience in Turkish workers are prepared. The structure of the study design is shown in figure I.

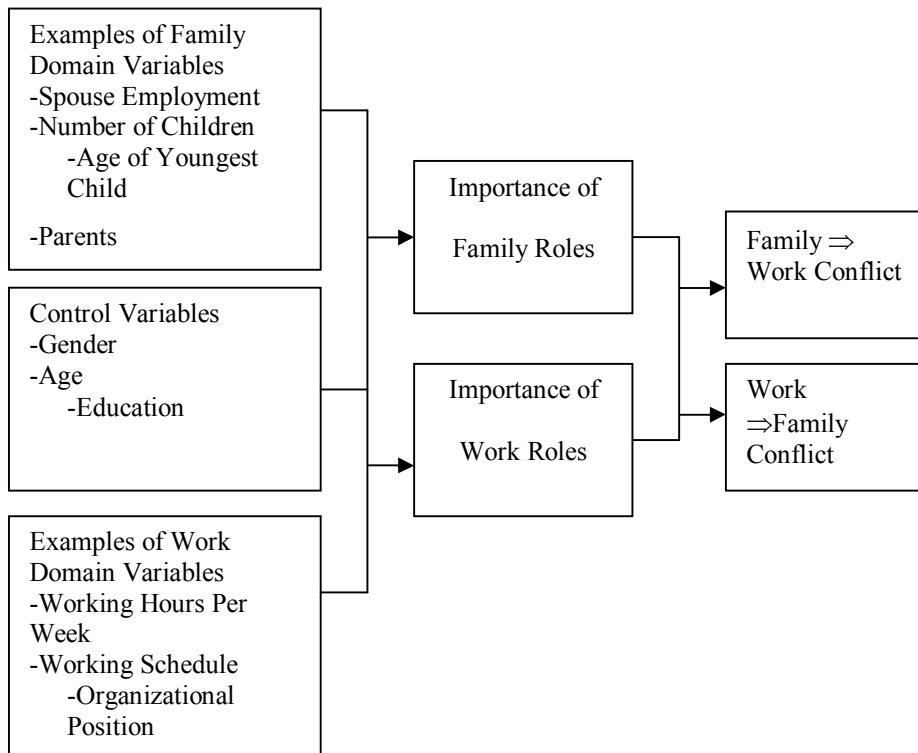


Figure I: Structural Model of the Study

**METHOD**

**Subjects**

Because of the relatively small number of women managers in Turkey, the sample was drawn from the sectors known to have a sizable number of women managers like banking sector. Anonymous questionnaires were distributed via mail and returned by each respondent directly to the researcher. The data collection was performed between January 2001 and May 2001. Respondents returned their completed questionnaires in closed envelopes and the respondents' identities remained hidden, as responses were given without using names. The final sample used in the study consisted of 110 men and 137 women. Table I summarizes the demographic characteristics of for the male and female respondents separately.

**Table-I: Characteristic of the Sample (n=247)**

Characteristic (%)	Men (n=110)	Women (n=137)	Chi- Square values
Age			61.25*
18-39 yr	62.7	84.7	
40-59 yr	37.3	15.3	
Education			55.42*
Lower	25.5	27.0	
Higher	74.5	73.0	
Organizational Position			4.96*
Upper level manager	57.3	31.4	
Middle level manager	42.7	68.6	
Tenure			8.20*
More than 10 yr	35.5	45.3	
Less than 10 yr	64.5	54.7	
Working Hours per Week			110.22*
< 40 hr/week	17.3	16.1	
> 40 hr/week	82.7	83.9	
Working Schedule			29.16*
Regular	44.5	27.0	
Partially Regular	40.0	51.8	
Irregular	15.5	21.2	
Spouse employment			31.36*
Employed	46.5	93.9	
Not employed	53.5	6.1	
Children			80.24*
Yes	13.9	23.0	
No	86.1	77.0	
Age of the youngest child			48.37*
>18	6.9	9.1	
7-18	43.7	42.9	

0-6	49.4		
Parents			156.69*
Both of them alive	65.5	73.0	
One of them alive	27.3	24.4	
Both of them not alive	7.3	6.6	
Time devoted to parents			37.93*
Frequently	29.4	28.1	
Occasionally	53.9	50.0	
Rare	16.7	21.9	
Availability of Housework Help from Family (Parents, sister etc.)			4.40*
Always / Sometimes	34.5	50.4	
Never / Rare	65.5	49.6	

\*  $p < .05$

### Measures

According to the conceptual model of the study, the research variables divided into two main groups: first, work family conflict and second, commitment to work and family roles or role salience scale. Work family conflict was measured using an 12 item scale that is derived from Carlson et al. (1999) and this scale is consisted of statements which assessed the degree to which a respondent's job interferes with his or her family life (e.g., "My work interferes with my family responsibilities, my family responsibilities prevent me from effectively performing my job, The behaviors that work for me at home (work) do not seem to be effective at work (home)" etc.) Each item used a 5 point frequency based Likert scale ranging from (1) never to (5) always. The reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) for the scale was 0.8538.

Role commitment or salience is measured also by using an 12 item scale produced by using the conflict scale and modified for Turkish people. Measure consisted of twelve statements like "Concentration to my work is important for me, joining to family activities is important for me etc." Each item also used a 5 point frequency based Likert scale ranging from (1) never to (5) always too. The reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) for the scale was 0.7115.

Work and family role pressure variables classified according to the domain of their source like age of the youngest child, number of children, time in paid work, features of work arrangements etc. Some variables about parents are added to the demographics section of the questionnaire because it was convenient to understand the whole structure of Turkish family.

### Data Analyses

Data analyses were conducted in three steps. In the first step, factor analysis was performed to extract factors and to examine the discriminant validity of each scales. Principal component analysis was used to extract the factors and

were rotated using varimax. So, there was three factors for conflict (work to family, family to work and behavior conflicts) and two (importance of work and importance of family) for salience scales. In the second step, to test for gender differences in the predictors of work family conflict within each domain, we used the ANOVA test for the significance of difference between betas. In the third step, hierarchical regression analyses were used to test the hypothesized relations between the antecedents variables and the two types of work family conflict variables for men and women separately.

## **RESULTS**

### **Results of Factor Analysis**

Results of the factor analysis of the work family conflict items are presented in Table II. As may be seen from the table, 12 items loaded onto three factors (work to family, family to work and behavior based conflict ) and these factors explained 58.5 % of the total variance in work family conflict as general. Table III presents the factor analysis results of the 12 items used to measure importance of work and family roles. The 12 items loaded onto 2 factors which were labeled importance of job and importance of family. The two factors explained only % 43.2 of the variance.

Table II: Results of Factor Analyses of Work Family Conflict Scale Items

	Contribution to Total Variance (%)	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue
<b>Factor 1: Work ⇒ Family Conflict</b>	34.712		4.17
24. I feel physically drained when I get home from work		.803	
26. Due to all pressures at work, when I come home I am too stressed to do things I enjoy		.774	
21. My work often interferes with my family responsibilities		.770	
20. My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like		.756	
25. The stress from my job often makes me irritable when I get home		.718	
<b>Factor 2 : Family ⇒ Work Conflict</b>	12.825		1.54
28. My family responsibilities prevent me from effectively Performing my job		.788	
27. Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work		.705	
22. The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my		.699	

work responsibilities			
23. The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career		.643	
<b>Factor 3: Behavior Based Conflicts</b>	10.818		1.30
30. The behaviors that work for me at home (work) do not seem to be effective at work (home)		.798	
29. The problem solving approaches I use at home (work) are not effective in resolving problems at at work (home)		.689	
31. The behaviors I Perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.		.598	

**Table III: Results of Factor Analyses of Role Salience Scale Items**

	Contribution to Total Variance (%)	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue
<b>Factor 1: Importance of Job</b>	30.425		3.59
40. Importance of job concentration		.784	
35. Importance of joining activities that are useful for the career.		.723	
39. Importance of to be able to cope with problems at work		.647	
<b>Factor 2: Importance of Family</b>	12.862		1.51
34. Importance of fulfil daily family responsibilities		.783	
33. Importance of time devoting to house work		.656	
32. Importance of joining to family activities.		.578	

**Relationships Between Factors and Independent Variables**

*1. Work Family Conflict.* ANOVA and t tests for work family conflict shown that there was difference between men and women respondents ( $t = -4.24$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $n = 247$ ). So, there was significant difference between two sexes. ( $m = 3.21$  for women and  $m = 2.77$  for men) Organizational position of a manager was also an

effective variable. ( $t = 2.51, p = .013, n = 247$ ) Besides, as a significant time based constraint, number of working hours was an effective variable. There were difference between respondents working less than 40 hours per week and more than 40 hours per week ( $t = -3.41, p = .001, n = 247$ ). Working schedule was also a determinative factor. ( $F(2,245) = 13.69, p = .000$ ) At last, there was difference between managers who concerned with their parents frequently and the other groups who concerned occasionally and rarely. ( $F(2,245) = 6.22, p = .002$ )

2. *Family Work Conflict.* There was no significant difference between the groups for factor of family work conflict. (For women  $m = 2.07$  and for men = 2.06)

3. *Importance of Job.* There was no significant difference between the groups for factor of job importance, too. (For women  $m = 4.65$  and for men = 4.62)

4. *Importance of Family.* For family importance factor, only gender was seemed as an effective variable. ( $t = -3.66, p = .000, n = 247$ , for women  $m = 4.37$  and for men = 3.83) According to this result, it is clear that family is to be perceived more important for women than men.

**Prevalence of Work Family Conflict**

Table IV presents means and prevalence rates (i.e., the percentage reporting each conflict at least occasionally) of the two types of conflicts (work family and family work conflicts) As table IV indicates, interference from work to family was more prevalent than interference from family to work among both sexes. ( $t = 18.59, p = .000, n = 247$ ) The prevalence of work family conflict was at a higher level, about % 69.1 suffering from it at least occasionally, whereas the prevalence of family work conflict was low, under % 31 of the men and women reporting at least occasional interference from family to work.

**Table IV: Work Family Conflict Means for Two Sexes** (PR= Prevalence rate that represents the percentage of respondents reporting the type of conflict at least “occasionally”.)

	Type of Conflict			
	Work Family		Family Work	
	M	PR	m	PR
Men	2.77	63.4 %	2.06	33.0 %
Women	3.21	75.1 %	2.07	32.8%
Total	3.08	69.1 %	2.02	30.8 %

**Antecedents of Work Family Conflict**

To examine the contribution made by each domain variables to work family and family work conflict, each type of conflict regressed onto full set of variables for men and women separately.

**Table V: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Work Family Conflict**

Independent Variable	Women (n=137)				Men (n=110)			
	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	F	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	F
Step 1 Demographics								
Age	.01				.01			
Education	-.01	.01	.01	0.41	.12	.01	.01	.51
Step 2. Family Domain Variables								
Spouse employment	-.15				.13			
Age of youngest child	.05				-.01			
Parents	.08				-.04			
Time devoted to Parents	.46*				.08			
Help for housework	.12	.33	.32	4.25*	.24	.08	.07	.84
Step 3 Work Domain Variables								
Organizational Position	.05				.08			
Tenure	.12				-.10			
Working Hours Per Week	-.12				.02			
Working Schedule	.15	.40	.07	3.43*	.23	.16	.09	1.10

\* p< .05

Table V presents the results for the work family conflict. According to the table, the full set of variables explained % 40 (R<sup>2</sup>) variance in work family conflict for women; but only % 16 (R<sup>2</sup>) for men. For women, of the three antecedent sets, family domain variables made the highest contribution (Δ R<sup>2</sup> = 32 %, F = 4.25, p = 0.001), followed by work domain variables (Δ R<sup>2</sup> = 7 %). Within the antecedent sets the only significant variable was time devoted to parents (beta = .46, t = 3.90, p = .000). For men, of the three antecedent sets, the work domain variables made the highest incremental contribution (%9), followed by family domain variables (%7). Within the antecedents, there was no significant variable.

**Table VI: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Family Work Conflict**

Independent Variable	Women (n=137)				Men (n=110)			
	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	F	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	F
Step 1 Demographics								
Age	-.01				-.02			
Education	.04	.01	.01	.34	-.05	.02	.02	.97
Step 2. Work Domain Variables								
Organizational Position	.11				.03			
Tenure	-.10				.08			





and place of employment are not similar in the sources of work family conflict in Turkey.

### **Sources of Conflict**

Work family conflict was not associated with family domain variables like the presence of small children, number of children, spouse employment and was associated with time spent in paid work, irregularity of working schedule and organizational position. So it was clear that work family conflict is generated by pressures from time based constraints in work domain. One exception was organizational status of the respondents. In line with Karasek's theory, lower level managers reported higher levels of conflict.

As a non western society characteristic, feelings about parents was a significant conflict source especially for women. Most of the research about work and family indicated the sensitivity of the workers about their children and care arrangements. But in Turkey, wide structures of the families which are including parents, parents - in - law, sisters and brothers etc., are also influential on child care arrangements and their quality. But sensitivity about parents are also seemed to be an significant factor effecting work and family roles.

Our findings indicated that women considered their families and family activities much more than men. Even they are upper level managers in their organizations, gender role expectations and responsibilities have been continuing to be dominant for women. Women undertake most of the family responsibilities from child care to parents' care. These results refer to greater responsibility of women for family matters than men. So, it can be said that for women real source of conflict is work family conflict is perception of the family responsibilities. This finding is line with classic gender role expectations theory. In this respect, Turkish women can not participate in working life equally with men.

### **Turkish Context**

Turkey is a mostly industrialized and urbanized but a relatively traditional one in terms of the structure and culture of family. As a family centered society the dilemma between career and family put pressure on women in Turkish culture. Business world is not family friendly, insufficient social security arrangements and frequent economic crises have significant negative effects on women. Comparing professional women in Europe and Turkey; Turkish women attach to their family identities so much; affected by hard working conditions and family characteristics.

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