

The Effects of Work-to-family Conflict and Work-to-family Enrichment on Job Satisfaction among Academics in Malaysia

Badri, S. K. Z.* and Panatik, S. A.

Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81300 Skudai, Johor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effect of work-life balance from the perspective of work-to-family conflict (W-FC) and work-to-family enrichment (W-FE) in relation to job satisfaction among academics in Malaysia. A survey method using self-administrated questionnaire was adopted to gather data from 307 respondents. Results were analysed using AMOS 23 and SPSS23. Findings showed that all W-FC and W-FE dimensions were significantly correlated with job satisfaction. However, for direct effect result, only W-FE capital significantly affected job satisfaction whereas none of W-FC dimensions found to have had an effect on job satisfaction. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on work-life balance and job satisfaction among Malaysian Research University academics. The findings provide useful information for university academics and human resource practitioner for future organisational improvement and policy development.

Keywords: Work-to-family Enrichment, Work-to-family Conflict and Job Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance which revolves around work and family domains is not a new issue. Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) defined work-family balance as the extent to which individuals are equally engaged

and satisfied with his/her work and family roles. Perrons (2003) argued that work-life balance is not only essential to health and well-being of individuals, but also cost-efficient for institutions towards providing a stable work environment. Those who have good work-life balance will perform better in workplace, thus, increases productivity of the organisation. It has been argued that achieving balance between work and

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E-mail addresses:

SitiKhadijah.Zainal@nottingham.edu.my (Badri, S. K. Z.),

sitiasiyah@management.utm.my (Panatik, S. A.)

* Corresponding author

The University of Nottingham, Malaysia Campus, Jalan Broga,
43500 Semenyih, Selangor, Malaysia

family is not only critical in maximising an individual's functionality at work but also helpful in minimising occurrence of conflict between work and family (Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985).

In Malaysia, work-family balance became a hot topic when the number of dual income earners increased (Aminah, 1996). Dual-earner couple is when both spouses are earning an income. The Department of Statistics Malaysia (2013) released reports which showed a steady increase in the ratio of working women to men, 6:4. Recent statistics also revealed a high participation of woman in the work force (Labour Force Participation Rate - LFPR) at 54.1% (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016). Equal involvement of both genders in work reflect change in today scenario where traditional view which men function as the sole breadwinner while women function as family caretakers are no longer been practiced.

The increasing number of dual income earners is one of the reason which has caused conflict between work and family life (Panatik, et al, 2012a; Jamadin et al., 2015). This is because, work-to-family conflict happens when work domain interferes with family domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Conflict is a result of collision between multiple roles in an individual's life. Jamadin et al. (2015) argue that excessive work stress caused by poor working conditions is one of the main factors which trigger work-to-family conflict. According to the role theory (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964),

conflict happens when individuals fail to live up to expectations of their role. For some individuals, multiple roles are difficult to be balanced which explain why some individuals encounter high level of work-to-family conflict (Greenhaus & Powell, 1985). Those with high work-to-family coonflict will experience physical and emotional exhaustion as well as unstable behaviour which hinders them from participating fully in both family and work activities.

In contrast, a good balance between work and life results in work-to-family enrichment. Carlson et al. (2011) argue that a good balance in this regard could promote higher occurrence of work-to-family enrichment. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) define work-to-family enrichment as a situation where participation at work helps individual to perform better in the family domain. The concept is opposite of work-to-family conflict where it and focuses on how work brings beneficial effect towards the family. According to the role accumulation theory, having multiple roles increase reciprocity in terms of benefit, privilege, resource and social relationship (Sieber, 1974). That is, positive energy and experience gained through participation in multiple roles promote higher role enhancement which improves individual gratification, skills and commitment (Marks, 1974). This is also highlighted in work-to-family enrichment theory by Greenhaus and Powell (2006) which states that multiple resources in a role generate higher performance in another role. Hamid and Mohd (2014) claim that work-to-family

enrichment provides synergistic effect which increases the individual's ability to harmonise balance between work and family domain which in turn leads to good physical, emotional and behavioural participation.

In Malaysia, academics are often confronted with issues related to work-family balance. Panatik et al. (2012a) argue that working in a research university becoming more increasingly challenging which explains why some Malaysian academics have difficulty in managing their work-life balance. However, most studies which investigating work-life balance tend to emphasise on work-to-family conflict while there is limited study investigating in on work-to-family enrichment. It is believed that having multiple perspective of work-life balance is crucial since previous studies reported that both work-to-family conflict (Panatik, Rajab, Shah, Rahman, Yusoff, & Badri, 2012a) and work-to-family enrichment (Swee Fung, Ahmad & Omar, 2012) are connected with job satisfaction. Therefore, the aim of the current paper is to investigate how work-life balance including work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment affect job satisfaction of university academics in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-to-family Conflict and Job Satisfaction

For decades, job satisfaction had been associated with work-life balance (Zulfiqar,

Khan, Afaq, & Khan, 2013). Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which a person believes that his/her work has a significant impact on personal well-being and overall life satisfaction (Spector, 1997). It is part of an organisational commitment indicator which is important to develop positive work environment (Kovach, 1977). Jijena Michel and Jijena Michel (2012) argue that job satisfaction functions as an evidence-based approach that is pre-requisite in promoting positive changes in organisations.

Earlier studies have shown the link between work-to-family conflict (W-FC) and work-to-family enrichment (W-FE) with job satisfaction (Anafarta, 2011; Swee Fung et al., 2012; Goa & Jin, 2015; Choi & Kim, 2011). Panatik et al. (2012b) found work-to-family conflict significantly and negatively related with Malaysian academics job satisfaction. They observed that the increasing level of work-to-family conflict decreased the level of an academic's job satisfaction. Hence, the study showed work related stresses and conflicts has caused academics to physically, emotionally and behaviourally underperform in the family domain which in turn reduced their job satisfaction level. Their findings supported Anafarta's (2011) who found similar pattern on the negative effect of work-to-family conflict towards job satisfaction.

Some studies provided more in-depth result of the effect of work-to-family conflict and job satisfaction where they discussed the effect towards job satisfaction using

specific dimensions of work-to-family conflict. Carlson, Kacmar and William (2000) suggest that there is three important dimensions of work-to-family conflict: time-based conflict, strain based conflict and behavioural based conflict. The W-FC time-based conflict is a situation where time spent at work interferes with participation in family domain. The W-FC strain-based conflict is when strain accumulated from work brings conflict to the family domain. The W-FC behavioural conflict is when inappropriate behaviour at work causes conflict in the family domain.

For example, Zulfiqar et al. (2013) found that W-FC time-based and W-FC strain were negatively correlated with job satisfaction. They discovered that high level of W-FC time and W-FC strain correlated with lower job satisfaction among nurses in Bhakkar district, Afghanistan. According to them, excessive working time and high work strain caused poor participation in family domain which lowers their job satisfaction level. Meanwhile, Qiu and Yan (2010) highlighted negative relationship between W-FC strain and job satisfaction among manufacturing workers in China. They found that excessive work strain elevated work-to-family conflict and caused low job satisfaction among the workers. However, limited evidence was found on the effect of W-FC behavioural towards job satisfaction. Even though some studies showed negative relationship between W-FC behavioural towards job satisfaction, yet, the result was

insignificant (Khan & Khan, 2014; Qiu & Yan, 2010). Therefore, , this study proposes the following hypotheses.

H1: Work-to-family conflict time-based will significantly and negatively influence job satisfaction

H2: Work-to-family conflict behavioural-based will significantly and negatively influenced job satisfaction

H3: Work-to-family conflict strain-based will significantly and negatively influence job satisfaction

Work-to-family Enrichment and Job Satisfaction

Studies found that work-to-family enrichment was associated with higher job satisfaction (Swee Fung et al., 2012; Lu, 2011; Simone, Lampis, Lasio, Cicotto, & Putzu, 2014). Jijena Mivheal and Jijena Mivheal (2012) showed that work-to-family enrichment was positively associated with job satisfaction among academics in Economics and Finance Faculty of Juan Misael Saracho Autonomous University. They highlighted that work-to-family enrichment is important in promoting high level of job satisfaction among the academics. This was further supported by Swee Fung, Ahmad and Omar (2014) who demonstrated a found positive association between work-to-family enrichment and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Bangsar Zone, Malaysia.

The findings suggest that good working condition in school boosts work-to-family enrichment that increases teacher’s level of job satisfaction.

Specifically, work-to-family enrichment had also been investigated by some studies based on particular dimensions. Work-to-family enrichment consist of three main dimensions that are similar to work-to-family conflict. The dimensions are W-FE development, W-FE affect and W-FE capital (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne & Gruwacz, 2006). The W-FE development is a situation where participation in work helps increase knowledge, skills and idea to create a better family. The W-FE is a situation where good emotion experienced in work helps to build good emotion towards the family while W-FE capital is the extent to which accomplishment and success in work help individuals to be a better family member.

Empirical evidence by Mc Nall, Nicklin and Masuda (2010) suggested a positive relationship between W-FE development, W-FE affect and W-FE capital and job

satisfaction. They found that frequent experience of W-FE promotes high level of job satisfaction. This was confirmed by Carlson, Kacmar, Zynuska, Ferguson and Whitten (2011) who also reported a positive association between W-FE development, W-FE affect and W-FE capital with job satisfaction. They argued that enrichment from work towards family in numerous aspects such as development, emotion and capital could help workers feel more satisfied towards their job. Therefore, this study proposes below hypotheses.

H4: Work-to-family enrichment development is significant and positively influences job satisfaction of the respondents

H5: Work-to-family enrichment affect will be significant and positively influences job satisfaction of the respondents

H6: Work-to-family enrichment capital will be significant and positively influences job satisfaction of the respondents.

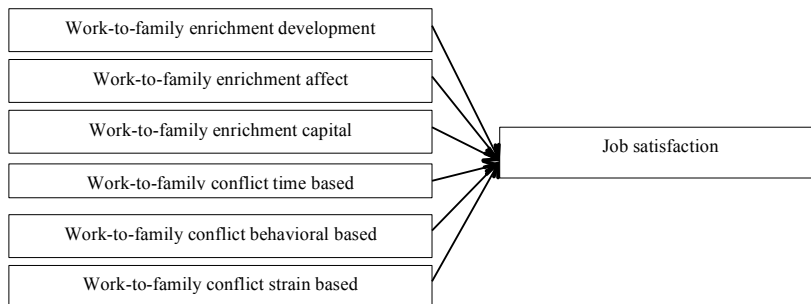


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the study

METHODS

Sample and Procedure

A survey method using self-administered questionnaire was adopted to collect data. The questionnaire was distributed through online and self-collection. The online questionnaire was structured using Google Document and were distributed using G-mail. Three reminders were sent to the participants with interval of 2 weeks. Concurrently, self-collection was executed through drop and collect method where the questionnaire was distributed and collected 2 weeks later. During online data collection, a total of 3686 emails were sent out where 712 emails were sent to academics in UKM, 710 emails to academics in UM, 755 to academics in UPM, 701 to academics in USM and 808 to academic in UTM. A total of 150 questionnaires were sent out during self-data collection. In the end, 350 respondents had completed the survey within 6 months. However, six respondents were eliminated as missing data and 37 respondents were excluded as outliers in this study. As total of 43 cases were excluded, thus making the final sample of 307 respondents.

Measurement

Work-to-family enrichment (W-FE) was measured using nine items adopted from Carlson et al. (2006) work-to-family enrichment questionnaire. It consisted of three dimensions: W-FE development, W-FE affect and W-FE capital. Example of the item is “My involvement in my

work helps me to understand different viewpoints and this helps me be a better family member (W-FE development)”, “*My involvement in my work puts me in a good mood and this helps me be a better family member (W-FE affect)*”, “*My involvement in my work helps me feel personally fulfilled and this helps me be a better family member (W-FE capital)*”. All items were scored using 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Construct validity using Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) confirmed the scale as a three-factor model with good fit indices of $\chi^2(n=307)=73.03$, $p<0.001$, $\chi^2/df=3.04$, RMSEA=0.08, RMR=0.02, CFI=0.95, GFI=0.98, AIC=115.03, CAIC=214.29) where each items yielded high factor loading ranged from 0.84 to 0.94.

Work-to-family conflict (W-FC) was measured using nine items of work-family conflict scale adopted from Carlson et al., (2000). This scale composes of three dimensions: W-FC time-based, W-FC strain-based and W-FC behavioural-based. Items were rated using 5-point Likert scale from 1=strongly disagree until 5=strongly agree. Examples of the items are “*The problem-solving behaviours I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home (W-FC behavioural)*”, “*When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/responsibilities (W-FC strain)*”, “*The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities (W-FC time)*”. Fit indices confirmed that the instruments yielded a good fit with

data $\chi^2(n=307)=58.92$, $p<0.001$, $\chi^2/df=2.45$, RMSEA=0.07, RMR=0.03, CFI=0.96, GFI=0.95. All items also yielded acceptable factor loading ranging from 0.60 to 0.90.

Job satisfaction was measured using eight items from Michigan Organizational Assessment (MOAQ) of Job Satisfaction Subscale (JSS). Examples of JSS items are “*Regarding your work in general. How pleased you with the people you work with?*” and “*Regarding your work in general. How pleased you with the way your department is run?*”. Answers were measured using a 5-point Likert scale with 1=very satisfied, 2=satisfied, 3=unsatisfied, 4=highly unsatisfied and 5=not relevant. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed job satisfaction as a single-factor model with good fit in terms of the data $\chi^2(n=307)=39.25$, $p<0.001$, $\chi^2/df=2.45$, RMSEA=0.07, RMR=0.02, CFI=0.97 and GFI=0.98. All items were found to have moderate to high factor loading ranged from 0.52 until 0.83.

Data Analysis

AMOS 23 and SPSS 23 were used to analysis data. Descriptive and inferential statistic including mean, standard deviation (SD), reliability, and correlational analysis were executed using SPSS 23. Meanwhile AMOS 23 was executed to analyse confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and direct effects analysis for purpose of examining the constructs validity and regression result for the direct effect of W-FE and W-FC on job satisfaction.

RESULTS

Demographic Profiling of the Respondents

It was found that slightly more than half of the respondent in this study were female academics, 173 respondents (56%). More than half of the respondents were ethnic Malays accounting for 251 respondents (81%), followed by Chinese accounting for 24 respondents (8%), and Indians with 8 respondents (3%) and the others representing 24 respondents (8%). For marital status, three-quarters, 260 respondents (85%), were married, 37 respondents were single (12%), nine were divorced (3%) and one classified as others. Academics from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) had highest participating rate with 85 respondents (28%), followed by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) with 78 respondents (25%), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) with 60 respondents (20%), Universiti Malaya (UM) with 49 respondents (16%) and lastly University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) with 35 respondents (11%). About half of the respondents were associate professors accounting for 158 respondents (52%), followed by senior lecturers representing 62 respondents (20%), professor accounting for 49 respondents (16%) and lecturer with 38 respondents (12%). Nearly a quarter of the respondents have tenured post below five years with 71 respondents (23%), followed by those having between 6 and 10 years with 62 respondents (21%), 25 and above with 56 respondents (18%), 11 to 15 years with 48

respondents (16%), 16 to 20 years with 45 respondents (14%) and 21 to 24 years with 25 respondents (8%).

Descriptive and Correlation Analysis

Table 1 below presents descriptive statistic of mean, standard deviation and correlation between variables of the study. The result indicated that W-FE development ($m=3.942$, $SD= \pm 0.713$), W-FE affect ($m=3.540$, $SD= \pm 0.869$), and W-FE capital ($m=3.540$, $SD= \pm 0.738$) and job satisfaction ($m=3.739$, $SD= \pm 0.587$) were high. All the dimension of W-FC namely W-FC time ($m=3.127$, $SD= \pm 0.952$), W-FC strain ($m=2.908$, $SD= \pm 0.943$) and W-FC behavioural ($m=2.683$, $SD= \pm 0.754$) were in moderate level.

Correlation analysis showed that work-to-family conflict has weak negative relationship with job satisfaction ($r=-0.325$, $p<0.01$). Result emphasised that

high-level work-to-family conflict leads to decreasing level of job satisfaction among academics in Malaysia. The W-FC time-based have the highest correlation with job satisfaction ($r=-0.380$, $p<0.01$). Meanwhile W-FC behavioural-based have the weakest relationship with job satisfaction with $r=-0.286$ ($p<0.01$). However, result indicated that W-FC strain-based was insignificant with job satisfaction. Meanwhile, overall work-to-family enrichment has positive and moderate relationship with job satisfaction ($r=0.463$, $p<0.01$). That is, high level of work-to-family enrichment increased job satisfaction's level of research university academics in Malaysia. Specifically, W-FE affect ($r=0.442$, $p<0.01$) have the highest correlation with job satisfaction followed by W-FE capital ($r=0.441$, $p<0.01$) and W-FE development ($r=0.365$, $p<0.01$).

Table 1
Correlation of the variables

Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. WFE	3.788	0.683	-							
2. W-FEd	3.942	0.713	.879**	-						
3. W-FEa	3.540	0.869	.918**	.685**	-					
4. W-FEc	3.895	0.738	.901**	.702**	.756**	-				
5. WFC	2.906	0.761	-.631**	-.474**	-.671**	-.539**	-			
6. WFCt	3.127	0.952	-.461**	-.358**	-.497**	-.372**	.884**	-		
7. W-FCs	2.908	0.943	-.607**	-.447**	-.661**	-.507**	.878**	.673**	-	
8. W-FCb	2.683	0.754	-.561**	-.420**	-.570**	-.515**	.816**	.602**	.553**	-
9. JS	3.739	0.587	.463**	.365**	.442**	.441**	-.325**	-.380**	-.185	-.286**

Notes: W-FE: Work-to-family enrichment, W-FEd: Work-to-family enrichment development, W-FEa: Work-to-family enrichment affect, W-FEc: Work-to-family enrichment capital, W-FC: Work-to-family conflict, W-FCt: Work-to-family conflict time based, W-FCb: Work-to-family conflict behavioural based, W-FCs: Work-to-family conflict strain based, JS: Job satisfaction * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Direct Effects Result

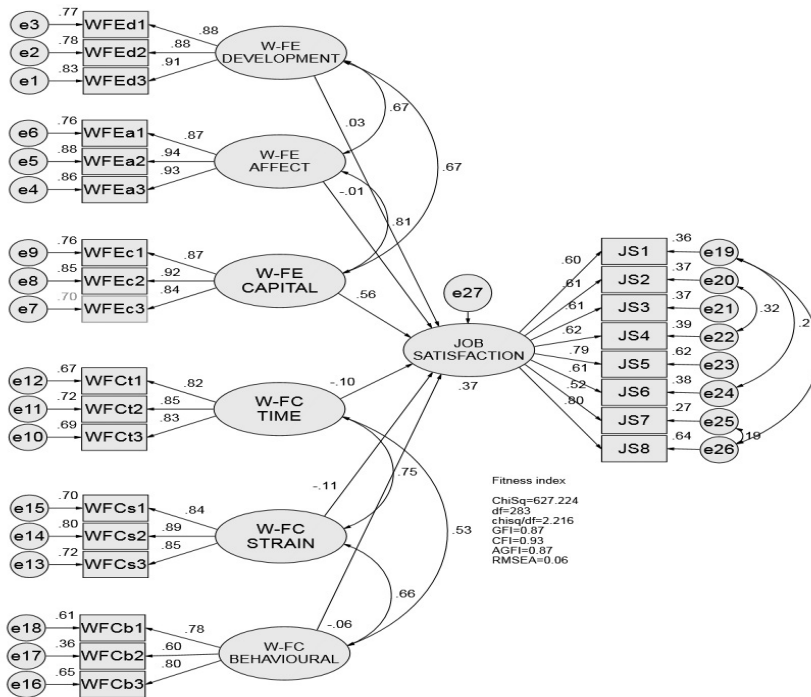


Figure 2. Final model of direct effects work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment towards job satisfaction

Table 2
Result of work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment towards job satisfaction

Hypotheses			Standardised Estimates	S.E	C.R.	p	
H1	WF-C time	→	Job satisfaction	-.117	.031	-1.933	.053
H2	WF-C behavioural	→	Job satisfaction	-.065	.037	-1.192	.233
H3	WF-C strain	→	Job satisfaction	-.109	.026	-1.844	.065
H4	WF-E development	→	Job satisfaction	.030	.036	1.140	.254
H5	WF-E affect	→	Job satisfaction	-0.01	.030	1.716	.086
H6	WF-E capital	→	Job satisfaction	.556***	.049	6.486	***

Notes: *p<0.05, **p<0.01, p<0.001***

Figure 2 and Table 2 above are direct effect model which show work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment towards job satisfaction. It was found that the overall model has yielded good fit with data $\chi^2(n=307)=627.224, p<0.001, df= 283,$

$\chi^2/df=2.216$, RMSEA=0.06, CFI=0.93 and GFI=0.87. Overall, both work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment explained 37% variance in job satisfaction ($R^2=0.37$). Specifically, results indicated that only W-FE capital has significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta= 0.556$, $p<0.001$). Results suggested that increasing level of W-FE capital was associated with increasing level of job satisfaction. However, none of W-FC dimensions have significant effect on job satisfaction. Therefore, only H6 was supported.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This study examined the relationship and impact of work-to-family conflict (W-FC) and work-to-family enrichment (W-FE) on job satisfaction among Malaysian academics. The findings showed that W-FC was significantly and negatively correlated with job satisfaction. This was consistent with earlier studies by Zulfiqar et al. (2013), Buonocore and Russo (2013), Burke et al. (2013) and Huffman Casper and Payne (2014) who reported high work-to-family conflict results in low job satisfaction across countries. Panatik et al. (2012b) also showed negative correlation between work-to-family conflict and job satisfaction. This study suggested that W-FE was positively correlated with job satisfaction. More specifically, it showed high level of W-FE led to reduced job satisfaction among Malaysian academics and corroborated by Swee Fung et al. (2014) where they reported a positive relationship between work-to-

family enrichment and job satisfaction among teachers in Malaysia.

This study also tested the impact of W-FC and W-FE on academics' job satisfaction. Both W-FC and W-FE were explained by 37% variance in job satisfaction. Only one dimension of W-FE, which was WFE capital, had significant effect on job satisfaction. While, all W-FC dimensions have no effect on academic's job satisfaction. The result indicated that high level of W-FE capital was associated with increasing level of academic's job satisfaction. W-FE capital is the extent to which accomplishment and success in workplace helps individual be a better family member (Stoddart and Madsen, 2007). It was found that frequent positive accomplishment and success in the workplace in terms of high W-FE capital increased job satisfaction level of the research university academics. This result is consistent with the role accumulation theory by Sieber (1974). According to the theory, having multiple roles benefit individual by increasing their privileges. This is because, accomplishment gained through multiple role-playing increases positive social interaction that leads to ego gratification and satisfaction (Sieber, 1974). That being said, when individual successfully manage their roles, it increases their chances to receive more role privileges in term of success and accomplishment. Frequent experiences of success and good accomplishment help academic to feel more satisfied and happy with their job which promotes higher level of job satisfaction.

This was supported by Granny, Smith and Stone (1992) where they argued that high job satisfaction could only be achieved if the worker had demonstrated high achievement. However, this study found that W-FE affect (i.e. emotion) and W-FE development (i.e. knowledge, skill, ideas) did not affect job satisfaction. Even though results indicated that level of W-FE affect and W-FE development were high, it was insignificant with job satisfaction. Perhaps, good emotion and high skill at the university are not important factors which contribute to higher academic's job satisfaction level compared with accomplishment and success (W-FE capital).

This study, however, failed to support work-to-family conflict for job satisfaction. Previous studies (Anafarta, 2011; Clavo-Slaguro, Carroscos-Gonzalez, Maria, & Lecea, 2010) suggested that work-to-family conflict has insignificant impact on job satisfaction, which was supported in this study. Result suggested that even though academics experienced high level of W-FC strain ($m=2.908$) and W-FC time ($m=3.127$) while near to high level for W-FC behavioural ($m=2.683$), yet they do not appear as factors that caused job dissatisfaction. Perhaps the level of work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment could explain these results. Based on the result, the overall mean for work-to-family conflict was 2.906, which was lower compared with work-to-family enrichment with an overall mean of 3.788. This could be because even though

academics experience work-to-family conflict, they also experience work-to-family enrichment. Thus, work-to-family conflict is less relevant in the academic's job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

This study showed the effect of W-FC and W-FE on academics' job satisfaction. In particular, W-FE capital was found to have strongest effect on academics' job satisfaction. It is hoped that the result from this study would assist future researcher, universities and human resource practitioners to outline proper work guideline focuses on aspect of work-to-family enrichment capital (i.e. success and accomplishment) in workplace as a way to increase job satisfaction among academics in the future. Despite these contributions, this study was subjected to few limitations. First, the findings were based on survey conducted on academics in Malaysia. Therefore, the result cannot be generalised to other populations. Second, this is a cross-sectional study, which limits its capability to ascertain causal relationship among variables examined.

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