THE IMPACT OF WORK-FAMILY FACTORS IN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND INTENTION TO STAY

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ABSTRACT

In this study work-family factors were examined as mediating variables on the relationships between organizational and occupational characteristics as the independent variables and intention to stay as the dependent variable. Self-administered research questionnaire was utilized for data collection and data was collected from 240 middle age single mother employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia. Samples were determined through simple random sampling method from six single mother associations. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to describe the respondents. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationships among variables and Structural Equation Modeling using AMOS version 16.0 was utilized for model testing and to verify the presence of mediation effects. Further, the Sobel’s z-test was used to test whether the mediators carry the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The findings indicated that there were positive and negative relationships among variables. The results also established the presence of mediation effects between the independent and dependent variables. Organizations may utilize work-family factors as mechanism to promote longer retention among employees.

Keyword: Intention to stay, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction, organizational characteristics, occupational characteristics, single mother employee, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Since 1980s employee turnover has attracted many researchers especially in human resource area due to its negative impacts. The impacts could be seen from the cost involved for training and orientation of new employees and destabilization of human resource supply
that led to destabilization of work-client relationship (Montague, 2004). According to Shaw, Gupta, and Delery (2005); Meier and Hicklin (2008) hiring and training being a compulsory agenda after the employees’ resignation, indicated that turnover was adversely correlated to performance, thus disrupting the process to meet organizational goals in both the public and private sectors. 

Employee turnover intention is the behavior that precedes turnover. Firth, Mellor, Moore and Loquet (2004) define employee turnover as an idea or thinking about quitting a job. An individual’s intention to perform or not to perform a behavioral act is the immediate determinant of action. Based on this notion an individual who nurtures the thought of quitting his present profession is more likely to do so if the right condition exists, or if the adverse condition that warranted the thought of intent persists (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Intention to stay however is simply the converse of the turnover intention (Kim, Price, Mueller & Watson, 1996). According to Black and Stevens (1989) intention to stay was significantly negatively correlated with turnover. Since intention to stay is referred to as employees’ willingness to stay with an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993), it consistently demonstrated a stronger relationship with turnover than did other turnover precursors (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Therefore although the construct of the study was turnover intention, but the focus of investigation was from the perspective of intention to stay.

This study was meant to measure turnover intention among single mother employees in Malaysia. Specifically this study was conducted to test the relationships between independent (organizational and occupational characteristics), mediation (work-family factors) and dependent (intention to stay) variables. The study was also meant to test the mediating effects of work-family factors (work-family facilitation and family satisfaction) on the relationships between organizational (coworker and supervisory support) and occupational (job demands) characteristics and intention to stay among single mother employees.

In this country there were about 70 percent mothers with children below 12 years of age working full-time (Yunos & Talib, 2009). The phenomenon originates from rapid industrial development in Malaysia since 1990s that encouraged massive migration of rural population to the urban industrialized areas especially to the states such as Selangor, Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory, Johor, Perak and Penang. The migration of rural population to urban centres has also affected overall family life (Yunos & Talib, 2009). Due to rapid economy development, there has been an increase in competitive pressures on organisations to increase productivity; that lead to increase in work demands on the workforce, leaving less time available for the employees to be with their families. This situation creates different and unique challenges for women especially single mothers in terms of work and family obligations and responsibilities. According to Parkman (2004) women spent twice as many hours on average on home activities and family tasks as men. Since single mothers have to smartly tackle demands rooted from both domains, the study was really keen to investigate the interaction between positive and negative valences (intent to stay or intent to quit) with the influence of work-family factors and how these factors tailored the respondents’ decision for their future.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilizes several theories to explain the framework of the study. Then the discussion continues by focusing on the variables to be examined in the study: intention to stay, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction, coworker support, supervisory support and job demands among single mother employees.

Conceptual Overview and Definition of Intention to Stay

Intention to stay mirrors the employee’s level of commitment to his organization and the willingness to remain employed (Hewitt, 2004). It is sometimes referred to as the propensity to leave, intent to quit, intent to stay, behavioral commitment and attachment (Halaby, 1986; Mueller et al., 1999). Several studies have revealed that this concept whether it is
called ‘intent to stay’ or ‘propensity to leave’, it is clearly the most important determinant of turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Igharia & Greenhaus, 1992). Dalessio, Silverman and Shuck (1986) have emphasized that more concern should be given on intention to stay rather than turnover, as whenever an employee has exit, an organization has to incur the cost of recruiting and maintaining a new employee.

Social Exchange Theory as Foundation of Intention to Stay

Social Exchange Theory (SET) developed by Thibaut and Kelley (1959), had explained the reasons why individuals had personal relationships with others (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). The theory also emphasized on personal relationships, its costs and benefits. What rewards did people receive from a given relationship, and what costs did they pay to obtain those rewards? Social Exchange Theory posited that good deeds should be reciprocated (Blau, 1964). Mossholder, Settoon and Henagan (2005) had pointed to Social Exchange Theory which proposed that individuals who felt that they had received benefits from others would later feel an obligation and then compensate through effort and loyalty. Effort and loyalty usually could be seen from a shear commitment to their job and strong intention to remain with the present employer. Employee’s loyalty clearly fitted within the framework of SET since it focused on citizenship behaviour whereby employees stopped looking for a new job elsewhere since they felt obligated to stay and repay the organization for support they had received (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Conceptual Overview and Definition of Work-Family Facilitation

Previous research on work-family arrangement mostly focused on the outcomes, or the influence of an individual's involvement in one domain either family or work which led to the change in performance and quality of life in the other domain (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). These positive reciprocal relationships were conceptualized as: (a) positive work-family spillover (Grzywacz, 2000), (b) work-family facilitation (Frone, 2003; Grzywacz, & Butler, 2005), (c) work-family compatibility (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003) and (d) work-family fit (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003; Voydanoff, 2002). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) conceptualized facilitation as the extent to which experience in one life sphere improved the quality of life in the other. Since the study on facilitation is relatively very new in the field of work-family arrangement, there is no single established definition that has best explained the concept “facilitation”. For the purpose of the present study, work-family facilitation is defined as occurring when, by virtue of participation in one role (work), one’s performance or functioning in another role (family) is enhanced. The study imposed theoretical attention on the topic of facilitation that brought to an explicit definition of the construct.

Theoretical Foundation of Facilitation

In this study, three complementary frameworks were integrated to build a theoretical foundation for facilitation called the Resource-Gain-Development (RGD) perspective proposed by Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne and Grzywacz, (2007). First: Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) by Cameron, Dutton, Quinn and Wrzesniewski (2003) explained the positive processes and outcomes of interactions between individuals and organization in organizational setting. Second: Ecological Systems Theory (EST) by Bronfenbrenner (1979), an emerging theory within the work-family literature (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Voydanoff, 2001) which emphasized that people had natural desire and the capacity for growth and development. Finally: Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) by Hobfoll (1989) which also had been applied to the work-family interface provided a heuristic approach in identifying the specific type of resources for the facilitation of the positive interaction between work and family domain.

Positive Organizational Scholarship

Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) emphasized on the interactions between individuals and organizations in organizational settings and what both parties could benefit from these interactions (Cameron et al., 2003). Essentially, this transaction focused on the
individual’s capabilities and organizational processes that contribute to positive organizational ‘outcomes’. POS represents a perspective that including instrumental concern and emphasizes on positive idea and human potential. Facilitation clearly fitted within the framework of POS since it focused on an enhanced functioning within the work or family domain (Carlson et al., 2007). POS provided an explanation for the ‘purpose’ of facilitation and its potential for affecting ‘outcomes’ in social systems such as work and family. Positivity was viewed as functional because it activated a variety of forces that promoted individual and organizational strengths (Cameron et al., 2003; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005).

**Ecological Systems Theory**

Ecological systems theory (EST) served as a framework for work-family experiences (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Voydanoff, 2001) and provided a clear direction for informing facilitation. First, ecological theory complemented the function of POS in explaining the factors leading to the occurrence of facilitation. EST argues that individuals had the natural potential toward higher levels of functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Ecological systems theory is also instructive for explaining how facilitation occurred and broadly, likely antecedents. According to EST, individual development is a result of ongoing interactions between the individual and his/her environment (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). Therefore EST suggests that resources within an individual’s environment are the primary sources of facilitation since they bridge the interactions between individuals and their work and life environment (Carlson et al., 2007).

**Conservation of Resources Theory**

Both POS (Cameron et al., 2003) and EST (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) provided a foundation on why and how facilitation occurred and suggested the importance of resources. Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2001) provided a basis for identifying the specific type of resources. COR model defined resources as valued articles people seek to acquire and manage. Hobfoll (2001) defined resources as properties of the environment that can be utilized for a certain purpose such as personal characteristics, objects, conditions, energies, and support that serve as a means for the attainment of these objects. Personal characteristics are those traits or skills that resulted from one’s orientation to the world such as self-efficacy and internal locus of control. Objects are valued because of their physical nature or the status obtained through their ownership such as one’s car, home, clothes or other material goods. Energy resources, such as time, money, knowledge, and skills are those that aid in the acquisition of other resources such as time for work or family and opportunities for advancement. Conditions are resources that are sought after such as marriage, divorce, employment, or seniority. Finally, support such as loyalty or intimacy preserves other types of resources (Carlson et al., 2007).

**The Resource-Gain-Development Perspective**

The basic premise of the RGD perspective is that individuals are dynamic and have the natural potential to grow, develop, and achieve the highest levels of functioning for themselves and the systems in which they have participated including families and organizations. Individuals having this natural tendency toward positivity and development, when engaged in a role, they will obtain resources that enable growth and development. When individuals utilized those available resources they would obtain positive gains. When gains from one domain are utilized, sustained, and reinforced in another (Kirchmeyer, 1992), it would improve system functioning.

The RGD perspective posited that antecedents of facilitation consisted of personal characteristics and environmental resources (objects, conditions, energies, and support) that contributed to the development of new skills and perspectives (developmental gains), positive emotion (affective gains), economic, social, or health assets (capital gains), and greater efficiency (efficiency gains) in one system which enhanced functioning of the other systems (Carlson et al., 2007). The greater of any single resource an individual has, the
greater the potential for facilitation is; likewise, the greater the overall accumulation of resources, the greater the potential for facilitation.

**RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COWORKER AND SUPERVISORY SUPPORT, JOB DEMANDS, WORK-FAMILY FACILITATION, FAMILY SATISFACTION AND INTENTION TO STAY**

The focus of the study was to examine the relationships between coworker and supervisory support, job demands and work-family facilitation and how this construct related to family satisfaction and intention to remain working among single mother employees in Malaysia. Support from coworkers normally exists through interaction among workers at the workplace. This support serves as a predictor for the workplace relationship that offering sympathy or encouragement to employees with family responsibilities (Anderson et al., 2002). On the other hand, supervisory support normally presents through interaction between a supervisor or a group of supervisors and workers at the workplace. The interaction can be both emotional (involving the provision of sympathy and reassurance), and instrumental (involving practical assistance such as changing work or leave schedules to accommodate an employee's family demands) (Anderson et al., 2002). Another factor; job demands is defined as work stressors emanated from the physical nature of work, such as physical exertion, as well as psychological aspects of the job, such as repetitiveness and highly management supervision (Karasek, 1979).

**Relationship between coworker support and work-family facilitation**

Coworkers have a unique opportunity to provide family-facilitative support as they have a clearer understanding of the nature of stressors faced by their fellow employees. Support from coworkers normally exists at the workplace from the interaction with all workers except supervisory personnel. Furthermore, with the increasing prevalence of team-based organizational structures, coworkers are better prepared to offer instrumental and emotional assistance to a coworker struggling to balance conflicting work and family demands (Ray & Miller, 1994). In addition to exercising family-friendly benefits, employees would often seek emotional and instrumental support from family, supervisors, or coworkers/peers to help them deal with incompatible work and family demands (Ray & Miller, 1994). Organizations are socio-technical systems and coworkers constituting a major component of the system. Such coworker support has been identified as an important coping mechanism for employees struggling to balance work and family demands (Anderson et al., 2002; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986). Finally, research suggested that the perceived likelihood of receiving coworker support might be as important as actual support in the reduction of work-family conflict (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Given the increasing prevalence of team-based organizational structures (Ensign, 1998) and an associated increase in interdependent work, coworker family-facilitative support offered another mechanism by which work-family facilitation could be initiated. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1:**

There is a positive linear relationship between coworker support and facilitation.

**Relationship between coworker support and family satisfaction**

Coworkers are in an optimal position to offer support for employees struggling with work-family conflict as they have first-hand knowledge of the stressors associated with the workplace (Ray & Miller, 1994). Coworkers may help by taking the time to sympathize, understand, and listen to a fellow employee’s problems. Coworker’s emotional support has been linked with decreased physiological strain and depression, as well as increased job performance, organizational commitment, and work-group and family cohesion (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Ladd & Henry, 2000). Although the majority of research on family-facilitative coworker support in reducing work-family conflict has focused on coworker emotional support, coworkers may be the most helpful when they provided instrumental assistance to help a coworker juggle competing work and family demands. Specifically,
coworkers are the most immediately available assistance to assist one another. In accomplishing work, for example, family-facilitative coworker instrumental support may include covering or swapping job duties or shifts, providing missed materials or information to a coworker attending to a family matter, or backing up a coworker leaving work to attend to a sick child (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2008). All these supports contributed to family satisfaction. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a positive linear relationship between coworker support and family satisfaction

**Relationship between coworker support and intention to stay**

Another type of coworker helping behavior includes organizational citizenship behaviors (Ladd & Henry, 2000). Organizational citizenship behaviors are the helping behaviors enacted to facilitate organizational performance (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman & Fetter, 1990). Although the goal of these behaviors is directed at the organizational level, the results of such behaviors may indirectly benefit coworkers (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2008). Research suggested that the importance of coworker support (Jayaratne, Himle, & Chess, 1988; Ray & Miller, 1991) might increase satisfaction and well-being and less prone to quit the job (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992). Moreover, social support from coworkers could reduce one’s negative feelings about the job and reduce intention to quit. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a positive linear relationship between coworker support and intention to stay

**Relationship between supervisory support and work-family facilitation**

Above and beyond the aspects of the individual, environmental or situational resources (that promote positive and dynamic) and enriching environments enable facilitation. For example, working in an enriched job and having a supportive work environment, such as support from supervisors, promoted personal, emotional and intellectual development that can facilitate functioning of another domain (Carlson et al., 2007). It has been found that once supervisors interested in aiding in the resolution of employees’ work or family related problems, employees would tend to experience less work-family conflict (Karatepe & Kilic, 2007). Supervisory support is a kind of interpersonal relationship between a supervisor and subordinates in the form of informational support, material support and emotional support in order to improve the subordinate’s work motivation, performance and/or work effectiveness (Bhanthumnavian, 2000). All kinds of supports received at work spillover to another domain or will enhance subordinates’ function well at home. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4:** There is a positive linear relationship between supervisory support and facilitation

**Relationship between supervisory support and family satisfaction**

Having a resourceful supervisor buffers the employee from negative career ramifications allows the employee’s to use flexible work benefits (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002). The availability of flexible work-family benefits has been found to initiate greater organizational commitment and loyalty (Thompson et al., 1999) and productivity. Broadly speaking, when an individual exploits more object, condition, energy, or support resources that enrich the environment and provides growth and development (i.e., gains), the individual is more likely to experience facilitation. This positive experience from work will benefit family members and reciprocally the employees’ family members will become more cohesive since they become interdependent to each other. Hanson et al. (2006) emphasize that a transfer of positive valence affect, skills, behavior, and values promotes better role performance (Hanson et al., 2006). In this regard, the positive spillover between work and family should
lead to enhanced role performance through the improvement of family satisfaction. Empirical evidence has supported this notion with Brockwood’s (2002) finding work-family positive spillover to be positively related to family satisfaction (cited in Hanson et al., 2006). Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 5:** There is a positive linear relationship between supervisory support and family satisfaction

### Relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay

Previous research suggested that social support at work might be effective in reducing stress, especially when a supervisor created a less stressful work environment (Roskies & Lazarus, 1980). Sorod and Wongwattanamongkol (1996) studied antecedence and the consequences of stress in 174 Thai government officers and found that supervisory support was the most important source of support that yielded the highest amount of variance (34%) in predicting job satisfaction. They also concluded that supervisory support was positively related to job satisfaction (r = 0.58). A study of social support and teacher’s job stress conducted by Russell, Altmeier and Van Velzen (1987) concluded that teachers who received higher levels of supervisory support reported less emotional strain at work and experienced a greater sense of self esteem and less intention to leave the job. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 6:** There is a positive linear relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay

### Relationship between job demands and work-family facilitation

Karasek’s (1979), suggested that high job demand-high decision latitude could lead to the development of new behavior both on and off the job (Karasek, 1979). This new behavior pattern may link to job satisfaction, high self esteem and less intention to quit the job (Karasek, 1979). Literature has reported the correlation between work demands and work role quality and work-family facilitation. Voydanoff (2004a), in two different national surveys, examined the relationship between work demands and work-to-family facilitation. Women with rewarding jobs were protected from the negative mental health caused by troubled relationships with their children. Barnett et al. (1992) using the same sample of 409 women discussed above, looked at the job rewards to identify which factors mitigated the relationship between parent-role quality and psychological distress. They found that challenging work was the only job factor that mitigated parental stress. If employed mothers experienced higher reward from challenging work they reported less distress, regardless of their level of disaffection in their relationship with their children. If the reward from challenging work was low, employed mothers who were concerned about disaffection in their relationship with their children reported high psychological distress (Barnett et al., 1992). Research by Wayne et al. (2004) had shown that positive relationship between total work hours was significantly related to work-to-family facilitation. Similar results were reported by Wayne, Randel, and Stevens (2003) in their examination of the relationship between organizational time demands, organization support (usage of family-friendly benefits), family supportive work culture, and work-to-family facilitation, reported that a supportive work culture and organizational time demands was positively predicted work-to-family facilitation. Based on theory and evidence the following hypothesis was tested:

**Hypothesis 7:** There is a positive linear relationship job demands and facilitation

### Relationship between job demands and family satisfaction

Karasek (1979) labels high demand-high decision latitude jobs as ‘active’ and led to the development of new behavior pattern (Karasek, 1979). Grzywacz and Butler (2005); Grzywacz and Marks (2000); and Voydanoff (1988), suggest that high job demand is positively correlated to greater work-family conflict. Conceptually, high perceived workloads influenced employees’ affective experiences at home because the affect experienced at work...
is positively correlated work spills over onto the affect experienced at home (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Positive spillover from workplace to family members at home mirrors certain job characteristics that may enhance an employee’s family satisfaction. Therefore this study suggests that:

**Hypothesis 8:** There is a positive linear relationship between job demands and family satisfaction

**Relationship between job demands and intention to stay**

Voydanoff (2004) in her study discovered that job demands might enhance an employee’s family satisfaction. This satisfaction serves as internal motivation for employees to work hard and at the same time be more committed with their job and high loyalty to organization (Butler, Viet, Narrigon & Taylor, 2005). The finding suggested that certain job demands might enhance an employee’s satisfaction and at the same time employees become more committed with their job and high loyalty to organization (Butler et al., 2005). Therefore this study suggests that:

**Hypothesis 9:** There is a positive linear relationship between job demands and intention to stay

**MEDIATION EFFECTS OF WORK-FAMILY FACILITATION AND FAMILY SATISFACTION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COWORKER SUPPORT, SUPERVISORY SUPPORT, JOB DEMANDS AND INTENTION TO STAY**

**Mediation effect of work-family facilitation on the relationship between coworker support and intention to stay**

Coworkers have a unique opportunity to provide family-facilitative support as they have a clearer understanding of the nature of stressors faced by their fellow employees. Researchers have proposed that increased levels of work-family facilitation might be related to both greater job and family satisfaction (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Grzywacz et al., 2002) that lead to greater intention to remain employed. Hanson et al. (2006) emphasize that a transfer of positive experience, skills, and values promotes better employees’ achievement (Hanson et al., 2006). Higher achievement motivates employees’ commitment. In this regard, the positive spillover between work social support and organizational loyalty was mediated by work-family facilitation. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 10:** Facilitation mediates the relationship between coworker support and intention to stay.

**Mediation effect of family satisfaction on the relationship between coworker support and intention to stay**

Organizations are socio-technical systems and coworkers constituting a major component of the system. Such coworker support has been identified as an important coping mechanism for employees struggling to balance work and family demands (Anderson et al., 2002; Thompson, et al., 1999; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986). Research suggested that the perceived likelihood of receiving coworker support might be as important as actual support in the reduction of work-family conflict (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Hill (2005) discovered that work-group support and supervisory support received from work-related problems enhanced work-family facilitation. More recently, Wadsworth and Owens (2007) reported that social support emanating from both supervisors and coworkers, and positive family-work culture facilitated employees of public organizations to integrate their work with family roles. The integration contributes to family satisfaction and organizational loyalty. Therefore this study tested the following hypothesis:
Hypothesis 1: Family satisfaction mediates the relationship between coworker support and intention to stay

Mediation effect of work-family facilitation on the relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay

Supervisory support can be defined as interpersonal behavior between a supervisor and his subordinates in the form of informational support, material support and emotional support in order to improve the subordinate’s work motivation, performance and/or work effectiveness (Banthumnavian, 2000). These forms of supports are interrelated (House, 1981). For instance, a supervisor gives informational support such as verbal feedback in terms of recognition when a subordinate has accomplished a job. When receiving this recognition, the subordinate might feel that he or she is appreciated, esteemed, and/or cared by the supervisor. It is important to recognize that this informational support from the supervisor has an attachment to the psychological meaning. Thus, giving a subordinate verbal feedback can be a sign of caring or a source of emotional support as well. For example having supportive coworkers, supervisors, and/or a family-friendly work environment may lead to more positive effect, a sense of energy (Marks, 1977), or confidence from work which carries over and enhances functioning of the family (work-family facilitation) and high intention to stay with the organization. Therefore this study posited that:

Hypothesis 1: Family satisfaction mediates the relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay

Mediation effect of family satisfaction on the relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay

Most organizational family-friendly policies were dependent on the discretion of supervisors, whereby supervisor family-facilitative support was critical to the effectiveness of these policies (Flye, Agars & Kottke, 2003). Accordingly, supervisors might offer emotional (e.g., showing empathetic understanding, being sensitive toward work-family conflict issues, displaying genuine concern for the wellbeing of employees and their families) or instrumental (e.g., suggesting use of family-friendly policies, offering advice to assist employees in meeting family responsibilities, providing direct assistance in completion of work assignments) support to employees with work-family conflict (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Supportive supervisors might also reduce work-family conflict stress by being flexible when emergencies arise and willing to discuss family-related issues (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999). Employees with supportive supervisors were more likely to have higher organizational commitment and higher intention to contribute to the organization as compared to employees whose supervisors offered less family-facilitative support (Dupre & Day, 2007; Aryee, Luk & Stone, 1998; Parasuraman et al., 1992). Therefore this study posited that:

Hypothesis 1: Family satisfaction mediates the relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay.

Mediation effect of work-family facilitation on the relationship between job demands and intention to stay

Since work-family conflict implies that demands exceed resources that lead to limited role performance, this arrangement is expected to be related negatively to family satisfaction (Bellavia & Frone, 2005). Alternatively, the resources associated with work-family facilitation is expected to enhance role performance, thus increasing family satisfaction (Brockwood et al., 2003; Voydanoff, 2005b; Wayne et al., 2004). In addition to these direct relationships, work-family conflict was found to mediate relationships between work demands and family satisfaction, whereas studies that consider work-family facilitation as a mediator is not known (Voydanoff, 2002). Due to scarcity of data this study intended to examine work-family facilitation as mediating factor between job factors and intention to stay. From the above support, this study proposed:
Hypothesis 14: Facilitation mediates the relationship between job demands and intention to stay

Mediation effect of family satisfaction on the relationship between job demands and intention to stay

Family satisfaction is defined as the response to present family functioning as compared with an individual's inner sense of what is desirable (Olson, 1986). Satisfaction is a cognitive appraisal and an emotional response to what was and what could be (Olson, 1986). Researchers have proposed that increased levels of work-family facilitation might be related to both greater job and family satisfaction (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Grzywacz et al., 2002). Hanson et al. (2006) emphasize that a transfer of positive valence affect, skills, behavior, and values promote better role performance (Hanson et al., 2006). In this regard, the positive spillover between work and family should lead to enhanced role performance through the improvement of family satisfaction, by a greater social support (Hanson et al., 2006). Empirical evidence has supported this notion with Brockwood's (2002) finding work-family positive spillover to be positively related to family satisfaction. From the above support, this study posited:

Hypothesis 15: Family satisfaction mediates the relationship between job demands and intention to stay.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample and procedure

The subjects of the study were single mother employees working either with government or private sectors. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2000), single mothers is defined as (1) woman as the head of household; (2) widow or separated/divorced wife; and (3) unmarried woman that possess a child/children. In this study single mother was operationalized as a woman who was divorced and separated or a woman whom her husband had passed away. Record from the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development showed that there were 24 registered single mother's associations in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory. Due to time and financial constraints along with the limited capability of the researcher, only six out of 24 associations were selected through systematic random sampling to obtain samples for the study.

Measurement

Coworker Support

Coworker support was measured by using Perception of Social Support developed by Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, and Pinneau, (1975) – 4 items together with Scale of Social Support by Letiecq, Anderson, and Koblisnky, (1996) – 2 items. Respondents indicated their degree of agreement/disagreement on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (7) “strongly agree”. The Chronbach alpha for the previous sample was 0.83, while for the current sample the reliability coefficient for coworker is 0.87.

Supervisory Support

This variable was measured by using Perception of Social Support from the supervisor developed by Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, and Pinneau, (1975) – 4 items together with Scale of Social Support by Letiecq, Anderson, and Koblisnky, (1996) – 2 items. Respondents indicated their degree of agreement/disagreement on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (7) “strongly agree”. The Chronbach alpha for the previous sample was 0.83, while for the current sample the reliability coefficient for supervisor is 0.87.
Job demands were assessed by using the Job Content Questionnaire developed by Karasek, Brisson, Kawakami, Houtman, Bongers and Amick (1998). Job demands were measured using 12 items (e.g., My job requires working very hard). All of the items comprising the scales reported below were measured using a 7-point response scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). A seven response option was included for respondents to indicate their agreeableness to each statement. For the current study the reliability coefficient value is 0.70.

Work-Family Facilitation

Work-family facilitation was measured with 7 items (e.g., I have developed skills in my job that are useful at home). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) adapted these items from existing scales in the literature (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Kirchmeyer, 1992; Stephens, Franks & Atienza, 1997; Sumer & Knight, 2001). Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agree/disagreement on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (7) “strongly agree”. The Chronbach alpha for this measure from previous sample was 0.78 and slightly higher (0.84) for the current sample.

Family Satisfaction

Family Satisfaction was measured using items developed by Reardon (1982). The scale contains 7 items (e.g., I am happy with the progress toward the goals I have for my family). Respondents indicated their degree of agreement on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (7) “strongly agree”. Higher scores indicated greater family satisfaction. The Chronbach alpha for this scale in previous sample was 0.87 while in the current study the alpha value is 0.85.

Intention to Stay

Intention to stay was measured by using the instrument developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Loquist, (1967). The instrument measures respondents’ intention to leave/stay from two dimensions: intention to leave (e.g., I always thinking of resigning the job) and intention to remain with the organization. (e.g., I have planned to remain with this organization to advance my career). Intention to stay was measured by reverse-coding items of intention to leave where respondents indicated their degree of agreement on a 7-point scale ranging from (7) “strongly disagree” to (1) “strongly agree” (reverse-coded). For items measuring intention to remain, respondents indicated their degree of agreement on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (7) “strongly agree” (normal-coded). The Cronbach alpha value in the current sample is 0.74.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

(i) In this study four types of statistical analyses were utilized. (i) SPSS for Windows to calculate many of the descriptive statistics: mean, standard deviations, percentage, reliability coefficients and zero order correlations. Descriptive analysis was also used to report demographic data and to check the level of all independent, mediator and dependent variables. (ii) Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation to determine the linear relationships between quantitative variables between organizational and occupational characteristics, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay. (iii) Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) to examine the goodness of fit of the proposed model, and subsequently to estimate the structural coefficients pertaining to the hypothesized path model. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was also used to verify the hypothesized relationships between organizational, occupational, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intent to stay in the organization. (iv) The Sobel’s z-test was then conducted to test the z-value to examine whether the mediators carried the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable.
RESULTS

The respondents’ age ranged from 29 to 45 years (M = 39.6, SD = 3.63). About half of the total respondents (47%) aged between 30 to 40 years old and majority of the respondents (89.5%) were below 44. The study also revealed that 42.9% of the respondents had working experience of ten years and below, 35.4% of the total respondents had experience between 11 to 14 years and about 20% of the respondents (19.6%) had work experience between 15 to 20 years (M = 12.26, SD = 4.38) (Table 1). The income received by the respondents ranged from RM700 – RM4000 (M = RM1682.17, SD = RM692.72).

Most respondents (60.0%) earned between RM1001 to RM2000, with a very small number (5.4%) of respondents took the largest amount of income of between RM3001 to RM4000 a month. The mean score for variables on a seven-point scale was as follow: coworker support 4.06 (SD = 0.63), supervisory support 3.58 (SD = 1.10), job demands 4.06, (SD = 0.63), work-family facilitation 4.55 (SD = 0.99), family satisfaction 4.92 (SD = 0.90) and intention to stay 4.40 (SD = 0.94) (Table 2).

Correlation Analyses

Correlation analyses results revealed that organizational characteristics were small to moderately related (r = 0.320 to r = 0.578) to work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay. The findings from data analysis as presented in Table 2 shows that as the level of coworker support of single mothers increased, their level of facilitation also increased (r = 0.578, p = 0.001). The result of the data analysis shows that as the level of coworker support of single mothers increased, their level of family satisfaction (r = 0.394, p = 0.001), and intention to stay (r = 0.320, p = 0.001) increased. However the result indicates that as the level of supervisory support of single mothers increased, their level of facilitation decreased (r = -0.343, p = 0.001). Similarly as the level of supervisory support of single mothers increased, their level of family satisfaction (r = -0.490, p = 0.001), and intention to stay (r = -0.464, p = 0.001) were also decreased. Job demands was positively related (r = 0.082 to r = 0.332) to work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay. The findings from data analysis as presented in Table 2 also revealed that as the level of job demands of single mothers increased, their level of facilitation increased (r = 0.332, p = 0.001) and at the same time their level of family satisfaction (r = 0.177, p = 0.001), and intention to stay (r = 0.082, p = 0.001) also increased.

Mediation Analyses

Mediation analyses were conducted to test the effect of work-family facilitation and family satisfaction as mediators in the relationship between coworker support, supervisory support, job demands and intention to stay.

Coworker Support and Intention to Stay via Work-Family Facilitation

Table 3 showed the direct effect of coworker support on intention to stay was significant (pc = 0.079, p < 0.05) and the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of coworker support on intention to stay via work-family facilitation was estimated by the product of the effect of coworker support on work-family facilitation and the effect of the work-family facilitation on intention to stay which was (0.206**)(0.186**) = 0.038**. The indirect effect (0.038**) was weaker than the direct effect (0.079*).
Table 3 also presented the direct effect of coworker support on intention to stay was significant \( (pc = 0.038, p < 0.05) \) while the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of coworker support on intention to stay via family satisfaction was estimated by the product of the effect of coworker support on family satisfaction and the effect of the family facilitation on intention to stay which was \( (0.079**)(0.482**) = 0.038** \). The indirect effect \( (0.038**) \) was the same value of the direct effect \( (0.038*) \).

**Supervisory Support and Intention to Stay via Work-Family Facilitation**

Referring to the same table the direct effect of supervisory support on intention to stay was significant \( (pc = -0.253, p < 0.05) \) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of supervisory support on intention to stay via work-family facilitation was estimated by the product of the effect of supervisory support on work-family facilitation and the effect of the work-family facilitation on intention to stay which was \( (-0.205**)(0.186**) = -0.038** \). The indirect effect \( (0.038**) \) was weaker than the direct effect \( (-0.253) \).

**Supervisory Support and Intention to Stay via Family Satisfaction**

Table 3 also indicated that the direct effect of supervisory support on intention to stay was significant \( (pc = -0.038, p < 0.05) \) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of supervisory support on intention to stay via family satisfaction was estimated by the product of the effect of supervisory support on family satisfaction and the effect of the family satisfaction on intention to stay which was \( (-0.079**)(0.482**) = -0.038** \). The indirect effect \( (0.038**) \) was the same value of the direct effect \( (-0.038) \).

**Job Demands and Intention to Stay via Work-Family Facilitation**

Table 3 showed that the direct effect of job demand on intention to stay was significant \( (pc = 0.047, p < 0.05) \) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of job demands on intention to stay via work-family facilitation was estimated by the product of the effect of job demands on work-family facilitation and the effect of the work-family facilitation on intention to stay which was \( (0.156**)(0.186**) = 0.029** \). The indirect effect \( (0.029**) \) was weaker than the direct effect \( (0.047) \). This means that indirect effect of job demand on intention to stay was partially mediated by work-family facilitation.

**Job Demands and Intention to Stay via Family Satisfaction**

Table 3 shows that the direct effect of job demand on intention to stay was significant \( (pc = 0.045, p < 0.05) \) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of job demand on intention to stay via family satisfaction was estimated by the product of the effect of job demand on family satisfaction and the effect of the family satisfaction on intention to stay which was \( (0.060**)(0.482**) = 0.029** \). The indirect effect \( (0.029**) \) was weaker than the direct effect \( (0.045) \). This means that indirect effect of job demand on intention to stay was partially mediated by family satisfaction.

**DISCUSSION**

**Correlation Analyses**

From the analysis the finding supported the hypothesis that single mothers who possessed high coworker support also experienced high facilitation. This finding supported Hill’s (2005) that work group support received for work related problems enhanced work-family facilitation. He further showed that support received for family-related problems from the coworker positively influenced family-work facilitation. The finding also in line with Wadsworth and Owens (2007) that concluded social support emanating from coworkers, made employees of public organizations facilitated the integration of their work and family.
roles. Therefore, the above hypothesis is supported. From the study, as the level of coworker support of single mothers increased, their level of family satisfaction ($r = 0.394$, $p = 0.001$), and intention to stay ($r = 0.320$, $p = 0.001$) increased. This finding supports the hypothesis that single mothers who obtained high coworker support also experienced high family satisfaction and high intention to stay with their organization.

Result from the study also revealed that there was negative significant correlation between supervisory support and facilitation ($r = -0.343$, $p = 0.001$). Negative correlation between supervisory support and facilitation indicated that the higher the support from supervisor received by single mothers the lower the facilitation. This situation has already been recorded by Sohlberg (2006) that concluded as albeit the glass ceiling effect, the literature has witnessed that there were companies that took advantage by interpreting what was needed to compete in a 24-hour globalized world, by means of exploiting female employees at the expense of families and their personal time. Result of the current study might represent the above description. Thus, the finding violated the hypothesis.

The result from supervisory support did not compromise with previous literature. With the correlation results of supervisory support and family satisfaction ($r = -0.490$, $p = 0.001$), supervisory support and intention to stay ($r = -0.464$, $p = 0.001$) indicated that supervisory support had negative significant relationship with family satisfaction and intention to stay. This means that supervisory support did not influence employees to have facilitation at work as well as family satisfaction as a whole. Supervisory support also did not show to have influence on intention to stay. Therefore, the above hypothesis is not supported.

The correlation coefficients among coworker support, supervisory support and job demands and work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay derived from the data analyses indicated that there were linear relationships among variables. The correlation coefficient among variables was between 0.082 to 0.578 which indicated that the relationships among variables were varies from small to moderate.

**Mediation Analyses**

The mediation analyses indicated that the results of indirect effects of variables were mixed. The analyses indicated that the indirect effect of coworker support on intention to stay was partially mediated by work-family facilitation. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 3.323; p < .001$). In other words, work-family facilitation was partially mediated the relationship between coworker support and intention to stay. The result indicated that coworker support could increase the work-family facilitation of single mothers which in turn would increase intention to stay with organization.

However the indirect effect of coworker support on intention to stay was not mediated by family satisfaction. The Sobel’s $z$-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was no different from zero ($z = 3.323; p < .001$). In other words, family satisfaction was not mediated the relationship between coworker support and intention to stay. The result indicated that coworker support did not increase the level of family satisfaction of single mothers and did not increase intention to stay with organization.

On the other hand the indirect effect of supervisory support on intention to stay was partially mediated by work-family facilitation. The Sobel’s $z$-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = -3.154; p < .001$). This means that work-family facilitation was partially mediated the relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay.

The result from mediation analyses shows that the indirect effect of supervisory support on intention to stay was not mediated by family satisfaction. However the Sobel’s $z$-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = -1.295; p < .001$). Therefore, family
satisfaction was partially mediated the relationship between supervisory support and intention to stay. The result indicated that supervisory support suppressed the family satisfaction of single mothers but enabled to increase intention to stay with organization.

Job demands indicated indirect effect of 0.047 stronger than its direct effect of 0.029. The Sobel’s z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 3.319; p < .001$). In other words, work family facilitation partially mediated the relationship between job demands and intention to stay. The analysis of mediation effect of job demands to intention to stay through family satisfaction indicated indirect effect of 0.045 stronger than its direct effect of 0.029. The Sobel’s z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 1.225; p < .001$). In other words, family satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between job demands and intention to stay.

**IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY**

From the interaction between coworker support, supervisory support, job demands and its mediating variables, this study has several implications on intention to stay as the research outcome. The study has established a kind of relationships between work-family facilitation and family satisfaction and how these variables helped promote organizational commitment among employees. Besides, this study has built a new structure of relationships between coworker support, supervisory support, job demands to work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay among employees.

First, from the field of human resource development (HRD) this study has established an additional insight about the relationships between work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay among employees in Malaysia. This study concentrated several theories and assumptions including Social Exchange Theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) (Cameron et al., 2003); Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979); Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989) in a single model. Second, three antecedent variables were chosen on the basis of sampling across coworker support, supervisory support and job demands in order to broaden perspective about its relationships to work-family facilitation and family satisfaction on intention to stay. By testing the importance of organizational and occupational characteristics to an individual employee, new insights emerged regarding the work-family arrangement in general and work-family facilitation specifically. Third, this study utilized the constructs of work-family facilitation and family satisfaction as mediating variables between coworker support, supervisory support, job demands and intention to stay; the factor that had not been well explored in education. These mediating constructs have proven to have influence on the employees’ decision to remain working with the present employers. Understanding work-family facilitation provides value to family domain and it is important not only for family members and managers but also for expanding our understanding of the conceptual phenomenon of work-family facilitation.

**CONCLUSION**

The primary focus of this research is to examine the level of intention to stay and its independent variables employed in the study with the intervention of mediating variables. Moving towards answering all the research questions and hypotheses, the study has been designed to examine the relationships of its exogenous and endogenous variables. Work-family facilitation and family satisfaction were examined as the mediating variables and how these mediating variables influenced single mothers’ coworker support, supervisory support and job demands to make decision on their intention to remain working with their present employers. The first and second mediators bridged the chain of correlation between the antecedent variables to the research outcome: intention to stay that lastly results in loyalty and cohesion among employees towards their organizations. Our findings suggest the importance of the organizational and occupational characteristics through coworker support, supervisory support, job demands and provide actionable elements to increase
facilitation and satisfaction between work and family. A deeper understanding of the work-family arrangement will not be fully realized until researchers devote as much effort and energy to facilitation as has been devoted to conflict.

REFERENCES


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<th>SD</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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### Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability and Intercorrelations of the variables

(n = 240)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cow</th>
<th>Sup</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>WFF</th>
<th>FSat</th>
<th>ITS</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>-0.364**</td>
<td>0.87</td>
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<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.578**</td>
<td>-0.343**</td>
<td>0.332*</td>
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<td>FSat</td>
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Note: N = 240.  ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Cronbach Alpha reliabilities are shown in bold.  M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Cow = Coworker, Sup = Supervisor, Dem = Demand,  WFF = Work-Family Facilitation,  FSat = Family Satisfaction, ITS = Intention to Stay.
Table 3: Direct and Indirect Effects of the relationship between coworker support, supervisory support, job demands and intention to stay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Job Characteristics</th>
<th>Direct Effect</th>
<th>Indirect Effect via Work-family facilitation</th>
<th>Sobel Z-test</th>
<th>Result of Mediation</th>
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<td>0.038</td>
<td>3.323</td>
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<td>Supervisory Support</td>
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<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.029</td>
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via family satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Dimension of Job Characteristics</th>
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<th>Indirect Effect via Work-family facilitation</th>
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<td>0.029</td>
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