EMPIRICALLY TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIAL SUPPORT, JOB SATISFACTION AND WORK -FAMILY BALANCE IN PAKISTANI SOCIO CULTURAL SET-UP

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Abstract: Healthy family life and organizational success depend upon balancing marital obligations and work responsibilities. Pakistan has joint family system, male dominant culture with religious overtones which do not have much space for females to enter the corporate world. The male is considered the head of family with the responsibilities of earning bread and butter. The highly educated female has representation at all walks of life including army and social sector but her prime responsibility is considered to look after family. Many educated girls, after completion of education do not enter in professional organizations due to cultural impediments, religious restrictions and social limitations. Working females are looked down upon and they are socially marginalized. In this scenario when female shares the economic burden with her male counterpart, her responsibilities are doubled, meeting her family tasks, keeping her husband happy and fulfilling organizational commitments. This paper examines the relationship of social support, job satisfaction and work – family balance among male and female employees in Pakistani socio-cultural setup. A random sample of 250 respondents working in private and public sector organizations has been taken. Reliability of the scales used in the questionnaire has been checked and found satisfactory. Independent sample t – test, Pearson's correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to get results. The study has revealed many interesting results including that male permit female and provides social support for work to avoid many family issues and problems caused by joint family system. They think, when female reach home after long day of hectic commitments, physically burnt-out, mentally exhausted, they find less time to get involved in family quarrels whereas female have to work hard to perform well at organizational environment, because this is the only outing opportunity they can avail to spend time out of depressed family surroundings. That's among the many reasons they receive social support to work. In Pakistani cultural perspective the study gains significance and warrants further investigation as the results seemly stand anomalous to the perceptions in the male-dominated Muslim society.

Keywords: Gender, Social support, Work family balance, Pakistan

I. INTRODUCTION

Social support and work family balance are the critical areas addressed in the organizational development studies. There has been a substantial rise in the number of female workers in organizations. These individuals are facing difficulties in balancing their work responsibilities and family obligations. Social support is one of the factors that can reduce stress, work family conflict and improve physical and psychological health [5, 21] while performing work and non work activities. The social support at work place and family level enable people to achieve a balance between work and family responsibilities.

The term 'work family balance' relates to create a balance between work and family responsibilities. The individuals need to meet family commitments and work requirements. Social support is help that one receives from coworkers, supervisor, and colleagues at workplace to perform work responsibilities effectively, achieving higher job satisfaction and meeting marital commitments with the help of friends, spouse and children.

Research suggests that the social support at the work place achieving job satisfaction [1] and similarly the social support outside of work may have a positive effect on work family balance by diminishing work family conflict [3].

Social support is explained as the structure of relationship as well as the flow of resources provided by the environment [11]. Social support has two categories namely work related social support and the personal social support. The individuals receive work related social support from work environment including the supervisor and the coworkers, whereas the personal social support comes form he personal relationship with friends, family, parents and children. Social support at work in many organizations is considered as a part of work family balance policies and practices [13].

Ducharme and Martin found that social support from peers at workplace enhances job satisfaction and positively relates with higher productivity and organizational effectiveness [6] whereas the job satisfaction is considered as combination of individual's feeling about job and career [15].

This paper examines the affect of social support and job satisfaction on work family balance of male and female employees working in public and private organizations of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. Furthermore, this paper tries to explore the fact whether female employees or male employees get social support from work environment and family setting.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The political and economical environment, equal employment opportunity concept and social factors have resulted into work force diversity. The induction of female employees at workplace has highlighted many issues relating to work and family life. Managing work demands and family obligations is a key area of concern for employers as well as employees to meet job satisfaction and leading a happy marital life. Ensher et al., suggest that creating work – personal life balance is a challenge for female executives [7]. They concluded that work – family balance has been considered a "women's issue" but recent researches have confirmed that men were also likely to have difficulty in managing work – family balance. The authors inferred that females working in public and private sector face the crucial issue of creating a work-family balance.

In many cultures male is considered the head of family with the responsibilities of earning bread and

butter and the primary role of female is to look after their homes, children or elderly parents [12]. The working female have to meet organizational and

work responsibilities and at the same time to assume the obligations of looking after the family commitments as a mother, wife, daughter and sister. The female dual duties create high demands to manage work-family balance [14]. Nadeem and Dr. Abbas found that job satisfaction has negative relationship with work to family interference and family to work interference as well [16].

A research highlighted the demands of time and energy spent at home may affect work performance, and stipulation at work may impact on home and family life [8].

The working females admit that assuming the responsibilities of work and family life simultaneously constitute a considerable amount of stress and anxiety. The parental responsibilities, family commitments and high work demands lead to excessive workload and exhaustion building dissatisfaction at work and creating problems and issues at home leading to miserable family life [9]. The researchers have extensively documented the implications of this growing frustrations and disappointments from work and the associated role overload and job–family spillover for children, families, work organizations and communities [8, 18].

In Australia, for instance, workers' experiences of work–family imbalance are linked to the increasing prevalence of routine, unpaid overtime, anti-social working hours, less predictability and security of hours, and an increasing work pace and intensity [17]. Indicators of balance have been associated with greater employee commitment and job satisfaction [1].

Grzywacz and Carlson stated that work–family balance as the absence of work–family conflict, or the frequency and intensity in which work interferes with family or family interferes with work [19]. Berg, Kalleberg, and Appelbaum stated in their research that the employers are taking care of their employees, specially the parents, by providing them with the family – friendly facilities [2]. Moreover they stated that the employee who were provided with greater autonomy in their jobs, control over their work schedules, experienced less conflict, less stress and better coping than other employees. In addition, individuals who had supportive supervisors, workplace cultures and believed their opportunities to advancement were not impeded by race or gender reported less conflict, less stress and better coping with work-family balance.

The opportunity to participate in decision making, informal training, pay for performance and good promotion opportunities have positive affect on work family balance. The intrinsically rewarding and

creative jobs increase ability of workers to balance the two domains of work and family [2].

III. METHODOLOGY

Sample

The study is based on cross sectional convenient sample of 250 male and female middle level managers in different service organizations such as hospitals, universities; banks of twin cities of Pakistan, Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The questionnaire was distributed to 320 individuals, 250 final responses were included in the study resulting in 78.2% response rate.

Measures

Independent sample t – test, Pearson's correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to get results. The Cronebach's alpha coefficients are summarized in table 1. Three variables were assessed on the five point Likert scale. The social support and job satisfaction of employees were assumed as the independent variables and the work – family balance of the employees treated as the dependent variable for the current study.

Table 1
Source and reliabilities of the scales used

Variable	Source	Reliability coefficient
Social support	Caplan et al., (1980)	.78
Job satisfaction	Warr et. al., (1979)	.90
Work – family balance	Kinnunen, et. al., (2006)	.90

Procedure

The questionnaires were distributed and collected personally by visiting public and private organizations. The respondents were briefed about the objectives of the research maintaining confidentiality of the responses. The data collected was processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The statistical independent sample t – test examined the differences among respondents with respect to gender. Pearson's correlation and regression analysis was used for examining the relationship of the variables.

IV. ANALYSIS

The following table 2 gives the demographic information of the respondents.

Table 2
Demographic profile of the respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Job Experience	1 – 5 years	105	42.0%
	6 – 10 years	67	26.8%
	11 – 15 years	43	17.2%
	Over 16 years	35	14.0%
Gender	Male	213	85.2%
	Female	37	14.8%
Marital status	Unmarried	97	38.8%
	Married	153	61.2%
Education	Undergraduate	57	22.8%
	Graduate	71	28.4%
	Masters	109	43.6%
	Others	13	05.2%
Age	21 – 30 years	97	38.8%
	31 – 40 years	99	39.6%
	41 – 50 years	42	16.8%
	Above 50 years	12	04.8%
Dependent children	Nil	95	38.0%
	1 – 3	117	46.8%
	4 – 6	38	15.2%

The demographic information reveals that 85.2% of the respondents were male and 14.8% were female. The marital status of responded was 61.2%, having job experience 01 to 05 years, which shows that most of the respondents had joined their jobs recently. The high educational qualification 43.6%, having Master Degree, corresponds to premium quality of respondents understanding the work-family issues. The Shapiro – Wilk test, skewness and kurtosis conferred the normality of data and appropriate for parametric tests for further analysis. The Pearson's correlation illustrates the relationship of the dependent and independent variables.

Table 3
Pearson's correlation

Variables	Social Support	Job Satisfaction	Work-Family Balance
Social Support	1	-	-
Job Satisfaction	0.581**	1	-
Work Family Balance	0.663**	0.853**	1

** Significant at 0.01%

The Pearson's correlation results show that there is a positive relationship between the social support, job satisfaction and work family balance. Job satisfaction has strong positive relationship with work family balance as compared to social support. The regression analysis shows the relationship of the variables presented in the table 4.

Table 4
Regression Model
Regression coefficient, St. error in parenthesis, t- values in brackets, and
p – values in italics

Constant	SS	JS	R^2	F – Statistic
	0.523	0.771	0.631	132.623
(0.311)	(0.083)	(0.079)		
[25.113]	[4.551]	[9.773]		
0.000	*0.000*	*0.000*		*0.000*

*Dependent variable: Work Family Balance (WFB).
*Independent variables: Social Support (SS), Job satisfaction (JS).

The multiple regression analysis indicates that there is a relationship between the dependent variable (work-family balance) and the independent variables (social support and job satisfaction). The results indicate that social support (0.523, p = 0.000) has a moderate positive and significant relationship with the work family balance where as, job satisfaction (0.771, p = 0.000) has strong positive significant relationship with work family balance. The value of R^2 (0.631) illustrates the variance of dependent variable explained by independent variables. The value of F – statistic (132.623) confirms significance of the relationship and the fitness of the model tested.

The researcher used t-test to examine the different responses among male and female, middle level managers of private and public organizations, the results are presented in table 5.

The results of the independent sample t – test explain that there is a significant difference in getting the social support (p = 0.000) for female middle level managers. The results also show that there are significant differences with respect to job satisfaction (p = 0.001) and work family balance (p = 0.001). Further results show that the female managers get more social support (M = 4.06) and are satisfied (M = 3.32) with their jobs as compared to their male (M = 2.64) counterparts and they are better able to manage their work and family life.

Table 5
Independent sample t – test

Variable		Mean	St. Dev.	t – values	p – values
Social Support	Male	3.642	0.7811	-0.568	0.000
	Female	4.060	0.8250		
Job satisfaction	Male	2.648	0.4802	-0.751	0.001
	Female	3.326	0.4905		
Work family balance	Male	3.124	0.7405	-3.211	0.001
	Female	3.632	0.6915		

*P value significant at 5 % level of significance.

V. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The study results conclude that maximum managers were young, energetic, married and had strong educational background. The research focused on individuals, who had marital status with dependents and measured their ability to balance work-life responsibilities.

The Pearson's correlation results reveal that there is a positive relationship between the social support, job satisfaction and work family balance. The job satisfaction has stronger relationship with work family balance as compared to social support. The finding is consistent with the views of earlier researchers [2]. The individuals satisfied with their jobs were more capable of managing their work and family life.

Nadeem and Dr. Abbas found that job satisfaction has negative relationship with work to family interference and family to work interference in Pakistani environment [16], where as the current findings are not in accordance with the research findings of Nadeem and Dr. Abbas. The reason might be the level of management, type of work organizations etc.

Job satisfaction seems to be the predictor of work family balance instead of social support among male member of the society. The reason might be that the male value more their job as compared to other factors effecting their work and family affairs whereas the researcher inferred an interesting conclusion that female do receive social support for work by male family members to avoid many family issues and problems caused by joint family system by staying of female at home. Ensher et al., suggested that attaining work – personal life balance is a challenge for the women [7]. The current study reveals that women are better able to manage their work and family affairs as compared to the male individuals. The reason may be that women in Pakistani environment are considered to look after family and home tasks. Males think that when female reach home after long day of hectic commitments, physically burnt-out, mentally exhausted, they find less time to get involved in family quarrels whereas female have to work hard to perform well at organizational environment, because this is the only outing opportunity they can avail to spend time out of depressed family surroundings. That's among the many reasons they receive social support to work. In Pakistani cultural perspective and religious male-dominated society, middle class working female spend long commitment hours looking after family responsibilities and meeting organizational obligations.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The provision of work family balance opportunities to the workforce is beneficial to the organization. It helps the organizations to retain the skilled, satisfied employees, minimizing costs associated with recruitment and selection, training and development. The employee friendly policies and social support provided by the organizations enhance the loyalty of the employees resulting into higher productivity and generating more revenues. The social support at family level has many advantages, improving social status, economic well being and happy married life.

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