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# WORK-FAMILY CULTURE AND BORDER PERMEABILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK-FAMILY BORDER THEORY

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**A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA by coursework and Research Report in the field of Industrial Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.**

**June 2010**

## DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own, unaided work and that it has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university. It is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand.

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Ruvarashe Saungweme

This _____day of_____ year _____

## ABSTRACT

The study explored the relationships between role centrality, work-family culture, work-family balance and work-family conflict. Additionally, it examined the incorporation of work-family culture into border permeability as used in work-family border theory. A total of 103 participants from five organisations completed the questionnaires. Participants were employed in administrative, professional/skilled/specialist, supervisory or management positions. Data were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation and Simple Regression. Significant results were obtained between role centrality, home centrality and work-family balance as well as work-family conflict. These were in support of Clark (2000) work-family border theory. However, work centrality produced insignificant relationships. Work-family culture produced significantly strong relationships and predictability on work-family balance and conflict. The study findings highlight a need for expansion of border theory to include work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability.



Keywords: Work-family balance; work-family conflict; role centrality; work-family culture; border permeability.

## DEDICATION

To my husband Willis and daughter (Nicole). You have been my inspiration and thank you so much for being there for me always. God bless you

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# CHAPTER 1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The work-family interface is a topic that has generated interest in recent years because reality has shown that although work and family are separate domains, they greatly influence each other. This is witnessed by the growing number of research studies focusing on the work-family interface over the last two decades (Allen, 2001; Clark, 2001; Morris & Madsen, 2007; Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999). The last twenty years or so have seen many employees juggling their home and work roles (Morris & Madsen, 2007). These challenges arise from various factors including an increase in dual income earners; increasing numbers of working single parents; long working hours; ever-increasing numbers of 'cared for' groups and increased expectations of male participation in the home (Carlson, 1999; Donald & Linington, 2008; Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007; Mckee, Mauthner & Maclean, 2000).

Statistics indicate that dual income earning has become the norm in households with nearly two thirds of couples with children below eighteen being dual income earners (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). Family structure has also shifted significantly from the traditional family model where men were solely responsible for fending for the family (Ahmad, 2003). In contrast, in the 'modern' family structure, couples are increasingly becoming dual earners and more men are expected to participate in household duties (Carlson, 1999). There is also an increase in the number of employees taking care of aging parents or family members. In America, this proportion stood at 35% in 2002 (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky & Prottas, 2002 as cited in Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). As a result of these challenges, balancing one's work and family roles has become important in recent years for both individuals and organisations.

There are benefits to achieving work-family balance both at the individual and organisational level. Whether implicit or explicit, work-family balance may function as a crucial and powerful 'leverage point' necessary in creating individual and organisational effectiveness (Gryzwacz & Carlson, 2007). For

example, an association was established between work-family balance, higher job satisfaction and higher employee affective commitment (Allen, Herst, Brocks & Sutton, 2000). Affective commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment to the organisation they work for (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Affective commitment may influence the extent to which one is a central participant in the work domain (Lambert, Kass, Piotrowski & Vodanovich, 2006). This in turn influences the degree to which one experiences a balance between the work and family domains. There is also an association between work-family balance and organisational citizenship behaviour (Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki, Kutcher, Indovino & Rosner, 2005). Experiences of conflict between one's home and work roles tend to cause negative emotional and physical consequences and this can in turn lead to higher absenteeism and low productivity (Cooper & Williams, 1994).

Much research has been directed to understanding the interdependent nature of the work and family domains in recent years, as earlier mentioned. One theory that aims to understand this interdependent relationship is work-family border theory developed by Clark (2000). The theory aims to explain the nature of the borders between the home and work domains and how individuals negotiate them to accomplish work-family balance (Clark, 2000).

The concepts of border crossers' central or peripheral participation, border strength and permeability are important in work-family border theory. The theory views work-family balance as a function of central participation in the home and work domains. Thus, role centrality is key in understanding the relationship between the home and work domains (Clark, 2000). This suggests that one is more likely to experience work-family conflict if one is a peripheral domain participant. In addition to role centrality, border permeability influences work-family balance. Less defined borders are said to allow border permeability and facilitate work-family balance where the work and family domains are comparable (Clark, 2000). However, Clark (2000) provided little information on factors that contribute to border permeability. Therefore, the current study examines work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability. This is based on the realisation that organisations can facilitate work-family balance by

creating organisational cultures that are family friendly (Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999). Therefore the relationships between work-family culture and work-family balance and conflict are also explored in this study.

## 1.1. Rationale

Work-family border theory has contributed to a better understanding of the work-family interface (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004), however, it lends itself to validation and expansion since it is new. Very few studies (Lambert, Kass, Piotrowski & Vodanovich, 2006) have attempted to validate work-family border theory.

Work-family border theory (Clark, 2000) clearly identifies role centrality as a key factor influencing experiences of work-family balance or conflict. However, Clark (2000) conceptualised this relationship. It is therefore imperative that a clear understanding of the relationship between role centrality, work-family balance and conflict be empirically established. Moreover, role centrality establishes the extent to which an individual is capable of controlling his/her experiences of work-family balance or conflict.

The theory lacks adequate information on the issue of border permeability. The contribution of work-family culture to work-family balance is also not discussed in the theory. This study conceptualised border permeability more clearly and explored work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability. Literature suggests that organisations are increasingly putting in place family friendly policies and programmes such as flexible working hours, on-site child care and working parents' support groups (Thompson et al., 1999). Since these practices are part of work-family culture, there appears to be growing awareness of the need to develop family-friendly cultures (Grover & Crooker, 2006). This study therefore identifies factors that contribute to permeability but at a conceptual level. However, at an empirical level, it examines work-family culture.

Work-family culture has not been examined before in the context of border theory. Previous research on work-family culture has examined how these

cultures influence individuals' organisational commitment and work-family conflict (Thompson et al., 1999); formal and informal family-friendly cultures and their relationship with job related outcomes like job satisfaction (Anderson, Coffey & Byerly, 2002), and the relationship between work-family culture and organisational attachment of parents and non-parents (Grover & Crooker, 2006). Clark (2001) also differs from the present study in that, it examined different constructs of work-family culture such as working hours and work processes flexibility in relation to work-family balance. In contrast, the present study looked at work-family culture constructs namely organisational time demands, negative career consequences and supervisor support. In addition, this research explores work-family culture in the context of the work-family border theory thereby creating a new and original approach.

## 1.2. Aim

Work-family balance has become a cause for concern for employers, employees, academics and policy makers (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). In particular, employers seek to address challenges faced by employees in managing their home and work spheres in order to improve their work performance (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). This is sought through the creation of an organisational culture that supports employees in their roles both at home and at work (Allen, 2001; Clark, 20001; Thompson et al., 1999). In addition, border permeability has been acknowledged as facilitating the attainment of work-family balance. Clark (2000) proposed that less defined borders are more permeable and as a result they facilitate work-family balance depending on the extent to which the home and work domains are different. This research aims to expand on work-family border theory. In particular, it proposes that a supportive work-family culture increases the permeability of the border between the work and family domains. Therefore the study seeks to expand on work-family border theory by conceptualising work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability.

The study also aims to examine the relationship between role centrality and work-family balance as well as that of work-family culture and work family balance. Since role centrality is one of the central aspects of border theory, it is

important that its relationship to work-family balance be examined extensively. Furthermore, this study proposes work-family culture to be a central aspect of border permeability, therefore, its relationship to work-family balance needs to be examined.

A theoretical and conceptual framework on work-family interface aspects related to the study is provided. Previous research is thus reviewed in this section. In order to empirically examine the relationships mentioned earlier, this study's methodology section indicates that the research design is quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional and ex-post facto. Self-reported questionnaires were used to obtain data from 103 participants. Pearson's r correlation and simple regression were conducted to analyse data. The findings are presented and discussed in the results and discussion sections respectively. Limitations of the present study and recommendations for future research are stated in the discussion section. Inferences drawn from the whole study are then presented in the conclusion chapter.

# CHAPTER 2

## 2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The work and family spheres are increasingly becoming interconnected. Work and home are no longer spatially and temporarily dislocated spheres. Rather they are independent domains whose boundaries are permeable and are increasingly becoming eroded (Hochschild, 1997). Some researchers advocate that the integration of these domains facilitates employees' work-family balance (Bailyn, Drago, & Kochan, 2001) whereas others are concerned that too much work-family integration can lead to blurring boundaries between these domains which can lead to work-family conflict (Chesley, Moen, & Shore, 2001). While it can be argued that integrating work and home roles can lead to fewer difficulties during role transitions, it has also been suggested that less integrated roles lead to clearer and more easily maintained boundaries (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). The literature is contradictory and not clear on this issue.

The complex interconnectedness between the work and home spheres has partly led to the interest by researchers in this topic and the development of theories which provide insight into the work-family interface. For example, work-family border theory (Clark, 2000) and boundary theory (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000) provide insight into the integration and blurring of work and family domains. Both these theories discuss how individuals construct, maintain, negotiate and cross the boundaries or borders between the work and family roles. Permeability and flexibility are seen as the two mechanisms that affect integration of roles (Clark, 2000; Ashforth et al., 2000). Insight into some of the work-family interface theories provides background for understanding the subject. It also provides an opportunity to understand the reasons behind the choice of work-family border theory as the basis for this study and why this theory arose.

## 2.1. Work-family interface theories

Spillover theory (Staines, 1980) is one of the earliest theories on the work-family interface to advocate an interconnection between the work and family domains. Spillover theory proposes that a process of 'spill over' can explain this interconnectedness between work and family (Staines, 1980). Thus experiences, thoughts and feelings which originate in one domain can spill over into the other domain (Kirrane & Buckley, 2004). This reciprocal effect of multiple roles can be negative or positive in nature. Negative experiences at work such as fatigue and distress may affect the nature and quality of interactions at home and vice versa. The same applies to positive experiences such as job satisfaction, which can lead to positive feelings and interactions at home and vice versa (Williams & Alliger, 1994).

Despite it being commonly applied in many work-family interface studies, the spillover theory has its limitations. The theory lacks comprehensive insight into the day to day interactions that occur between one's work and family roles (Williams & Alliger, 1994). The work-family border theory attempts to address this limitation by discussing the character of the border between work and family. The underlying psychological links between one's work and family are also absent in the spillover theory (Williams & Alliger, 1994).

The Conservation of Resources model (C.O.R.) (Hobfoll, 1989) supports the spillover theory on the notion that the work and home spheres are integrated. The main difference is that, whereas the spillover theory proposes a positive correlation between work and family resulting from spillover effects, C.O.R. proposes an inverse correlation (Kirrane & Buckley, 2004). The spillover theory states that negative or positive experiences in one domain spill over to the next domain which leads to a positive correlation in domain experiences. However, C.O.R suggests that negative experiences in one domain can lead to one exerting effort in the other as a way of compensating for these experiences (Clark, 2000; Kirrane & Buckley, 2004). Positive outcomes in one domain can lead to one exerting more effort in that domain at the expense of the other (Kirrane &

Buckley, 2004). This therefore leads to an inverse correlation in one's work and family experiences.

The theory (C.O.R.) integrates several stress theories. The theory is based on the assumption that individuals desire to acquire and maintain resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Stress is therefore viewed as a reaction to an actual or perceived threat to one's resources, actual loss of resources or perceived or actual lack of expected gain in resources (Hobfoll, 1989). The resources referred to in the theory are varied and include time, money, self-esteem and marital status (Alicia & Cropanzano, 1999).

C.O.R is an integrated theory but it is limited in that it mainly focuses on resources as the main determinant of stress (Alicia & Cropanzano, 1999). In contrast, work-family border theory integrates different factors such as border permeability and flexibility, central and peripheral participation as well as the blending of roles in an attempt to explain work-family balance. Work-family border theory therefore incorporates diverse concepts.

Work-family border theory relates to boundary theory more closely (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). Both theories describe "the conditions under which varying degrees of work-family integration are likely to improve or diminish individual well-being" (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004, p.40). The two theories are, however, distinct in that boundary theory focuses on cognitive social classification. This means that it concentrates on the meaning assigned to one's home and work roles (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). In contrast, work-family border theory is focused on the work and family domains, with work-family balance as the outcome. Its approach has therefore rendered work-family border theory as the most appropriate in this study since work-family balance is also an outcome in the current study.

## 2.2. Work-family Border Theory

Early theories on the work-family interface generally lacked integration of different concepts. Work-family border theory sought to address the

shortcomings of past research, such as the spillover and compensation theories (Clark, 2000). Generally these theories are limited in that "they did not adequately explain, predict and help solve problems the individuals face when balancing home and work responsibilities" (Clark, 2000, p.749). The development of work-family border theory is therefore based on strong theoretical underpinnings gathered from a variety of disciplines. The concept of 'life space' proposed by Kurt Lewin provides a basis for understanding the nature of the borders between work and family roles (Clark, 2000). The theory works on the assumption that work and family are independent spheres that influence each other (Clark, 2000).

Key concepts in work-family border theory include the characteristics of the home and work domains; central or peripheral participation of border crossers, as well as the permeability and flexibility of the border between the two domains (Clark, 2000). These concepts are presented in Figure 1.

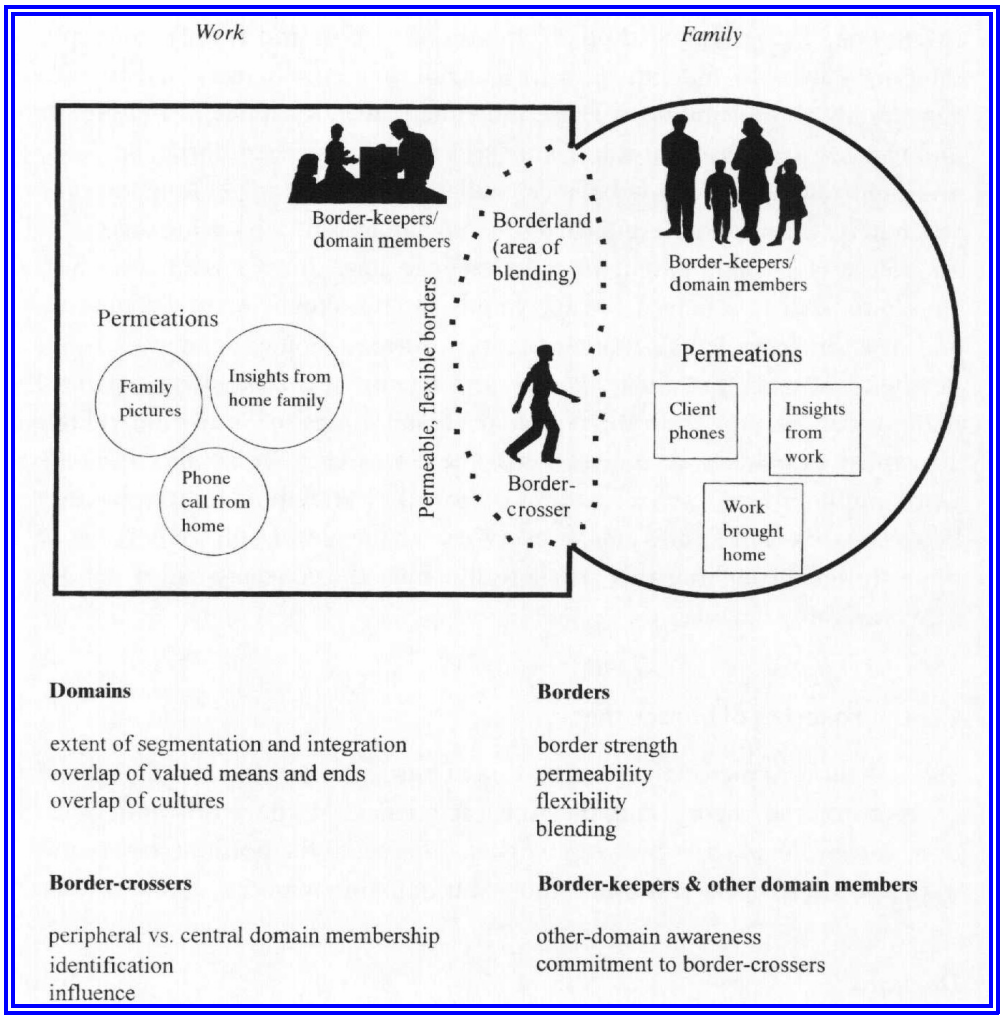



**Figure 1: Pictorial representation of work-family border theory and list of central concepts and their characteristics (*Adapted from Clark, 2000, p.754*).**

Work-family border theory attempts to provide an understanding of the "complex interaction between border-crossers and their work and family lives, to predict when conflict will occur, and give a framework for attaining balance" (Clark, 2000, p.748). It postulates that although there are physical, temporal and psychological borders between work and family, these two life domains are interconnected (Clark, 2000). People are therefore border crossers in that they make regular crossings between these domains (Figure 1). The transition between work and home ranges from a slight transition for some, to extreme

transitions for others. This is based on the contrast between the home and work domains (Clark, 2000).

The strength of the border between the two domains, however, determines their degree of interaction (Clark, 2000). Individuals as border crossers are also partly able to shape the environments in which they exist and negotiate the borders between their family and home domains (Clark, 2000). The concept of border crossers is central to work-family border theory (Clark, 2000). Border crossers can be central or peripheral participants in their domains (Clark, 2000). Individuals with role centrality are said to have internalised the domain's culture, are competent in their responsibilities and personally identify with domain responsibilities to a high degree (Lambert et al., 2006). As a result, central participants become influential and enjoy flexibility and autonomy in the domain in which they are central role players. They interact and are well connected with other central participants in the domain (Lambert et al., 2006). Role centrality therefore may lead to greater control over one's life and the ability to negotiate the borders between domains. This can help in achieving a balance between work and family.

In contrast, peripheral participants are less aware of their domain values, do not fully identify with domain responsibilities, their interaction with central domain members is limited and are less competent in their responsibilities (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This may lead to peripheral participants having less control over their domains and being more susceptible to difficulties in balancing their work and family roles.

The work and home domains are demarcated by a border between them as depicted in Figure 1. The nature of this border varies in its degree of permeability (Clark, 2000). Border permeability refers to the level to which the border between the home and work domains allows elements from one domain to enter the other (Clark, 2000). For example, when one is working from home, the family domain can easily cross the physical and temporal border demarcating work and home and vice versa. As proposed by Clark (2000), less defined borders are recommended where domains are comparable because they

allow permeability to take place and in turn facilitate work-family balance. More defined borders are most functional in facilitating work-family balance particularly when there are differences in the work and home domains.

Permeability allows blending of domains to occur (Clark, 2000). Where domains are less comparable, permeability becomes a source of work-family conflict as border crossers are faced with conflicting demands from the work and family spheres (Clark, 2000). However, work-family border theory can be criticised for its lack of clarity on what Clark (2000) refers to 'comparable' domains. The theory is vague on whether comparability refers to the roles which the border crosser plays or the domains themselves. It can be difficult to ever find comparable domains since work and family are independent spheres which, however, influence each other.

Boundary theory notes that if role identities are very different, the contrast between them is greater than when they are comparable. Consequently, this leads to greater magnitude experienced during transition from one role to the other and potential transition difficulties (Ashforth et al., 2000). Highly impermeable and inflexible roles referred to as segmented roles have the downside of increasing the magnitude of transition. However, they can reduce role blurring since the roles and boundaries are highly delimited (Ashforth et al., 2000). A reduction in role blurring may facilitate work-family balance.

## 2.3. Work-family border theory and work-family balance

Work-family balance is a concept that has become common with researchers, organisations and employees over the past two to three decades (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). Finding a balance between the work and family roles has been proposed as one of the main social challenges of the present era (Halpern, 2005). Balancing one's work and family roles is assumed to be a major goal for border crossers (Clark, 2002). There are varied and inconsistent definitions of work-family balance. The amount of balance between one's work and family that is considered to be balanced is relative in that different people view it differently (Clark, 2002). What one person regards as the attainment of balance between

work and family may not be regarded as balanced by the next person. Thus "balance is attained when a person feels comfortable with the way they have allocated their time and energy, and integrated and separated their responsibilities at work and at home" (Clark, 2002, p.24). This definition therefore points to the subjective nature of work-family balance experiences in that different people have different needs which in turn affect their perceptions of balance.

Other researchers define work-family balance as "the extent to which individuals are equally engaged in and equally satisfied with work and family roles" (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003, p.513). This definition is limited, however, in that it suggests that there should be equality or near equality in individuals' work and family roles in order to experience balance (Gryzwacz & Carlson, 2007).

Work-family balance is also defined in terms of the compatibility of one's life priorities with satisfaction and effectiveness in both the family and work roles (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006). This definition over-emphasises the importance of one's individual satisfaction at home and at work. In particular, Gryzwacz and Carlson (2007, p.457) noted the primary problem with this definition as "defining balance in terms of satisfaction isolates individuals in their work and family related activities from the organisation and families in which these activities are performed". This definition therefore considers only the psychological aspect of work-family balance and does not take into account the social aspect. From an extreme point of view, this would suggest that there is nothing much organisations or external agents can do to influence individuals' experiences of work-family balance since these experiences are 'idiosyncratic'.

In an effort to take into account psychological and social perspectives of work-family balance, Gryzwacz and Carlson (2007, p.458) thus define it as the "accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his or her role-related partners in the work and family domains". This definition emphasises that individuals are capable of negotiating and sharing the domain roles and responsibilities with other domain members.

These negotiations may involve daily and spontaneous interactions with other domain members in both the work and home domains. This ability facilitates their accomplishment of role-related expectations and consequently their attainment of work-family balance.

## 2.4. Work-family border theory and work-family conflict

The work and family spheres are microsystems which are interrelated and influence each other. The borders between them vary in their nature on a continuum from being permeable to impermeable (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). Permeability refers to the degree to which elements from one domain may enter (Clark, 2000). These elements can therefore enter the physical, temporal or psychological borders separating home and work domains. For example, an individual working from home can be regarded as having a very permeable border because family members can frequently talk to the individual whilst at work (Clark, 2000). The nature of borders between work and family can complement the domains or lead to conflict between them (Raymond & Fitz, 2004). Border permeability is one of the aspects that determine the strength of the border (Clark, 2000).

Although the aspect of domain comparability is vague in Clark (2000)'s theory, she argues that the ideal degree of border strength which allows work-family balance is dependent on the comparison between domains. Thus, less defined borders are said to facilitate balance where domains are similar whereas more defined borders do so when domains are not comparable. The work-family border theory (Clark, 2000) does not provide a value judgement on which border is good or bad. Rather, the effectiveness of the border depends on domain comparability (Clark, 2000).

Another school of thought, however, argues that boundaries are generally 'idiosyncratically constructed' (Ashforth et al., 2000). This means that one person may feel comfortable and attain balance by keeping their work separated from their home whereas another person would allow one domain to cross over

to the other. This notion may therefore suggest that individuals may experience conflict between their work and family roles if they perceive the nature of their borders as lying somewhere outside their ideal degree of strength.

Raymond and Fitz (2004) argue that the extent to which role or domain demands hinder one's performance of work and family roles leads to one's perceptions of whether there is conflict or not. Work-family conflict is thus a product of an individual's cognitive appraisal of the effects of one domain on the other (Raymond & Fitz, 2004). This indicates that the experience of work-family balance is subjective as it depends on one's appraisal of one's experiences. This research, however, proposes that work-family balance and conflict are predictable. In the author's view, a family-friendly organisational culture is expected to allow more border permeability thereby facilitating work-family balance and reducing conflict. Thus, work-family culture as a proposed aspect of border permeability is measured in the study.

Work-family conflict is defined as a form of interrole conflict which results from incompatibility between work and family role demands (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This role demand incompatibility can lead to difficulties in participating in one role because of participation in the other. Interrole conflict arises when there is role incompatibility which then produces pressure, making it difficult for an individual to participate adequately in both family and work roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Individuals as members of society have multiple roles that they are expected to fulfil. These roles can emanate from varied sources such as the work, family and community domains (Morris & Madsen, 2007).

The work and family roles are often the most important roles in an individual's life (Morris & Madsen, 2007). Roles are defined as "culturally defined behavioural expectations that an individual is expected to fulfil" (Morris & Madsen, 2007, p.446). Role expectations in both the work and family domains may lead to role conflict (Elloy & Smith, 2003). The greater the role demands an individual experiences in the work or family domain, the greater the level of

work-family conflict that individual is likely to experience (Cinamon, 2006). However, the strength of the border between these domains can mitigate one's experiences of a role balance or conflict. Furthermore, these experiences depend on domain comparability (Clark, 2000).

Conflict can occur in two directions (bi-directional) namely, work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (Raymond & Fitz, 2004). The former occurs when work demands interfere with family demands and the latter occurs when family demands interfere with work demands. Overall work-family conflict can have a significant impact on an individual's psychological wellbeing (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). In particular, family-to-work conflict may lead to high absenteeism, job dissatisfaction and poor job performance (Raymond & Fitz, 2004). On the other hand, work-to-family conflict may lead to poor performance of family roles; family dissatisfaction and distress. Generally, struggling to balance one's home and work roles may lead to employee stress and negative attitudes towards one's organisation (Raymond & Fitz, 2004).

Kasper et al. (2005) examined managers' experiences of work-to-family conflict and how they deal with these experiences. The study showed that managers often experience higher work-to-family conflict compared to employees occupying non-managerial positions. They attributed this to the large amounts of time and emotional commitment they invest in their jobs. In turn, this creates a shortage of the time resource in family life and a possibility of work-to-family conflict (Kasper et al., 2005). The experience of conflict between one's work and home roles can lead to negative emotional and physical effects. This can result in higher absenteeism and low productivity (Cooper & Williams, 1994).

Due to spillover effects, negative experiences in one domain may also spill over and affect the other domain negatively (Kasper et al., 2005). For example, one's dissatisfaction in one's family life may lead to lower job performance. It can be argued that limited availability of resources such as time and involvement in one domain may lead to one transferring this limited resource from one domain to cater for that resource shortage in the other domain. This resource-drain process can lead to insufficient or depleted resources in the domain which is the original

owner of that resource and the resultant possible conflict (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Incompatibility between work and family roles is complex and may lead to three forms of work-family conflict namely: time-based; strain-based and behaviour-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). These types of conflict occur both in the family and work domains (Carlson, 1999). Time-based and strain-based demands can lead to work-to-family conflict through depletion of resources (Voydanoff, 2004). Individuals tend to invest a greater amount of time and energy in those roles which they consider as more important in their lives compared to those which they regard as less central. This therefore leads to the latter roles receiving less time and energy which in turn may become a source of conflict (Cinamon & Rich, 2002).

Some researchers argue that a process of psychological spillover leads to work-family conflict when one experiences strain-based demands (Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh & Reilly, 1995). Thus "strain associated with participation in one domain is carried over to another domain such that it creates strain in the second domain, thereby hindering role performance in that domain" (Voydanoff, 2004, p.400).

Each of the three forms of conflict (time, strain and behaviour) has domain-specific antecedents (Lu, Gilmour, Kao & Huang, 2006). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) summarised their work on these sources of work-family conflict (Table 1).

**Table 1: Work family Role Pressure Incompatibility (Adapted from Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 78)**

| Work Domain Illustrative Pressures: | Role Pressure Incompatibility | Family Domain Illustrative Pressures: |
|---|---|---|
| **Time-based demands**<br>• Hours worked<br>• Shiftwork<br>• Inflexible work schedule | **Time** devoted to one role makes it difficult to fulfil requirements in another role. | **Time-based demands**<br>• Number and ages of children<br>• Spouse employment<br>• Large families |
| **Strain-based demands**<br>• Role conflict<br>• Role ambiguity<br>• Boundary-spanning activities | **Strain** produced by one role makes it difficult to fulfil requirements of another role. | **Strain-based demands**<br>• Family conflict<br>• Low spouse support |
| **Behaviour-based demands**<br>• Expectations for secretiveness and objectivity | **Behaviour** required in one role makes it difficult to fulfil requirements of another role. | **Behaviour-based demands**<br>• Expectations for warmth and openness |

## 2.5. Time-based conflict

This type of conflict emanates from one's inability to balance time spent in one role with the other role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This means that more time spent at work leads to less time left for one's family role and vice versa. Such a situation may result in work-to-family conflict or family-to-work conflict respectively. Thus, multiple roles compete for an individual's time. There are two forms of time-based conflict, one emanates from being physically unable to comply with one domain's expectations as a result of membership in another

domain. The second form of time-based conflict emanates from being preoccupied with one role and due to time pressure, one is not able to satisfy the demands of another role even if one is physically attempting to (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Working hours, inflexible work schedules and shift work are some of the most common time-based, work domain antecedents associated with work-family conflict. For example, working long hours, whether paid or unpaid, can lead to work-to-family conflict through depleting time resources meant for family. Previous studies (Clark, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999) consistently found a positive relationship between paid overtime and work-to-family conflict. Work schedule inflexibility can lead to greater experiences of work-family conflict. That is, the greater the control people have over their work schedules, the less work-family conflict they experience (Cinamon, 2006; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Family-related sources of time-based conflict include large families and living in the same household as young children (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Generally, family roles that expect large amounts of time input from an individual have more potential to create work-family conflict compared to those that require less time (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Due to the fact that younger children in particular demand significant time from their parents, some studies have found greater work-family conflict amongst working parents with younger children than those with older children (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1980; Greenhaus & Kopelman, 1981). The number of the children living in the household may also influence an individual's experience of work-family conflict. More children are more likely to place higher demands on the working parent than less (Cinamon, 2006).

## 2.6. Strain-based conflict

Emotional interference from one domain to the other leads to strain-based conflict (Small & Riley, 1990). This form of conflict results from one's inability to perform in one role as a result of strain experienced in the other role

(Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The work and family roles thus become incompatible. Symptoms such as tension, anxiety, fatigue and depression can be experienced as a result of role strain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). There are a variety of domain-specific sources of strain-based conflict. These antecedents include low spousal support in the family domain as well as role conflict, lack of supervisor support, work-overload and job insecurity emanating from the work domain. The elements may create negative emotional feelings which may in turn spill over into one's work or family domain and hinder one's adequate participation in that domain (Small & Riley, 1990).

Both physical and psychological work demands have been found to be positively related to work-family conflict (Jones & Butler, 1980). In their survey, Jones and Butler (1980) found that factors such as long working hours, schedules, fatigue and irritability accounted for the participants' work-family conflict experiences. This conflict was in-turn associated with lack of satisfaction in one's job and life. The study also found a negative relationship between work-family conflict, task challenge and task variety (Jones & Butler, 1980). This means that jobs that provide task challenge and variety can facilitate the reduction of work-family conflict.

Stressful events at work such as poor job-person fit and unfulfilled expectations may lead to symptoms such as tension and frustration which prevent one from having a satisfying non-work life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Job insecurity can lead to work-to-family conflict in that it is viewed as a threat to one's economic ability to fend for their family. This feeling therefore, leads to stress and consequently reduces the quality and quantity of life spent with the family (Voydanoff, 2004). A positive relationship was established between job insecurity and work-family conflict for both men and women (Batt & Valcour, 2003). Support from spouse, however, buffers the experience of conflict resulting from an imbalance between one's work and family roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

## 2.7. Behaviour-based conflict

Patterns of behaviour in one role may not be compatible with behavioural expectations in another role and may lead to work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). For example, a male managerial stereotype may expect self-sufficient, emotionally stable, aggressive and objective behaviour. On the other hand, that same person is expected to be warm, emotional, understanding and vulnerable at home (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It therefore becomes a source of conflict if one is unable to adjust one's behaviour to suit the different expectations from the different roles. A survey by Ahmad (2003) on 88 professional women in Singapore established that behaviour-based conflict was the main type of conflict experienced by the participants. This was followed by time and strain-based conflict.

It remains clear that balancing one's work and family roles remains a challenge as individuals have competing multiple roles to fulfil. It is, however, argued that work-family cultures in organisations may provide a solution to this challenge as they may facilitate overall work-family balance and reduce work-family conflict (Raymond & Fitz, 2004). The rationale behind this proposition is that work-family cultures are supportive of and legitimise the view that work and family domains are interconnected and therefore domain roles need to be coordinated (Raymond & Fitz, 2004). It can be further proposed that if work-family culture is related to work-family balance and work-family conflict, then, work-family border theory and its concept of border permeability need to be expanded to include work-family culture. Border permeability is not measured because it follows that, should it be established that work-family culture as a proposed characteristic of border permeability, is related to work-family balance and conflict, then, permeability is also influenced.

## 2.8. Role centrality and work-family balance

Role centrality is a key characteristic of border crossers and may help in facilitating work-family balance. Central participation in domain activities is recommended as being more functional in facilitating one's experience of work-family balance compared to peripheral participation (Clark, 2000). Thus, role

centrality may lead to more control over one's life and ability to negotiate the borders between domains.

Centrality refers to how important one regards one's work or family (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). Past researchers such as Dubin (1956) and Vecchio (1980) as cited in Carlson and Kacmar (2000) studied central life interests and established that work is a central life interest for most professionals. Generally, however, people differ in the relative level of importance they attach to their work or family and this leads to differences found in their experiences of work-family conflict. "The values that an individual holds about the roles he or she must fulfil in each life domain have significant implications for experiencing conflict" (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000, p.1032). For example, a person may wish to spend more time with his/her family but due to the high demands of the job, he/she would have no option than to work long hours since the family depends financially on that job. This person is therefore most likely to experience work-to-family conflict.

Individuals with high work centrality have higher organisational commitment and attraction to an organisation compared to those with lower work centrality (Pleck, 1977) (as cited in Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). Results from a study by Carlson and Kacmar (2000) showed that individuals whose family roles are central to their life are more likely to experience conflict from work time demands and job involvement compared with those whose family role is not central. Similarly, people with high work centrality often find family demands interfering with their work.

Individuals whose roles are central to their self concept tend to have a sense of control in those domains (Lave & Wegner, 1991). According to Clark (2002), employees' feelings of control form a critical psychological state which helps in mitigating experiences of work-family conflict. Sense of control is similar to what Hackman and Oldman (1980) refer to as decision-making autonomy in one's work. Sense of control is seen as mediating the relationship between work factors and work-family conflict (Clark, 2002).

When one is a central participant in a domain, one tends to intrinsically and extrinsically value that domain highly. Researchers (Clark, 2000, Thompson & Bunderson, 2001; Wallace, 1997) found that when employees regard their work as having intrinsic value, they become more effective in balancing their work and family roles even when their work is creating high time demands. According to Hackman and Oldman (1980), intrinsically valued work gives employees autonomy and ownership in what they do. This therefore gives them a sense of control.

The ability to deal with a variety of stressful circumstances depends partly on one's feelings of control. A sense of control gives employees the belief that they are capable of successfully negotiating and making changes to the status quo, thereby making their environment more rewarding or less threatening (Zimmerman & Rappoport, 1988) (as cited in Clark, 2002). Also as Thomas and Ganster (1995) note, when employees have a sense of control over their work environment, they tend to experience lower levels of work-family role conflict.

Individuals 'invest' in their family and work roles differently (Lobel, 1991). In analysing role centrality, Lobel (1991) considered centrality an aspect of role investment. Thus, people who are highly devoted to their work or family roles are said to have work and family investment respectively. In trying to understand clearly the process of role investment, Lobel (1991) analysed two main approaches namely, the utilitarian and social identity approaches to role investment. According to the utilitarian approach, the level of role investment is determined by the rewards and costs associated with that role. This means that the roles that motivate an individual provide valuable rewards and a favourable balance between rewards gained and costs expended (Lobel, 1991). Individuals who find equal satisfaction in their family and career may decide to invest in both roles. This pressure to participate equally in both work and family roles may lead to work-family conflict. Thus the utilitarian approach notes that work-family balance is only possible when there are unequal net role rewards and therefore unequal role investment (Lobel, 1991).

The social identity approach emphasises the importance of social groups. Individuals identify themselves as belonging to social groups or categories which contribute to the acquisition of multiple identities such as manager and father (Lobel, 1991). As members in particular social groups, individuals aspire to conform to that group's norms and values. The social identity approach emphasises that group membership is a function of cognitions and perceptions. Therefore people invest in roles which they identify with. Personal identification with a role can therefore contribute partly to one becoming a central participant. In support of this notion, Clark (2002) also concludes that when employees personally identify with and find meaning in their work, they tend to develop a sense of community. A sense of community involves a sense of belonging and concern for one another (Clark, 2002). Consequently, individuals with a sense of community tend to become central players in their work domains (Lave & Wegner, 1991).

Operational flexibility was found to be strongly associated with work satisfaction and family functioning (Clark, 2001). Lambert et al. (2006) studied employees from a large biotechnological company in California investigating the relationship between central participation, supportive communication, work and home satisfaction. The results showed that work centrality was related to high work satisfaction and organisational commitment. Central participants may therefore experience greater work-family balance compared with peripheral participants (Clark, 2000).

Researchers in the mid-twentieth century assumed that men and women differ in the roles they consider to be central to them (Wiley, 1991). In particular, men have been assumed to consider their work roles as more central to them than family and vice versa for women. Factors such as better education and increased career opportunities for women have, however, led to a shift from the traditional family structure where men were regarded as the breadwinners and women as the homemakers, to an egalitarian family structure (Gilbert, 1985). The egalitarian structure assumes active participation in family responsibilities by both men and women.

As noted earlier, centrality in a role requires active participation in that domain (Lave & Wegner, 1991). The assumption of active participation in an egalitarian family structure may not always be satisfied because whether men and women are central or peripheral players in the family and work domains, is related to their gender role orientation. The three possible gender role orientations that can be adapted by men and women in dual career families are: traditional, participant or role-sharing (Donald & Linington, 2008). Gender role orientations which do not facilitate men's active participation in the family domain may be of concern for women who are in favour of egalitarian family structures.

Traditionally oriented males expect women to be primarily responsible for household duties. Although participant dual income men are willing to participate in parenting as they perceive it as a shared marital responsibility, they perceive other household duties as women's responsibility (Gilbert, 1985). In contrast, role sharing dual career men are willing to fully participate in both parenting and other household tasks as they view them as responsibilities for both partners (Gilbert, 1985). It therefore follows that traditionally oriented males may tend to be peripheral players in the family domain but central players in the work domain. The same cannot be said, however, for men whose gender role orientation falls towards role-sharing end of the continuum (Donald & Linington, 2008).

Women whose spouses adopt a role-sharing role are likely to balance their work and family since they have support from their spouses (Ahmad, 2003). Traditional males are therefore more likely to find it challenging to balance their work and family demands because they are peripheral players in the family domain and therefore they lack control and autonomy over matters in that domain (Donald & Linington, 2008). Research has found that women continue to be primarily responsible for family and household duties regardless of whether they are employed or not (O'Driscoll, 1996).

According to Clark (2000, p.761), attaining a balance between work and home roles is seen as 'a consequence of artful border and domain management'. The characteristics associated with central participation, such as identification with

one's domain responsibilities, facilitate the attainment of this balance (Clark, 2000). Wayne, Grzywacz, Carlson and Kacmar (2007) conceptualised this as work-family facilitation. They referred to it as the extent to which individuals devote themselves to their roles and responsibilities in their domains. Individuals may experience benefits and gains from their active participation in one role which aid good functioning in the other domain (Wayne et al., 2007) thereby creating work-family balance. Although work-family facilitation is not the same as role centrality, both concepts emphasise the advantage of being a central player in a domain. Therefore based on the literature on work-family facilitation, identification with and participation in domain responsibilities may be hypothesised as a possible facilitator of work-family balance. The relationship between role centrality and work-family balance therefore, needs to be analysed.

## 2.9. Border Permeability

Borders between the work and family domains are important in that they reinforce values and norms that are unique to each domain. They protect the domains from outside influences (Clark 2000). Borders vary in their degree of permeability. Border permeability occurs when elements from one domain cross the border which separates the two domains (Clark, 2000). For example, when one is working from home, the family domain can easily cross the physical and temporal border demarcating work and home. Psychological permeability also occurs when there is spillover from one domain into the other. Physical or spatial borders include the walls, doors and gates that define work and home. Temporal borders include the defined hours of work and personal time. Psychological borders include rules and regulations that define the appropriate patterns of thinking, behaviour and emotions for each particular domain (Clark, 2002). Psychological borders are often self-defined (Clark, 2002).

Border crossers make daily transitions which may be spontaneous between their work and family borders. The transition between home and work is usually challenging and is described as often involving 'wearing different hats' and 'shifting gears' (Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000). These daily and

spontaneous interactions relate to permeability and they facilitate the balancing of one's work and family roles. When faced with conflict between their work and family domains, border crossers can employ different strategies to deal with this conflict. The choice and effectiveness of these strategies, however, depend on how permeable and flexible the border between work and family is, and the degree of similarity between the two domains (Kasper et al, 2005).

Borders which allow a low degree of permeability tend to segment the two domains and treat them as separate systems (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Work-family border theory, however, acknowledges that although the degree of permeability between work and family varies, these domains always have some level of interconnectedness and influence each other (Clark, 2000). Work-family culture plays a role in facilitating the integration of work and family domains (Thompson et al., 1999) and is therefore likely to influence border permeability. Thus, the study sought to understand border permeability by analysing it at a conceptual level.

Highly segmented roles are a function of less permeable and less flexible boundaries. There are thus clear distinctions between roles. Work-family border theory proposes that less permeable and less flexible borders facilitate work-family balance when domains are not comparable (Clark, 2000). On the other hand, less segmented and highly integrated roles result from more flexible and more permeable boundaries. These facilitate an easy transition between boundaries and also involve smaller transitions (Rau & Hyland, 2002). More permeable and flexible borders may facilitate work-family balance for employees in that they allow them to undertake role transitions when necessary. Research does not however, provide a clear-cut answer as to whether less or more permeable borders facilitate work-family balance. Rather, it suggests that the ideal level of permeability necessary depends on the situation (Clark, 2000; Rau & Hyland, 2002).

Highly permeable borders may, however, contribute to work-family conflict in some instances. Ashforth et al. (2000, p.475) noted that, "the very looseness of the boundary might exacerbate conflict by creating confusion among the

individual and members of his or her role sets as to which role is or should be most salient". For example, it is argued that more permeable borders may lead to work-family conflict for a man who works in a family business. This person may feel confused about whether to adopt the role of a 'supportive son' or 'critical colleague' when evaluating the decisions made by his parents (Kaslow & Kaslow, 1992).

## 2.10. Border permeability and work-family culture

Work-family border theory only discusses certain factors that influence the strength of the border and its subsequent permeability. In addition to the spatial, temporal and psychological aspects of borders, there may be organisational-level factors that influence permeability. These factors may include the existence or non-existence of a family-friendly culture commonly referred to as work-family culture. This suggestion is supported by previous studies showing that organisations have realised that people are faced with challenges in balancing their multiple roles as well as managing the boundary between the work and family domains (Rothbard, 2001). In response to this, organisations advocate policies and strategies aimed at facilitating work-family balance (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). In essence, the creation of work-family cultures in organisations may be critical in facilitating work-family balance.

Work–family culture is defined as "the shared assumptions, beliefs, and values regarding the extent to which an organisation supports and values the integration of employees' work and family lives" (Thompson et al., 1999, p.394). Some of the family-friendly programmes being put in place by organisations in response to this awareness include parental leave, flexible working time and on-site child-care assistance (Grover & Crooker, 2006). These family-friendly programmes may enable the boundary between work and family domains to be more permeable. Furthermore, an understanding of work-family theory and work-family culture help in providing a sound background for exploring aspects of border permeability and ultimately work-family balance (Morris & Madsen, 2007). It is therefore against this background that this study proposes that work-

family culture may need to be incorporated in work-family border theory as it may be an important contributor to border permeability.

A report produced by a consortium of Fortune magazine's top 100 companies (as cited in Gryzwacz & Carlson, 2007) indicated that organisational strategies that facilitate the achievement of work-family balance by their employees were recommended as good business strategies. This awareness might be the result of previous research conducted in the area of work-family balance. For example, in their study on supportive work-family cultures and certain organisational and personal outcomes, Thompson et al. (1999) found a relationship between supportive work-family cultures and turnover intention as well as work-to-family conflict and organisational commitment. In particular, a supportive work-family culture was found to be significantly related to work attitudes.

The three constructs which measure work-family culture include managerial support, perceived negative career consequences and organisational time demands (Thompson et al., 1999). Each of these constructs was found to have a unique relationship with outcomes such as organisational commitment, turnover intention and work-to-family conflict (Thompson et al., 1999). Perceptions of employees regarding the extent to which their organisation is family-supportive were analysed by Allen (2001). A significant negative relationship was established between perceived family-supportive culture and general work-family conflict experiences, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention.

Good supervisor support is recommended as crucial in facilitating work-family balance since supportive relationships enable a healthy integration of employees' work and home domains (Morris & Madsen, 2007). A negative relationship was found between supervisor work-family support and work-family conflict (Batt & Valcour, 2003). These results may suggest that supervisor support promotes the integration of work and family domains.

Supportive supervision enables work-family balance through the creation of a relational community at work. Thus when supervisors encourage employees to

use family-friendly programs and have a general understanding of one's work and family roles, a relational community can be created (Bailyn, 1997). Relational communities embrace mutually supportive relationships and create a platform for discussing and negotiating issues such as those concerning balancing one's work and family responsibilities (Clark, 2002). In other words, a relational community enables the borders between work and family to become more permeable since an employee may feel comfortable to discuss issues relating to the family and work. When one has a sense of community, one tends to feel that one's concerns regarding work and family are understood and will therefore be addressed. This then leads to decreased work-family conflict (Clark, 2002). As one of the constructs of work-family culture, supportive supervision can therefore be argued to be an aspect of border permeability.

Supervisors, through their provision of work-related support, help in mitigating the stress that an individual may experience at work (Clark, 2002; Nasurdin & Hsia, 2008). Despite a company having family-friendly policies, supervisors are the first line of contact and can hinder or facilitate the use of family-friendly programs by employees (Winfield & Rushing, 2005). Researchers propose supervisor support as consisting of two main components. These include flexibility during emergencies and being sensitive to and willing to discuss 'family-related problems' with employees (Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Warren & Johnson, 1995). These aspects of supervisor support were found to have an effect on work-family conflict (Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Warren & Johnson, 1995). One's family responsibilities are allowed to interfere with one's work during emergencies implying that the border between work and family is permeable enough to allow such interference.

Family-sensitive supervision mitigates one's experiences of work-family conflict in that it creates a sense of caring by the supervisor and conveys concern that the employee is not just a worker, but a whole person (Clark, 2002). Family-sensitive supervision is thus seen as important in creating employees' sense of community (Clark, 2002). In their study in an American corporation, Lambert and Hopkins (1995) found a relationship between male employees' sense of community and their perceptions of family-sensitive supervision.

Despite supportive supervision, work-family policies also need to be complemented by an overall supportive work-family culture (Voydanoff, 2004). This is so because, utilising work-family policies is often associated with negative career consequences (Voydanoff, 2004). It is argued that employees may put their career progression at risk when they participate in family friendly programmes such as taking time off to care for dependents and working flexible hours (Thompson et al, 1999). This reason is that, some managers may hold strong cultural assumptions that equate physical presence at work with one's commitment to the organisation (Perlow, 1995).

Such cultural assumptions leave employees feeling 'forced' to choose between two extremes. One extreme would be to pursue one's desire to balance work and family by utilising family-friendly benefits and the associated possibility of being considered on the "mommy track" or "daddy track" of career advancement. The second extreme would be to decide not to utilise the available family-friendly benefits and therefore be regarded as being on the "fast track" of career advancement (Hall, 1990). Flexibility and consideration by managers that individuals need to feel free to make use of available family-friendly benefits without fear of being disadvantaged for doing so would be beneficial to employees. A supportive work-family culture assists in integrating work and family domains and when this integration reaches one's desirable level, work-family balance is likely to be realised by the individual.

Factors at home and work such as company policies and cultures that allow for flexibility help in creating a balance for employees in multiple roles (Clark, 2000). Spousal support at home may also facilitate balancing one's work and family through provision of emotional support or flexibility thereby making the situation less stressful (Nasurdin & Hsia, 2008). Organisational time demand is a factor of work-family culture. One major source of work-family conflict is time-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Flexible time expectations, however, allow permeability and flexibility of the traditionally defined time routines. It also gives individuals control and authority

over their work systems or working time thereby facilitating work family balance (Gryzwacz & Carlson, 2007). Organisations need to have boundary-spanning resources as these may facilitate work-family balance (Voydanoff, 2004). These resources, such as flexible temporal boundaries, enable an interconnection between one's work and family roles (Voydanoff, 2004). Employers through introducing work-family culture and in particular flexibility can partly facilitate the achievement of work-family balance for employees. In an annual survey conducted by the American Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in (2001) (as cited in Rau & Hyland, 2002), 58% of organisations indicated that they were offering flextime.

Flexibility in the form of flexible work schedules or work processes can counteract possible work-family conflict emanating from organisational time demands. These forms of flexibility are also referred to as spatial flexibility (where work is conducted) and temporal flexibility (when work is conducted) (Rau & Hyland, 2002). The flexibility of both spatial and temporal work boundaries enables employees to balance their home and work demands because demands from these two spheres are a source of interrole conflict (Rau & Hyland, 2002). There are several options for temporal flexibility but a key option is flexible working time.

Employees who work flexible hours can adjust their working time according to their personal needs thereby facilitating work-family balance (Rau & Hyland, 2002). Flexitime usually requires employees to be physically present at their work premises during 'core' hours. Flexitime grants temporal boundary permeability and flexibility. At the same time, it aims at managing the degree of permeability and flexibility of borders by requiring employees to be present on the work premises during 'core' hours. Flexible work arrangements are strongly related to one's commitment to the organisation and job satisfaction, particularly for those with families compared to those without (Rau & Hyland, 2002). Flexitime results in employees perceiving low interference between their work and family roles implying reduced inter role conflict (Lee, 1983; Winnet, Neale & Williams, 1982 as cited in Rau & Hyland, 2002).

Border permeability can also be enabled through other family-friendly arrangements such as telecommuting. This arrangement refers to "the substitution of information technology for the commute to and from work" (Rau & Hyland, 2002, p.119). One can be physically located in the home domain, but carrying out work roles. Telecommuting therefore can allow permeability of spatial and temporal borders. As a family-friendly programme, telecommuting is popular with many organisations aiming to facilitate work-family balance (Rau & Hyland, 2002). Borders are more flexible and permeable under telecommuting arrangements as compared to standard '9am-5pm' work arrangements (Rau & Hyland, 2002).

The permeability of the border between work and family can, however, impact negatively on work-family balance experiences. For example, telecommuting has a possible negative impact on family relationships resulting from spouses and children not respecting the boundaries of work and home (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). Telecommuting is also criticised for its possibility of creating increasingly blurred roles (Rau & Hyland, 2002). There is a possibility of more frequent interruptions like personal phone calls and visits. Mirchandani (1998, p.178) quoted one of their telecommunicator interviewees saying:

> "I was feeling very keenly a sense of intrusion into my house. I had my… family around me and my work was a bothersome knock at the door…couriers showing up, a telephone line ringing, a fax machine going in the middle of the night…[l thought] that this was not … a pristine environment, that l had sullied it… l want[ed] this house to be ours, not part of my work".

It is argued that although many organisations are introducing technology that enables work to be flexible, such as pagers and internet, "these very same technologies blur or blend boundaries keeping the domain of work constantly accessible" (Descrochers & Sargent, 2003 p.48). As a result, work concerns are constantly present in one's life and this can lead to conflict. Too much permeability can therefore lead to blurring boundaries which can be difficult to manage (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). Flexible arrangements therefore may

require more boundary management in order for one to balance their home and work roles (Rau & Hyland, 2002).

Organisational policies that are family-friendly enable employees to balance their work and family roles (Voydanoff, 2004) depending on the degree of border permeability. Policies such as family-related compassionate leave and work-from-home can facilitate work-family balance by creating time resources necessary for one's family life (Voydanoff, 2004). A negative relationship between supportive work-family culture and work-to-family conflict was established (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2002). This relationship may be explained by the fact that when family friendly policies are available for employees, their perceived control is enhanced. As a result, they tend to view their organisation as having concern for them regardless of whether they utilise the policies or not (Clark, 2002; Grover & Crooker, 1995). These feelings facilitate work-family balance and reduce work-family conflict (Clark, 2002; Grover & Crooker, 1995).

## 2.11. Aims and Research questions

In conclusion, literature suggests that the degree of border permeability is important in predicting work-family balance or conflict (Grywacz & Carlson, 2007). Work-family culture is viewed as critical in influencing border permeability and the subsequent balance or conflict between one's work and family (Thompson, et, al., 1999). It is interesting to note that many organisations have already adopted work-family cultures by introducing family-friendly programmes such as flexible working hours, and telecommuting (Grywacz & Carlson, 2007). These programmes aim at integrating employees' work and family lives.

Employees are also partly able to influencing their work-family balance experiences by becoming central or peripheral participants in their work and/or family domains. Central participants identify with domain responsibilities and have internalised the domain culture (Lave & Wegner, 1991). As a result, they have more control over their lives and are able to negotiate borders between

their work and home (Lave & Wegner, 1991). Central participants can therefore experience work-family balance. This may not be the case, however, for peripheral participants.

The study therefore aims to explore the relationship between role centrality, work-family culture, work-family balance and work-family conflict. A secondary aim of the study is to examine the commitment of organisations in providing work-family cultures that facilitate employees in balancing their work and family roles. Depending on the outcome, an expansion of aspects of work-family border theory by incorporating work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability in the theory may be proposed. This will be done at a conceptual level. At this point, it can be argued that theoretical underpinnings provided in the study may adequately support this proposition.

Four research questions will be explored in this study:

1. What is the relationship between role centrality and work-family balance?
2. What is the relationship between role centrality and work-family conflict?
3. What is the relationship between work-family culture and work-family balance?
4. What is the relationship between work-family culture and work-family conflict?

# CHAPTER 3

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the research methodology. It deals with the research design, sample size and characteristics, how data was collected, sampling method, research procedure, measuring instruments used and the statistical procedures conducted to analyse data.

### 3.1. Research Design

The study is quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional and ex-post facto in nature.

Non-experimental studies are classified as those studies with no control group or manipulation of the independent variables (Kerlinger, 1986; Whitley, 2001). Thus, the researcher has no control over the individuals of interest (i.e. participants) or the experiences of interest (i.e. treatment) (Neal & Liebert, 1986). In this research, a non-experimental design is adopted as there is no manipulation of variables or treatments. An ex-post facto design is used implying that events of interest that are being measured have already taken place or cannot be manipulated. However, such a design presents limitations in that, since the researcher has no control over the event process, it is difficult to ascertain the degree of impact that extraneous variables may have on the results (Leedy, 1993). Despite this limitation, however, an ex-post facto design is used as it is simple and inexpensive. Moreover, the design is readily employed because it is suitable for both naturalistic and field research (Kerlinger, 1986).

The cross-sectional design involves observing or measuring two or more variables at a particular point in time with no repeat measure being carried out (Bailey, 1982). A cross-sectional design allows the researcher to measure the events or characteristics of interest at the time of interest. Its downfall however, is that the researcher is not able to assess the developmental trends of those events or characteristics (Whitley, 2001). In this study, the design fails to account for all the developmental trends relating to the participants' attitudes towards their home and work domains.

The data is gathered through self-report questionnaires. It is then recorded and analysed quantitatively. A quantitative research design is a traditional scientific approach which uses numbers to represent data and to describe and explain any observed fact (Babbie & Mouton, 1998).

## 3.2. Sample

In order to participate in the study, participants were required to fulfil the following criteria:

- Employed – specifically working at least in an administrative role or higher level in the organisational hierarchy
- Living in the same dwelling as at least one child below the age of eighteen

Restricting respondents to the specified criteria was aimed at getting a sample which represents people with a fair amount of responsibility both at work and home. Furthermore, the reason for limiting respondents to a specified employment category was done in order to focus the study on a specific sample. This allows generalisation of findings to that specific category rather than including everyone who is employed.

In this research, an employed person is regarded as "any person, excluding a contractor, who works for another person or for the state, and who receives, or is entitled to receive, any remuneration" as defined by the South African Department of Labour's Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997, p.5).

In total, two hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed between five organisations over a period of eight weeks. One of the five organisations is a non-governmental organisation whereas the other four are classified in either the financial, leisure, broadcast media/communications or mining industries. Of the two hundred and fifty questionnaires distributed, one hundred and thirty one

were returned which translates to 52.4% response rate. Of these one hundred and thirty one questionnaires returned, 78.63% (N=103) were usable in the study.

**Table 2: Number of participants from participating organisations**

| **Org** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Frequency Value** | 23 | 21 | 19 | 16 | 24 |

The sample size obtained from each of the five organisations which participated in the study was relatively small (Table 2). The highest number of participants (N=24) represented Organisation 5 and the lowest number (N=16) was obtained from Organisation 4. The sample sizes in each organisation were small but the total sample size obtained (N=103) was regarded by the researcher as large enough to conduct relevant and meaningful statistical analyses. Since the researcher encountered difficulties in obtaining large sample sizes from each organisation, the analyses were done using the total sample and not the sub-samples. The author however, acknowledges the possibility of a variance that might be present in work-family cultures between organisations. Also there may be other organisation specific factors that may influence the value that one attaches to one's work or family.

The sample is described in terms of gender; age; current position in company; number of children aged 18 or below living at home; highest educational level attained; marital status, spouse employment; number of hours worked per week; number of overtime hours during the week; number of overtime hours over weekends; childcare; and amount of flexibility allowed to work from home. These are summarised in Table 3 to Table 6 below.

**Table 3: Biographical data - Age and Gender frequencies**

| AGE | PERCENT |
|---|---|
| 23 -29 | 26.1 |
| 30 -39 | 46.6 |
| 40 -46 | 22.4 |
| 47 - 55 | 4.9 |
| **Total** | **100** |
| **GENDER** | **PERCENT** |
| Male | 36.9 |
| Female | 63.1 |
| **Total** | **100** |

**Table 4: Biographical data- Job Position, Educational level to Spouse Employment frequencies**

| JOB POSITION | FREQUENCY | PERCENT |
|---|---|---|
| Administrative | 36 | 35 |
| Professional/Skilled/Specialist | 27 | 26.2 |
| Supervisory | 11 | 10.7 |
| Management | 25 | 24.3 |
| Other | 4 | 3.9 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |
| **EDUCATIONAL LEVEL** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
| Matric | 14 | 13.6 |
| Certificate | 16 | 15.5 |
| Diploma | 36 | 35 |
| Degree | 31 | 30.1 |
| Other | 6 | 5.8 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |
| **MARITAL STATUS** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
| Never Married | 20 | 19.4 |
| Partner | 7 | 6.8 |
| Co-habiting with partner | 6 | 5.8 |
| Married | 64 | 62.1 |
| Divorced | 6 | 5.8 |
| Separated | 0 | 0 |
| Widowed | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | 103 | 100 |
| **NO. OF CHILDREN** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 or 2 | 93 | 90.3 |
| 3 or more | 10 | 9.7 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |
| **SPOUSE EMPLOYED** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
| Yes | 62 | 60.2 |
| No | 41 | 39.8 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |

**Table 5: Biographical data - Hours worked per week, weekdays and weekends overtime frequencies**

| **HOURS WORKED PER WEEK** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
|---|---|---|
| 40-44 hours | 50 | 48.5 |
| 45-49 hours | 28 | 27.2 |
| 50-54 hours | 18 | 17.5 |
| 55-59 hours | 5 | 4.9 |
| Other | 2 | 1.9 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |
| **OVERTIME HOURS ON WEEKDAYS** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
| 0 hours | 42 | 40.8 |
| 1 - 5 hours | 31 | 30 |
| 6 - 10 hours | 19 | 18.5 |
| 11 - 15 hours | 5 | 4.8 |
| 16 - 20 hours | 5 | 4.8 |
| 30 hours | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |
| **OVERTIME HOURS OVER WEEKENDS** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
| 0 | 59 | 57.3 |
| 1 - 5 hours | 35 | 34 |
| 6 - 8 hours | 4 | 3.8 |
| 10 - 12 hours | 4 | 3.9 |
| 24 hours | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |

**Table 6: Biographical data - Child Care and Work flexibility frequencies**

| CHILDCARE | FREQUENCY | PERCENT |
|---|---|---|
| Spouse | 13 | 12.6 |
| Relative | 17 | 16.5 |
| Domestic Worker | 33 | 32 |
| Friend | 1 | 1 |
| School | 26 | 25.2 |
| Au Pair | 1 | 1 |
| Other | 12 | 11.7 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |
| **WORK FLEXIBILITY** | **FREQUENCY** | **PERCENT** |
| Very Flexible | 38 | 36.9 |
| | 29 | 28.2 |
| Flexible | 28 | 27.2 |
| | 5 | 4.9 |
| Very Inflexible | 3 | 2.9 |
| **Total** | **103** | **100** |

Table 3 shows that the minimum age of participants was 23 and the maximum 55. Most participants (N=48) were, however, aged between 30 and 39. Frequencies in Table 3 indicate that males represented 36.9% (n-38) and females 63.1 (n=65) of the participants.

Table 4 indicates that most participants occupied at least a professional/skilled/specialist, supervisory or managerial position (n=63). It is also shown in Table 4 that most participants (90.3%) had no more than two children living at home except for the few remaining participants (n=10) who have at least three children living at home. A majority of the participants (n=67) had either a diploma or a degree. Sixty four participants were married and twenty had never been married (table 4). Such family dynamics may help in trying to understand one's experience of work-family balance or conflict over and above other factors such as work-family culture and role centrality. For those participants who are not single, 62 have employed spouses. In relation to

alternative childcare arrangement utilised, 86.3% (n=89) indicated that they leave their child(ren) with a spouse, relative, domestic worker or at school during the time they are at work (table 6).

Fifty participants work not more than 44 hours per week (Table 5). This indicates that many people have more or less a standard work week of 40 hours. Accordingly 42 and 59 participants do not work over time on weekdays or weekends respectively. However, five participants work between 16 and 20 overtime hours during the week and one participant indicated 30 hours of weekdays overtime (Table 5). Thirty five participants work at least five hours of overtime on weekends and one participant work as many as 24 hours weekend overtime. Long working hours whether paid or unpaid may impact on one's experience of work-family balance or conflict as they drain time resource from the family domain (Alicia, & Cropanzano, 1999). The majority of the respondents, however, rated the amount of flexibility they are allowed to work from home as flexible to very flexible (n=95) (Table 5). This may mitigate the participants' experiences of work-family balance (Gryzwacz & Carlson, 2007).

Other descriptive statistics for these demographic variables such as the mean; mode; median standard deviation; variance; range; minimum and maximum are also included. These are shown in
Table 7.

**Table 7: Biographical data - Descriptive Statistics**

| Variable | Mean | Median | Mode | Standard Deviation | Variance | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 34.71 | 34 | 35 | 7.166 | 51.346 | 23 | 55 |
| Job Position | 2.36 | 2 | 1 | 1.29 | 1.664 | 1 | 5 |
| Spouse Employed | 1.4 | 1 | 1 | 0.53 | 0.281 | 0 | 3 |
| Weekly Hours | 1.84 | 2 | 1 | 1.007 | 1.015 | 1 | 5 |
| Weekdays Overtime | 4.5 | 2 | 0 | 5.768 | 33.272 | 0 | 30 |
| Weekend Overtime | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.467 | 12.02 | 0 | 24 |
| Work Flexibility | 2.09 | 2 | 1 | 1.049 | 1.1 | 1 | 5 |

The mean scores of the demographic questionnaire show a mean age of 34.71 years. Weekdays and weekend overtime mean indicate that most participants work few overtime hours especially on weekends. However, the maximum score shows that some participants work as many as 30 hours on weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. Generally participants indicated flexibility in their jobs.

### 3.3. Sampling Method

Given that no particular industry or organisation was targeted by the researcher, the five organisations which participated in the study were obtained randomly. Questionnaires were distributed in the five organisations and this was done using non-probability sampling. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. The steps followed in the distribution of questionnaires are discussed below.

## 3.4. Research Procedure

Six self-report questionnaires were used to obtain data for this study. This technique is beneficial in that questionnaires can be distributed to large numbers of people and still allow participant anonymity to be maintained (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991).

All six questionnaires (namely, the biographical questionnaire; work-family culture; work-family balance; work-family conflict; work centrality and home centrality questionnaires) were collated into a questionnaire pack. This was accompanied by a participant information letter (Appendix A). The letter informed participants about the purpose of the study, and the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Thus no identifiable information such as the participant's name and identification number was required. It was also emphasised that participation was entirely voluntary and that participants had the freedom to withdraw from the study as long as this is done before placing a completed questionnaire in the provided sealed box. Furthermore, the participant information letter advised respondents that placing a completed questionnaire in the provided sealed box would represent consent to participate in the study. To confirm that the researcher had satisfied all ethical requirements prior to distributing the questionnaire pack, the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Witwatersrand granted the researcher ethics approval (Appendix B).

In distributing questionnaires, the researcher obtained permission to conduct the study through the respective companies' Human Resources Departments. The initial contact was, however, made telephonically and the purpose of the study was explained. Where the organisation sounded interested, a face to face meeting with the Human Resources representative was arranged. In this meeting, more detailed information pertaining to the study, such as the study's purpose, participant selection criteria and target population was presented by the researcher.

Once permission to approach employees was granted by the organisations, a representative from each company's Human Resource department identified potential participants from the organisation's database. Only those employees who matched the research criteria were targeted, therefore purposive sampling was used. It was, however, emphasised in the covering letter which these potential participants received that participation was entirely voluntary. Depending with each company's preference, electronic or hard copies of the research's covering letter and questionnaire pack were given to Human Resources department representative from each organisation by the researcher. Distribution of these to the potential participants was then done by the organisation. Three organisations preferred to distribute the questionnaires and cover letters electronically. This, however, has a risk of being ignored as junk mail and may explain the subsequent low response rate from some of these organisations. Nevertheless, during the research process, the researcher sent follow-up e-mails to potential participants through their organisations' Human Resource department.

Envelopes were provided for the return of the questionnaires to ensure participants' confidentiality. Participants were required to seal their responses in the envelopes before placing them in the sealed box provided. Each organisation had a sealed box placed in its reception area. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires at regular intervals in order to ensure that no one else had access to them. This was also done to further enhance participants' anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. For participants to remain anonymous, no personal details were required at any stage during the research. Participants were not required to sign the questionnaires after completing them.

### 3.5. Measuring Instruments

The complete questionnaire pack consisted of six different instruments with a total of 83 items. The questionnaire took approximately fifteen minutes to complete.

### 3.5.1 Biographical Questionnaire

A biographical questionnaire was constructed by the researcher (Appendix C). The aim was to obtain information on the nature of the sample under study and some of the information was used to interpret results where applicable. In total, the questionnaire has 12 items which included the participant's age; gender; educational level; marital status; whether spouse/partner is employed where applicable; hours worked per week; number of overtime (paid or unpaid) hours worked over the weekend and after office hours. Questions regarding the number and ages of children below 18 years living with participant as well as the participant's current occupational category (administrative, professional/skilled/specialist, supervisory, managerial, other specified) were also asked. These two questions particularly aimed at ensuring that participants met the inclusion criteria. Furthermore, participants were requested to indicate the type of after-school/childcare they use and their flexibility to work from home.

Due to ethical reasons, information such as the participant's name and race were not requested in the questionnaire.

### 3.5.2 Work Family Balance Scale

Work-family balance was assessed using a work-family balance scale, developed by Hill, Hawkins, Ferris and Weitzman (2001) (Appendix G). The scale measures the extent to which individuals are able to balance their work and home demands (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris and Weitzman, 2001). The scale has five items and a Cronbach alpha of .83 which is acceptable. All items except one are measured on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 is 'very easy/strongly agree/never' representing a high degree of work-family balance and 5 is 'very difficult/strongly disagree/almost always' representing a low degree of work-family balance. The one item is measured on a 7-point Likert scale where 1 is 'extremely unsuccessful' and 7 is 'extremely successful' in balancing one's work and family life. The question states that "*All in all, how successful do you feel in balancing your work and personal/family life*". This item is measured on

a 7-point Likert scale because the item is more general as compared to the rest, therefore, the responses are more likely to be wide-ranging.

### 3.5.3 Work-Family Conflict Scale

In addition to work-family balance, work-family conflict was also measured. The work-family conflict scale that was used in the study was developed by Carlson, Kacmar and Williams (2000) (Appendix H). The scale has 18 items which measure time, strain and behavioural based conflict in a bi-directional manner. This scale was chosen because it is one of the few work-family conflict scales which explore both the contextual component of work-family conflict (time, behaviour, strain) as well as its bi-dimensional nature (work-to-family and family-to-work conflict). The questionnaire is measured on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 5 is 'strongly agree'. This represents a low and high degree of work-family conflict respectively. For example, items include; "*My work keeps me from my family activities more than l would like*".

The scale's sample specific bias is low because various independent samples were utilised in each of the development phases of the scale (Carlson et al., 2000). Thus, in developing the scale, three different studies were conducted and these incorporated five different samples (Carlson et al., 2000). The scale was therefore regarded as usable in this particular sample. All the dimensions of the scale have their internal consistency (alpha coefficients) above acceptable levels (Carlson et al., 2000) (Table 8).

**Table 8: The Alpha Coefficients of Work-family Conflict dimensions**

| | Work-to-Family Conflict | Family-to-Work conflict |
|---|---|---|
| Time | 0.87 | 0.79 |
| Strain | 0.85 | 0.87 |
| Behaviour | 0.78 | 0.85 |

## Work–Family Culture Scale

Work-family culture was assessed using The Work-Family Culture Scale developed by Thompson et al. (1999) (Appendix D). The scale has 20 items which assess the extent to which an organisation has a work-family culture. Three constructs namely organisational time demands, perceived negative career consequences and managerial support are assessed by the work-family culture scale. Organisational time demands construct refers to employers' expectations that employees prioritise work over family (Thompson et al., 1999). Construct include items such as "*Employees are often expected to take work home at night and/or on weekends*". Perceived negative career consequences are negative outcomes associated with utilising work-family benefits in the organisation or devoting time to family responsibilities (Thompson et al., 1999).. An item example of perceived negative career consequences construct is; "*To turn down a promotion or transfer for family-related reasons will seriously hurt one's career progress in this organisation"*. Managerial support dimension refers to the extent to which employers are sensitive to employees' family responsibilities (Thompson et al., 1999). This construct was measured by items such as; "*Higher management in this organisation encourages supervisors to be sensitive to employees' family and personal concerns*".

Participants' responses were measured on a 7-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree with high scores indicating a more family-supportive workplace culture and low scores indicating a less family-supportive workplace culture. Thus coding of subscales was done in such a way that high scores represent less organisational time demands, less negative career consequences and high managerial support thereby implying a good work-family culture. The scale has an original established alpha of .92 (Thompson et al., 1999). The alphas for the three specific constructs are: .91 for managerial support, .74 for perceived negative career consequences, and .80 for organisational time demands (Thompson et al., 1999). These alphas are all above .70 level of acceptability and therefore the scales are suitable for use in the study.

### 3.5.4 Role Centrality (Work + Home Centrality Scales)

Role centrality at home and at work was measured using two scales: one measuring work centrality and the other measuring family centrality. The role centrality score was therefore a sum of work centrality and home centrality total scores.

Work centrality was measured using Paullay, Alliger and Stone-Romero (1994)'s Work Centrality Scale (Appendix E). The scale has 12 items and an acceptable established reliability of 0.76 (Paullay et al., 1994). The scale measures the extent to which participants believe work should be a central part of their life. Participants' responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 is 'strongly agree' representing a high degree of centrality in one's work domain and 5 is 'strongly disagree' representing a low degree of centrality in one's work domain. For example; "*The most important things that happen to me involve my work*"

The extent to which one is a central player in one's family was measured using Linington (2008)'s Home Centrality Scale (Appendix F). The scale has 16 items and the participants' responses are measured on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 representing 'strongly agree' and 5 representing 'strongly disagree'. This translates to high and low value placed in one's home domain respectively. For example, items include; "*It is important for me to share in the process of making decisions concerning my household*". The home centrality scale has an acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficient of .95.

## 3.6. Statistical Procedures

This section outlines briefly the statistical procedures that are conducted in this study. Data is analysed quantitatively using SAS® Enterprise Guide® 4.0. All the research questions are addressed using correlation analysis and regression techniques. These are described below. Initially however, descriptive statistics are conducted in order to be able to describe the nature of the sample.

### 3.6.1 Correlation Analysis

The study conducted correlation analyses. A simple correlation analysis is the most popularly used technique to indicate the relationship of one variable to another. Simple correlation coefficient is a statistical measure of the association, between two variables (Zikmund, 2003). The associations in this study between role centrality, work-family culture, work-family balance and work-family conflict are conducted using the Pearson correlation and the significance of the relationship is determined using the p (2-tailed)/ p-value.

The correlation coefficient, r, ranges from +1.0 to -1.0. It indicates both the magnitude of the linear relationship and the direction of the relationship. A correlation coefficient of +1.00 indicates a perfectly strong positive relationship (as one variable increases, so does the other) and -1.00 indicates a perfectly strong negative relationship (as one variable increases, the other decreases) (Devlin, 2006). A correlation coefficient of 0.00 indicates the absence of a predictable relationship between two variables. Relationships are interpreted as weak, moderate or strong, over and above their identification as positive or negative associations (Kerlinger, 1986) (Table 9). The strength of the relationship is applicable in both directions, that is, whether it is a positive or a negative relationship.

**Table 9: Correlation coefficient (r) indicating strength of relationship**

| | **Strong** | **Moderate** | **Weak** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Correlation Coefficient (r) | .40 & above | .30 to .39 | Below .30 |

### 3.6.2 Regression Analysis

A simple regression analysis is conducted in the study. This technique is a statistical methodology that is used to relate two or more variables; the independent or predictor variables to the dependent or response variable (Bowerman & O'Connel, 1990). The methodology involves building a regression model or prediction equation through relating a dependent variable to one or more independent variable(s) or predictor(s). This approach can be used to predict the dependent variable on the basis of one or more independent

variable(s) (Bowerman & O'Connel, 1990). In this case, each of the dependent variables namely work-family conflict (including its three dimensions of time, behaviour and strain) and work-family balance form regression models with the independent variables. These predictor variables are work-family culture (organisational time demands, perceived negative career consequences and managerial support) as well as role centrality (work and home centrality).

The limitation in the regression analysis is however, that, one can only ascertain relationships but one can never be sure of the causal mechanism (Bowerman & O'Connel, 1990). The objective of the regression model is to select the subset of predictors to optimise a predefined goodness of fit function, which means how well a statistical model fits a set of observations.

# CHAPTER 4

## 4. RESULTS

This section comprehensively reviews the statistical results which are obtained in this study. The descriptive statistics for all the scales utilised in the study are presented initially. This is followed by the results of the inferential statistics conducted such as the correlations and regression analysis. It is important, however, to note that the sample is not treated in stratas (organisations as subgroups) since these subgroups obtained small sample sizes not ideal for effective statistical analysis.

### 4.1. Statistical Abbreviations

To enable ease of reference, Table 10 provides a key of abbreviations utilised throughout the results section.

**Table 10: Item abbreviation key**

| ABBREVIATION | VARIABLE |
|---|---|
| Age | Age |
| Gender | Gender |
| JobPosn | Current position in the company |
| Children | Number of children aged 18 or below currently living at home |
| Educ | Highest level of education completed |
| Marital | Marital status |
| SpousEmp | If not single, is the spouse/partner employed |
| Wklyhrs | Hours worked per week |
| WkOver | Number of overtime hours (paid/unpaid) during weekdays |
| WkndOver | Number of overtime hours (paid/unpaid) over weekends |
| Childcare | Childcare facility utilised when one is at work |
| WorkFlex | Amount of flexibility allowed to work from home |
| WFCult_Tot | Overall work-family culture scale |
| WFCult_SS | Work-family culture – Supervisor Support subscale |
| WFCult_NCQ | Work-family culture – Negative Career Consequences subscale |
| WFCult_OTD | Work-family culture – Organisational Time Demands subscale |
| WCentr_Tot | Overall work centrality scale |
| HCentr_Tot | Overall home centrality scale |
| RCentr | Overall Home + Work centrality |
| WFB_Tot | Overall work-family balance scale |
| WFConf_Tot | Overall work-family conflict scale |
| WFConf_T | Work-family conflict – Time subscale |
| WFConf_S | Work-family conflict – Strain subscale |
| WFConf_B | Work-family conflict – Behaviour subscale |

## 4.2. Distribution Analysis

The descriptive statistics for all the variables are provided in the following table.

**Table 11: Descriptive statistics for scale responses**

| Variable | Mean | Median | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum | Skewness |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WFCult_Tot | 88.59 | 89 | 18.844 | 34 | 131 | -0.574 |
| WFCult_SS | 45.04 | 46 | 11.856 | 16 | 75 | -0.155 |
| WFCult_NCQ | 29.58 | 31 | 7.15 | 6 | 42 | -0.636 |
| WFCult_OTD | 13.97 | 15 | 3.904 | 3 | 21 | -0.546 |
| WCentr_Tot | 32.31 | 34 | 7.702 | 14 | 55 | -0.087 |
| HCentr_Tot | 66.82 | 68 | 10.648 | 20 | 80 | -0.178 |
| RCentr | 99.13 | 100 | 13.164 | 55 | 132 | -0.762 |
| WFB_Tot | 17.12 | 18 | 4.753 | 6 | 26 | -0.408 |
| WFConf_Tot | 44.17 | 44 | 11.142 | 18 | 72 | 0.138 |
| WFConf_T | 13.73 | 14 | 4.197 | 6 | 24 | -0.245 |
| WFConf_S | 13.5 | 14 | 4.692 | 6 | 25 | -0.132 |
| WFConf_B | 16.93 | 17 | 4.947 | 6 | 30 | -0.069 |

The mean scores for scale responses above are investigated in relation to the minimum and maximum scores for each scale (Table 11). All data was coded with low and high scores representing low and high levels on a variable respectively. Thus for WFCult_Tot, a mean of 88.59 indicates that although there are variances, the majority of respondents indicated a high level of work family culture. It means that generally participants perceive their organisations as facilitating employees' efforts to balance work and family roles. In relation to the work-family culture subscales, the responses indicate that participants experience a moderate level of supervisor support and organisational time demands. However, a generally higher level of perceived fairness on career progress for employees with family responsibility is reported.

A mean response score of 32.31 and a median of 34.00 for WCentr_Tot indicate that the respondents generally have a moderate to high degree of importance

they attach to their work. A high level of family/home centrality is generally reported. Thus, the results show a mean score of 66.82 and a median of 68.00. Role centrality is a summation of one's work and home centrality scores. A high level of role centrality (mean = 99.13) is reported. However, it must be acknowledged that although a higher level of home centrality is reported than work centrality, the former has more item scales than the latter. Based on a cut-off point of -1 and +1 for skewness, no serious departures from normality were observed except for home centrality which recorded a skewness value of -0.178.

In relation to the work-family balance scale, it is apparent from the reported WFB_Tot mean and median of 17.12 and 18.00 respectively that generally the respondents believe that they are able to balance their work and home demands. Similarly, participants report a moderate degree of work-family conflict. Thus, a mean of 44.17 and a median of 44.00 is established. However, in relation to conflict subscales, participants indicate low levels of time-based and strain-based conflict (mean = 13.73 and 13.50) respectively. The median was 14.00 for both subscales. Consequently, with a reported mean score of 16.93 and a median of 17.00, participants indicate a higher degree of behaviour-based conflict than time and strain-based conflict.

### 4.3. Analysis of Research Questions

The main focus of this study is to establish the nature of the relationship between role centrality, work-family culture, work-family balance and work-family conflict. The former two are predictor variables whereas the latter two are response variables. Some of these variables however, have subscales and these formulate research sub-questions. All four research questions are analysed by calculating the Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient and p (2-tailed) is used to determine the significance of the relationship. Simple regression analyses are also conducted. The results obtained relating to both the research questions and research sub-questions are presented below.

## 4.4. Correlations

**Table 12: Pearson Correlations for Main Variables**

| | WFCult_Tot | RCentr | WFB_Tot | WFConf_Tot |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| WFCult_Tot (r) | 1.000 | | | |
| p (2-tailed) | | | | |
| N | 103 | | | |
| RCentr (r) | 0.209* | 1.000 | | |
| p (2-tailed) | 0.017 | | | |
| N | 103 | 103 | | |
| WFB_Tot (r) | **0.459*** | **0.328*** | 1.000 | |
| p (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | | |
| N | 103 | 103 | 103 | |
| WFConf_Tot (r) | **-0.552*** | **-0.313*** | | 1.000 |
| p (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.001 | | |
| N | 103 | 103 | | 103 |

*** correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (p. 2-tailed)**

Correlation coefficients relating to research questions are in bold

**Table 13: Pearson Correlations including Variable Subscales**

| | WFB_Tot | WFConf_Tot | WFConf_S | WFConf_T | WFConf_B | HCentr | WCentr | WFCult_SS | WFCult_NCQ | WFCult_OTD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HCentr | | | | | | | | | | |
| (r) | 0.321* | -0.287* | -0.362* | -0.273* | -0.070 | 1.000 | 0.004 | 0.011 | 0.009 | 0.252 |
| p.(2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.002 | 0.000 | 0.003 | 0.241 | | 0.486 | 0.455 | 0.464 | 0.005 |
| WCentr | | | | | | | | | | |
| (r) | 0.117 | -0.139 | -0.068 | -0.181* | -0.094 | 0.004 | 1.000 | 0.237 | 0.210 | 0.202 |
| p.(2-tailed) | 0.119 | 0.081 | 0.247 | 0.033 | 0.171 | 0.486 | | 0.008 | 0.170 | 0.020 |
| WFCult_SS | | | | | | | | | | |
| (r) | 0.354* | -0.463* | -0.383* | -0.313* | -0.414* | 0.011 | 0.237* | 1.000 | 0.474 | 0.370 |
| p.(2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.001 | 0.000 | 0.455 | 0.008 | | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| WFCult_NCQ | | | | | | | | | | |
| (r) | 0.350* | -0.436* | -0.275* | -0.395* | -0.387* | 0.009 | 0.210* | 0.474* | 1.000 | 0.600 |
| p.(2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.002 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.464 | 0.017 | 0.000 | | 0.000 |
| WFCult_OTD | | | | | | | | | | |
| (r) | 0.499* | -0.460* | -0.343* | -0.497* | -0.290* | 0.252* | 0.202* | 0.370* | 0.600 | 1.000 |
| p.(2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.001 | 0.005 | 0.020 | 0.000 | 0.000 | |

*** correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (p. 2-tailed). Note:** N = 103

## 4.5. Regression

Regression analysis is described as a statistical method that is used to predict the dependent variable on the basis of one or more independent variables (Bowerman & O'Connel, 1990). The methodology involves building a regression model or prediction equation through relating a dependent variable to one or more independent variables or predictors. As discussed earlier, each of the dependent variables in this study namely overall work-family conflict (including its three dimensions of time, behaviour and strain) and work-family balance is regressed with the independent variables. These predictor variables are work-family culture (organisational time demands, perceived negative career consequences and supervisor support) and role centrality (work and home centrality).

**Table 14: Simple Regression Analysis with Overall Work-family Balance as dependent variable**

| Model | Variables | β (parameter estimate) | Std Error of β | t | $R^2$ | p-value | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | Intercept | -0.687 | 3.354 | | | | |
| | WFCult_Tot | 0.103 | 0.022 | 4.66 | 0.27 | 0.000* | 103 |
| | RCentr | 0.088 | 0.032 | 2.77 | | 0.007* | |
| b | Intercept | -0.059 | | | | | |
| | WFCult_SS | 0.082 | 0.039 | 2.129 | 0.332 | 0.036* | 103 |
| | WFCult_NCQ | 0.035 | 0.074 | 0.471 | | 0.639 | |
| | WFCult_OTD | 0.408 | 0.134 | 3.035 | | 0.003* | |
| | WCentr_Tot | -0.007 | 0.053 | -0.129 | | 0.898 | |
| | HCentr_Tot | 0.104 | 0.039 | 2.675 | | 0.009* | |

Note: p = 0.05; * indicate significant p-values

**Table 15: Simple Regression Analysis with Overall Work-family Conflict as dependent variable**

| Model | Variables | β (parameter estimate) | Std Error of β | t | $R^2$ | p-value | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| c | Intercept | 88.162 | 7.427 | | | | |
| | WFCult_Tot | -0.301 | 0.049 | -6.151 | 0.346 | 0.000* | 103 |
| | RCentr | -0.175 | 0.070 | -2.499 | | 0.014* | |
| d | Intercept | 88.873 | 7.612 | | | | |
| | WFCult_SS | -0.291 | 0.088 | -3.326 | 0.372 | 0.001* | 103 |
| | WFCult_NCQ | -0.283 | 0.169 | -1.675 | | 0.097 | |
| | WFCult_OTD | -0.511 | 0.305 | -1.672 | | 0.098 | |
| | WCentr_Tot | 0.014 | 0.121 | 0.117 | | 0.907 | |
| | HCentr_Tot | -0.247 | 0.089 | -2.792 | | 0.009* | |

Note: p = 0.05; * indicate significant p-values

**Table 16: Simple Regression Analysis with Work-family Conflict subscales as dependent variables**

| Variables | Time | | | | | Strain | | | | | Behaviour | | | | | Sample size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | β (parameter estimate) | Std Error of β | t | $R^2$ | p-value | β (parameter estimate) | Std Error of β | t | $R^2$ | p-value | β (parameter estimate) | Std Error of β | t | $R^2$ | p-value | N |
| Intercept | 29.297 | 2.977 | | | | 30.591 | 3.379 | | | | 28.274 | 3.605 | | | | |
| WFCult_Tot | -0.089 | 0.020 | -4.53 | 0.259 | 0.000* | -0.09 | 0.022 | -4.06 | 0.237 | 0.000* | -0.122 | 0.024 | -5.13 | 0.218 | 0.000* | 103 |
| RCentr | -0.078 | 0.028 | -2.77 | | 0.007* | -0.092 | 0.032 | -2.88 | | 0.005* | -0.006 | 0.034 | -0.16 | | 0.87 | |
| Intercept | 28.796 | 3.007 | | | | 31.124 | 3.397 | | | | 28.953 | 3.757 | | | | |
| WFCult_SS | -0.041 | 0.035 | -1.18 | 0.309 | 0.24 | -0.126 | 0.039 | -3.22 | 0.294 | 0.002* | -0.125 | 0.043 | -2.88 | 0.223 | 0.005* | 103 |
| WFCult_NCQ | -0.283 | 0.067 | -1.23 | | 0.221 | -0.041 | 0.075 | -0.54 | | 0.59 | -0.283 | 0.083 | -1.92 | | 0.058 | |
| WFCult_OTD | -0.332 | 0.121 | -2.75 | | 0.007* | -0.137 | 0.136 | -1.01 | | 0.315 | -0.041 | 0.151 | -0.28 | | 0.784 | |
| WCentr_Tot | -0.033 | 0.048 | -0.70 | | 0.485 | 0.027 | 0.054 | 0.50 | | 0.616 | 0.02 | 0.060 | 0.34 | | 0.733 | |
| HCentr_Tot | -0.076 | 0.035 | -2.17 | | 0.033* | -0.145 | 0.040 | -3.67 | | 0.000* | -0.026 | 0.044 | -0.60 | | 0.55 | |

Note: p = 0.05; * indicate significant p-values

The correlation analysis in Table 13 relates to the research's main variables. The results indicate significant correlations for all four research questions. However, work-family culture and overall work-family conflict had the highest correlation (r = -0.552; p = 0.000). The strength and direction of these relationships, however, vary.

## 4.6. Research Question 1: Relationship between role centrality and work-family balance:

The results (Table 13) show a significant positive relationship between role centrality and work-family balance (r = 0.328; p = 0.000). This result implies an expected increase in work-family balance as one's central participation in work and family roles increase. The relationship is however, moderate. In relation to research question 1 simple regression analysis (Table 15) shows that work-family balance is predicted on the basis of role centrality. Based on a p-value of 0.05, Table 15 shows that role centrality recorded a low p-value of 0.007. This implies that, in response to research question 1, role centrality has a significant effect on work-family balance. Furthermore, Table 15 shows that an increase in role centrality is expected to increase work-family balance by 8.8% ($\beta = 0.088$). A t-statistic of greater than 2 indicates that there is a correlation between work-family balance and role centrality (Bowerman & O'Connel, 1990). $R^2 = 0.27$ (Table 15) implying that 27% of the variance in work-family balance is explained by changes in role centrality and overall work-family culture.

A further analysis of this relationship is conducted by correlating work-family balance with sub-scales of role centrality namely, work centrality and home centrality (Table 13). The results are significant and recorded a positive but moderate relationship between home centrality and work-family balance (r = 0.321; p = 0.000). Contrary to this, work centrality recorded an insignificant association with work-family balance (r = 0.117; p = 0.119). Furthermore, simple regression analyses conducted relating work-family balance to role centrality subscales (Table 15) shows home centrality (p=0.009) as a significant predictor of work-family balance. A 10.4% ($\beta = 0.104$) increase is expected in work-family balance as one's home centrality increases (Table 15). A lower standard error of $\beta$ as compared to the $\beta$ value confirms the correlation between overall

work-family balance and home centrality. Surprisingly work-centrality recorded an insignificant and negative effect on work-family balance (Table 15). A negative value implies that a unit increase in work centrality is expected to affect work-family balance negatively although the effect is insignificant (below 1%). A standard error of β (SE of β = 0.053) which is greater than the β value of -0.007 as well as a lower than 2 t-statistic (t=-0.129) further confirm that work centrality is insignificantly related to and cannot predict work-family balance.

### 4.7. Research Question 2: Relationship between role centrality and overall work-family conflict:

The correlation (Table 12) indicated a significant negative relationship between role centrality and overall work-family conflict (r = -0.313; p = 0.001). This result implies that one's degree of centrality to one's work and family roles is inversely related to overall work-family conflict. The association is, however, moderate. Further statistical analysis conducted using simple regression (Table 16) indicate that role centrality can predict work-family conflict. Table 16 shows that the p-value produced (p = 0.014) is below 0.05. This implies a significant expected effect of role centrality on work-family conflict. Consequently Table 16 also shows that high role centrality is expected to reduce work-family conflict by 17.5%. Furthermore, Table 16 indicates that about 34.6% of the variance in work-family conflict is explained by changes in role centrality and overall work-family culture ($R^2 = 0.346$).

In order to further analyse this relationship, overall work-family conflict as well as its sub scales namely strain, time and behaviour are correlated with each domain specific centrality (Table 13). The results indicate a significant negative but weak relationship when home centrality was correlated with overall work-family conflict (r = -0.287; p = 0.002) whereas work centrality recorded an insignificant relationship. Table 13 further indicates that the t-value is small (t = 0.117) implying the absence of a significant correlation between work centrality and work-family conflict. Subscale results indicate significant negative relationships between home centrality and strain-based conflict (r = - 0.362; p = 0.000) as well as home centrality and time-based conflict (r = -0.273, p = 0.003). Behaviour-based conflict, however, record an insignificant relationship when

correlated with home centrality (r = -0.070; p = 0.241). With regards to work centrality, the results indicated non-significant relationship with strain-based (r = -0.068; p = 0.247) and behaviour-based (r = -0.094; r = 0.171) conflict. Time-based conflict however, recorded a significant result (r = -0.181; p = 0.033) when correlated with work centrality. This result demonstrates an inverse but weak relationship between work-centrality and time-based conflict.

Simple regression analysis on these research sub-questions (Table 16) shows that work-centrality does not have a significant effect on time ($\beta = 0.033$; SE of $\beta = 0.048$; $t = -0.70$), strain ($\beta = 0.027$; SE of $\beta = 0.054$; $t = 0.50$) and behaviour-based conflict ($\beta = 0.02$; SE of $\beta = 0.060$; $t = 0.34$). Home centrality as well record a non-significant effect on behaviour-based conflict ($\beta = -0.026$; SE of $\beta = 0.044$; $t = -0.60$; $p = 0.55$). However, results indicate that home centrality can be predicted on the basis of time and strain-based conflict ($p=0.033$; $p=0.000$) respectively. Furthermore this simple regression analysis (Table 16) indicates that an increase in one's home centrality can lead to a decrease in time and strain-based conflict ($\beta = -0.076$; $\beta = -0.145$) respectively.

## 4.8. Research Question 3: Relationship between work-family culture and work-family balance:

The correlation analysis produced a significant, strong positive association between overall work-family culture and work-family balance ($r = 0.459$; $p = 0.000$). This demonstrates that work-family culture and work-family balance are strongly related and influence each other positively. Simple regression analysis (Table 14) further confirms this finding by recording a significant effect between overall work-family culture and work-family balance ($p=0.000$). With $\beta = 0.103$, SE of $\beta = 0.022$ and $t = 4.66$, it can be argued that overall work-family culture is related to and can predict work-family balance. Furthermore, $R^2 = 0.27$ implying that overall work-family culture and role centrality explain about 27% of the variance in work-family balance.

Sub-research questions are formulated and analysed by correlating work-family balance to work-family culture sub-scales namely supervisor support, organisational time demands and negative career consequences (Table 13). All the correlations are significant and indicate a positive relationship with supervisor support ($r = 0.354$; $p =$

0.000); less negative career consequences (r = 0.350; p = 0.000) and less organisational time demands (r = 0.499; p = 0.000). Particularly, a strong relationship is witnessed between work-family balance and organisational time demands whereas a moderate association is evidenced on supervisor support and negative career consequences.

Additionally, simple regression analysis is conducted on the research sub-questions (Table 14). Surprisingly less negative career consequences does not have a significant effect on work-family balance (p=0.639). Further regression results confirm these results with $\beta = 0.035$, SE of $\beta = 0.074$ and $t = 0.471$. These results indicate that there is no significant correlation between negative career consequencies and work-family balance. However, both supervisor support (p=0.036) and less organisational time demands (p=0.003) can predict work-family balance. Although an $R^2$ of 0.332 (Table 14) imply that about 33.2% of variance in work-family balance is accounted for by changes in work-family culture subscales and role centrality subscales, based on the rest of the other results, it can be argued that negative career consequences subscale on its own does not explain any or explains a small portion of that variance.

## 4.9. Research Question 4: Relationship between work-family culture and work-family conflict:

A significant relationship is established between overall work-family culture and overall work-family conflict (r = -0.552; p = 0.000). The association is very strong and negative indicating an inverse relationship. This result provides some evidence that work-family culture is related to one's experiences of work-family conflict. Thus, as work-family culture improves, work-family conflict is expected to decrease. A significant, negative effect of overall work-family culture on overall work-family conflict ($\beta = -0.301$; SE of $\beta = 0.049$; p=0.000) was also established using simple regression (Table 15). An $R^2$ value of 0.346 implies that overall work-family culture and role centrality account for 34.6% of the variance in work-family conflict. A t-value of 6.151 (Table 15) which is highly above 2 indicates that overall work-family culture can predict overall work-family conflict.

Further correlations between work-family culture and work-family conflict subscales were then conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the relationship (Table

13). All the work-family conflict subscales (time, strain, behaviour) generate significant results when correlated with work-family culture subscales (more supervisor support, less organisational time demands and less negative career consequences). All the correlations are negative implying an inverse relationship between them. The associations, however, vary from weak to strong. Particularly, strain-based conflict shows a weak relationship with negative career consequences ($r = -0.275$; $p = 0.002$). The same applies between behaviour-based conflict and organisational time demands ($r = -0.290$; $p = 0.001$). Strong correlations are however produced between organisational time demands and time-based conflict ($r = -0.497$; $p = 0.000$) as well as behaviour-based conflict and supervisor support ($r = -0.414$; $p = 0.000$).

Surprisingly, a different set of results were produced when simple regression analysis were conducted. Table 16 indicates that supervisor support has a significant effect on and can predict only strain and behaviour based conflict ($p=0.002$; $p=0.005$) respectively. Their $\beta$ values of -0.126 and -0.125 respectively further confirm this result. The results also indicated that organisational time demands can predict time-based conflict ($\beta = -0.332$; SE of $\beta = 0.121$; $t = -2.75$; $p=0.007$). No significant effect is found between all the other subscales. An $R^2$ value of 0.309 therefore imply that about 30.9% of the variance in time-based conflict is explained only by changes in organisational time demands ($p = 0.007$) and home centrality ($p = 0.033$) since they are the only subscales which produced significant results (Table 16). The same applies to strain-based conflict where about 29.4% ($R^2 = 0.294$) of its variance is accounted for by supervisor support ($p = 0.002$) and home centrality subscales ($p = 0.000$) (Table 16). Additionally, 22.3% ($R^2 = 0.223$) of the variance in behaviour-based conflict is explained by supervisor support only ($p=0.005$) (Table 16). A closer look at these findings can, however, explain differences found between correlation and regression results. Thus, those relationships which are established as weak using a correlation analysis are found as having a statistically insignificant effect on each other using simple regression. The same applies to strong established relationships which are confirmed as predictors of the dependent variables.

Although the results are varied, the main findings are that work-family culture is related to and can predict both work-family balance and conflict. Role centrality also indicates a relationship with work-family balance and conflict. Simple regression analysis further

confirms this. However, domain specific centrality shows surprising results. Although home centrality shows consistent associations with and can predict work-family balance and conflict, work-centrality produced surprising and unexpected results. Generally no relationships and no predictability is established between work-centrality and work-family balance and conflict.

# CHAPTER 5

## 5. DISCUSSION

This chapter analyses the results presented in Chapter 4. The interpretation of these results is facilitated by insights gained in literature review especially in relation to work-family border theory. The objective of this analysis of results is to address the research questions and to provide insight into the sample population.

## 5.1. Key Findings

The key findings of the study are related to the four research questions and the relevant sub-questions.

### 5.1.1 Research Question 1

*What is the relationship between role centrality and work-family balance?*

Role centrality is one of the central aspects of work-family border theory and is used to predict the conditions upon which work-family balance occurs. Based on this theory, individuals who are central participants in their domains are better able to balance their work and family roles as compared to peripheral (Clark, 2000). Individuals with role centrality are considered to have more control over their work and home roles and are therefore able to negotiate the demands of and borders between domains (Clark, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Consequently the author expected results to be in line with this. The findings of the study support this argument as a significant, positive but moderate relationship was found between role centrality and work-family balance. A regression analysis further validates this relationship by confirming that role centrality makes a significant positive contribution to work-family balance.

However, work-family border theory postulates that home and work are two separate but interrelated spheres (Clark, 2000). In this regard, the author considered it important that the directional relationships within the home and work domains be examined separately. Literature suggests that central participation in a domain leads to one

intrinsically and extrinsically valuing that domain highly such that one becomes more effective in balancing both work and family even though that domain is creating high demands (Clark, 2000; Wallace, 1997). Similarly, it was expected that central participants in the home and work spheres would experience work-family balance. The study findings offer support for the notion of the work-family border theory and Wallace's (1997) proposition by establishing a positive albeit moderate relationship between home centrality and work-family balance. A regression analysis also shows a significant result with an expected increase of 10.4% increase in work-family balance for every unit increase in home centrality. These findings suggest that individuals with high home centrality are likely to balance their work and family roles better as compared to peripheral participants in the home domain.

Surprisingly, findings on work centrality were contrary to the proposition of the work-family border theory. Thus, a weak and statistically insignificant negative association is found between work centrality and work-family balance. The same result is confirmed with the regression analysis for work-family conflict and work family balance where negative though insignificant values are recorded. Although the negative values found are not statistically significant, the findings imply that an increase in one's work centrality is expected to affect work-family balance negatively. These findings were unexpected because work family border theory's proposition that centrality in a domain leads to one being influential and flexible in that domain which may lead to greater control over one's life and the ability to balance domain demands seems reasonable. Additionally previous researchers (Thompson & Bunderson, 2001) support this proposition.

One can, however, base this adverse effect of work centrality on work family balance on the research findings that job holders of high level positions find it difficult to balance their work and family roles as compared to incumbents of less demanding jobs (Kasper et al. (2005). This is so because the former tend to invest large amounts of time and emotional commitment in their jobs which in-turn limits the attainment of a balance (Kasper et al. (2005). The sample from which the result was drawn comprised of more individuals occupying professional, supervisory and managerial positions (61%).

With regard to research question 1, work-family border theory was supported except for work centrality which demonstrated unexpectedly insignificant results. The result implies lack a significant relationship between work centrality and work-family balance.

### 5.1.2 Research Question 2

*What is the relationship between role centrality and work-family conflict?*

In relation to this research question, work-family border theory suggests that one can buffer a conflict between work and family roles if one becomes a central player in these domains (Clark, 2000). It is argued that the value that an individual attaches to the work and family domains has a significant effect on one's experiences of work-family conflict (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). As the case with work-family balance, central participation in the work and family domains facilitates artful border management thereby reducing the experience of work-family conflict. Another argument however, is that individuals who are central participants in both their work and family roles are under pressure to participate equally in both roles which may result in conflict (Lobel, 1991).

The research findings however, show a significant negative nevertheless moderate relationship between role centrality and work-family conflict in support of the work-family border theory's proposition. A significant, negative effect of work-family conflict on role centrality is also found on the regression analysis. These results suggest that individuals themselves can influence the extent to which they experience work-family conflict by internalising their domains culture, becoming competent in and identifying with domain responsibilities.

A closer look at domain specific centrality and overall work-family conflict and its subscales indicated varied but interesting findings. Home centrality is significant with a negative but weak association when correlated with overall work-family conflict. On the conflict subscales, both strain and time-based conflict are found to be significantly related to home centrality. Both relationships are negative and weak to moderate. The findings imply that time-based demands are related to home centrality. These findings

can be supported by literature which argues that time and strain-based conflict can lead to work interfering with family conflict through depletion of resources (Voydanoff, 2004). This relationship could therefore be substantiated since the study sample indicates a generally high level of home centrality witnessed by a mean score of 66 which is close to the maximum score. A previous study established that individuals whose family roles are central to them are more likely to experience conflict form work-time demands in comparison to those who are not (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). These work-time demands may include long working hours, irregular shiftwork and inflexible work schedule. An association could not be found however, between behaviour-based conflict and home centrality meaning one's difficulties in meeting different behaviour expectations from home and work is not significantly associated with one's home centrality. This may suggest that there is little separation between the study sample's home and work domains making role transition easier as supported by Desrochers & Sargent (2004).

No relationship could be established between work centrality and overall work-family conflict. This result does not support findings by Thomas and Ganster (1995) where a relationship was established between one's control over one's work environment and work-family conflict. Other findings on work centrality were unexpected as no relationships were found when correlated with strain and behaviour-based conflict. The reason why this was surprising is because the study sample comprised of white collar employees whose jobs require professional conduct, it was therefore expected that behaviour expectations from the home and family domain becomes incompatible and create conflict.

Time-based conflict however, recorded a significant negative association with work centrality. This result demonstrates an inverse but weak relationship between work-centrality and time-based conflict. Based on correlation results, one can argue that individuals who value their work highly are likely to experience conflict emanating from the family domain, such as large families as well as young children. Simple regression nevertheless produces an insignificant effect implying that work centrality cannot predict time-based conflict. Clark's (2000) work-family border theory however does not provide insight on the forms of conflict. Rather, work-family border theory proposes that role centrality predicts overall work-family conflict.

Although the relationship between overall role centrality and work-family conflict was found to be significant in support of the work-family border theory, domain specific centrality recorded varied results when assessed against the three different types of conflict. In relation to research question 2, some of these findings were therefore in support of work-family border theory whereas, other results were statistically insignificant.

### 5.1.3 Research Question 3

*What is the relationship between work-family culture and work-family balance?*

Literature suggests that recent developments show organisations creating family-friendly organisational cultures in order to facilitate work-family balance (Anderson et al., 2002; Grover & Crooker, 2006; Thompson et al., 1999). According to Voydanoff (2004), family-friendly organisational culture enables employees to balance their work and family roles. Work-family border theory however does not discuss work-family culture as an important contributor to employees' work-family balance. Based on research studies mentioned, it was expected that work-family culture is strongly associated with and influences work-family balance.

Findings from the study sample produced significantly strong positive associations between work-family culture and work-family balance. Consequently the suggestion that work-family border theory can be expanded by including work-family culture is supported. Findings show that family-friendly culture influences work-family balance and can therefore help predict when balance occurs. A regression analyses conducted also supported earlier findings by indicating a significant effect of overall work-family culture on work-family balance. This implies that an organisation's work-family culture can predict one's ability to balance work and family roles. This finding is also in line with Raymond and Fitz's (2004) viewpoint that family-friendly culture may facilitate work-family balance because it assists in coordinating the two domains of work and family.

With a maximum score on work-family culture of 131, the results from the study sample produced a high mean score (88.59) and a standard deviation of 18.84. This result suggests a generally positive family-friendly culture across the organisations where the sample was drawn. Some family-friendly programmes which the individuals in the study sample might be participating in may include flexible working time, on-site child-care assistance and parental leave.

In relation to work-family culture subscales (supervisor support, less negative career consequences and less organisational time demands) all correlations with work-family balance were significant and positive as expected. Organisational time demands produced a strong association whilst the rest were moderate. These findings imply that one's experience of work-family balance is positively influenced by support received from supervisors, low perceived negative career consequences and strongly influenced by low organisational time demands. In line with the result, supervisor support is recommended as it enables a healthy integration between one's work and family roles (Morris & Madsen, 2007).

Regression analysis confirmed the correlation results with organisational time demands assumed to predict 40.8% of work-family balance. This finding suggests that organisational time demands may be the most critical variable for employees in the sample to perceive/experience balance compared to other aspects measured. Surprisingly however, negative career consequences recorded a statistically insignificant result in the regression analysis implying that it cannot predict work-family balance. A small but insignificant effect was nevertheless found. The result can, however, have been influenced by sample characteristics such as the work-family culture in the organisations. Another explanation can be that generally participants are more concerned about other aspects of work-family culture (low organisational time demands and supervisor support) compared to less negative career consequences.

In relation to research question 3, the results found can allow one to safely recommend its inclusion in the work-family border theory. In the earlier literature review, work-family culture was analysed at a conceptual level as an aspect of border permeability. In view of the results obtained in this study, there are indications that it could be included as an aspect of border permeability.

### 5.1.4 Research Question 4

*What is the relationship between work-family culture and work-family conflict?*

The findings established a significant relationship between work-family culture and work-family conflict. The association was very strong and negative indicating an inverse relationship. In addition, a regression analysis produced significant results implying a significant effect of work-family culture on work-family conflict. A unit increase in work-family culture is expected to reduce work-family conflict by 30.1%. These established results provide some evidence to the notion that work-family culture influences one's experiences of work-family conflict as expected by the researcher. Additionally, the result supports the researcher's suggestion that work-family culture may need to be included in the work-family border theory. These findings are congruent with previous research conducted by Allen (2001) where a significant negative relationship was found between perceived family-supportive culture and general work-family conflict.

A further assessment of work-family culture and conflict subscales was conducted. In relation to overall work-family conflict and the three work-family culture subscales (supervisor support, less negative career consequences and less organisational time demands), strong negative relationships were established. This demonstrates that work-family culture, across its three levels may help to buffer one from experiencing work-family conflict. This is in line with previous research in which a negative relationship was found between supervisor work-family support and work-family conflict (Batt & Valcour, 2003). Similarly, Greenhaus & Beutell suggest that time-based conflict is a major source of work-family conflict. Thus, flexibility in the form of flexible working schedules for example, can help mitigate possible conflict that may emanate from organisational time demands (Rau & Hyland, 2002). In this study, results show that 92% of the sample was in flexible to very flexible jobs. This result can help explain the study findings.

All the work-family conflict subscales (time, strain, behaviour) produced significant results when correlated with work-family culture subscales. Correlations are varied

from weak to strong but all are negative implying an inverse association between them. Weak relationships are recorded between strain-based conflict and less negative career consequences as well as between behaviour-based conflict and less organisational time demands. Previous research argues that flexible time expectations as a factor of organisational time demands facilitate flexibility and permeability of traditionally defined time routines thereby reducing work-family conflict.

Research findings for research question 4 as expected. Also, it supports the proposition that work-family culture influences work-family conflict and thus can be included in work-family border theory.

To further validate the researcher's proposition, a conceptualisation of border permeability established that supportive supervision as a factor of work-family culture involves two components. These are supervisor's flexibility during emergencies and willingness to discuss family-related problems with employees (Warren & Johnson, 1995). Therefore since flexibility allows border permeability, work-family culture may be seen as an aspect of border permeability. Furthermore, previous research has established that other family-friendly programmes such as telecommuting facilitate border permeability and reduce work-family conflict (Rau & Hyland). Therefore it seems appropriate to suggest the incorporation of work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability in the work-family border theory.

In summary, the results of this study support work-family border theory. However, findings show that work centrality is not significantly related to work-family balance and work-family conflict. These results were unexpected and the direction of the insignificant correlations even suggested that work centrality can actually influence work-family balance negatively and work-family conflict positively. Home centrality nevertheless shows significantly large effects of balance and conflict. Strong relationships were particularly found with regards to time related aspects such as organisational time demands and time-based conflict. Overall, work-family culture witnessed the strongest relationships when related to work-family balance and work-family conflict compared to role centrality.

## 5.2. Limitations of the Study

One of the major limitations of this study was that of treating data gathered from five different organisations as a single unstratified sample. All analyses were conducted accordingly. This conduct overlooks Zikmund (2003)'s proposition that a population is a complete group of entities that share a common set of characteristics. Taking into account this definition, the organisations from which the sample was obtained may have different work-family cultures and thus the individuals' experiences of work-family balance of conflict. Also there may be other factors specific to organisations that may influence one's role centrality.

The data gathered through self-report measures may have questionable validity. This may be so because participants tend to provide responses which are socially acceptable and thus affect the data's validity (Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). This problem can, however, be expected to be minimal in this study since the questionnaire did not require participants to provide any identifying information.

Generalisability of findings to other job categories may be compromised because the sample in the study was drawn from specific white collar job categories. Thus findings may not be generalised to non professional employees for example as the study sample was drawn from individuals in administration, professional, supervisory and managerial positions.

Results may have been influenced by uncertainties about contextual characteristics present at the time of measurement, including the role of intermediaries who assisted with the briefing and distribution of questionnaires at the participating companies.

Border permeability was not measured. Measuring it could have provided a more informative justification of including work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability in the work-family border theory.

Finally, the study was quantitative in nature thereby. This could have limited the researcher in getting a clearer insight and investigation into the problem. It is argued

that although quantitative research is viewed as objective, it does not provide a platform for an in-depth insight into the problem as qualitative designs do (Whitley, 2001).

## 5.3. Recommendations for Future Research

Following from the previous discussion, it is recommended that future research draws its sample from one organisation or in cases where more than one organisation is used, analyse these as stratas. This may help to ensure homogeneity of sample characteristics such as work family culture.

Border permeability needs to be measured in order to gain an indepth insight and justify the expansion of work-family border theory based on an informed decision.

A further investigation into the issue of work centrality and overall work-family balance and conflict is recommended. This is so because work-centrality results do not support Clark's (2000) work-family border theory proposition that there is a relationship with work-family balance and conflict. Instead, though insignificant, work centrality was indicating an inverse relationship with work-family balance and a positive one with work-family conflict. These results were surprising and therefore require further examination.

Additionally in relation to work-family border theory, work-family culture showed strong relationships and was confirmed to be a predictor of work-family balance and conflict. This result together with the literature found on border permeability make it possible for one to recommend the inclusion of work-family culture as an aspect of border permeability in the work-family border theory.

## 5.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the work-family interface is a topic that has gained momentum as global trends witness an increase in dual income earners, long working hours and increased number of working parents (Allen, 2001; Carlson, 1999). Similarly, research has shown

that many employers are aiming to create family-friendly organisational cultures in order to help their employees in balancing increased work and family demands (Thompson et al., 1999).

Work-family balance theory developed by Clark (2001) attempts to predict when work-family balance occurs. In support of this theory, some relationships were established on overall role centrality and home centrality when correlated with work-family balance and conflict. Results also confirmed overall role centrality and home centrality as possible predictors of balance and conflict. However, work centrality did not show any significant relationship and could not be confirmed to be a predictor of work-family balance and conflict. This result should be of concern particularly to employers as it suggests that one's work-family balance cannot be predicted by the value one places in his or her work.

Work-family culture however, seems to be an available option for managers in facilitating work-family balance. Thus, research findings recorded strong relationships and confirm that work-family culture can predict work-family balance and conflict. This result signifies the importance of family-friendly cultures in organisations. With research indicating that employees are finding difficulties to juggle their home and work roles, work-family culture seems to provide a potential solution. However, work-family border theory does not incorporate work-family culture. Basing on the research findings, work-family culture can be argued to be an aspect of border permeability and consequently can predict work-family balance and work-family conflict. The incorporation of work-family culture into the work-family border theory is therefore supported by the results established and literature discussed in the study.

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# 7. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**Participant Information Sheet**




*School of Human & Community Development*




**University of the Witwatersrand**
Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050
Tel: (011) 7174 500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

24 July 2009

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Ruvarashe Saungweme, and I am presently completing my Masters degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. The degree includes a research study focusing on how employees achieve balance between their work and family lives. More specifically, the study examines how organisation culture supports this balance and how employees perceive their roles at home and at work. I would like to invite you to participate in the study.

Participation involves completing a questionnaire that should take no longer than fifteen minutes. Participation is voluntary, and no employee will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not participate in the study. While some questions are asked about your personal circumstances, no identifying information, such as your name or I.D. number, is asked for, and as such you will remain anonymous. Moreover, participants are requested to deposit all completed questionnaires in a sealed box whose contents only the researcher will have access to. I will collect the questionnaires from the box at regular intervals. This will ensure that no one will have access to the completed questionnaires, and will ensure your confidentiality. Responses will not be used for any purposes other than research. Informed consent is assumed by the completion of the questionnaires. Data will be used solely for academic purposes and the management in your organisation will only receive a summary of the overall results. The results will be presented as group trends, which make it impossible to identify any particular respondents.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you require further information you may contact me via email at rsaungweme@yahoo.co.uk or cell: 0723542841 or my supervisor at Fiona.Donald@wits.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

Ruvarashe Saungweme

APPENDIX B

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG**

**HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

| | |
|---|---|
| **CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE** | **PROTOCOL NUMBER: MORG/09/008 IH** |
| **PROJECT TITLE:** | Work-family culture and border permeability in the context of work-family border theory |
| **INVESTIGATORS** | Ruvarashe Saungweme |
| **DEPARTMENT** | Psychology |
| **DATE CONSIDERED** | 26/05/09 |
| **DECISION OF COMMITTEE*** | Approved |

**This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application**

**DATE: 01 June 2009**

**CHAIRPERSON** K Cockcroft
**(Professor K. Cockcroft)**

cc Supervisor: Fiona Donald
Psychology

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**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)**

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

I/we fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure, as approved, I/we undertake to submit a revised protocol to the Committee.

**This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2010**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX C

**Biographical Questionnaire**

(Information contained in this questionnaire will be kept confidential and is used only to describe general trends)

Please tick where applicable

1. Age:_____

2. Gender:

| Male | Female |
|---|---|

3. Current Position in the company:

| Administrative | Professional/ Skilled/Specialist | Supervisory | Management | Other (Please Specify) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

4. Number of children aged 18 or below currently living at home:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 or more |
|---|---|---|---|

5. Educational Level: (Highest level of education completed)

| Matric | Certificate | Diploma | Degree | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|

6. Marital Status:

| Never Married | Partner | Co-habiting with partner | Married | Divorced | Separated | Widowed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

7. If not single, is your spouse/partner employed?

| Yes | No |
|---|---|

8. Hours worked per week:

| 40-44 Hours | 45-49 Hours | 50-54 Hours | 55-59 Hours | Other (Please indicate) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Biographical Questionnaire (cont'd)**

9. How many overtime hours (paid or unpaid) do you typically work after office hours per week?_____

10. How many overtime hours (paid or unpaid) do you typically work over weekends?_____

11. Who cares for your child(ren) when you are at work?

| Spouse | Relative | Domestic Worker | Friend | School | Au pair | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

12. Amount of flexibility allowed to work from home:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very flexible | | Flexible | | Very inflexible |

APPENDIX D

**Work-family Culture Scale**

(Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999)

The following set of statements assesses your perceptions of the overall extent to which your organization facilitates employees' efforts to balance their work and family roles. Please indicate with an X the response which indicates your feelings most closely.

1. In this organisation employees can easily balance their work and family lives.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree

Strongly Agree

2. In the event of a conflict, managers are understanding when employees have to put their family first.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree

Strongly Agree

3. In this organisation it is generally okay to talk about one's family at work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree

Strongly Agree

4. Employees are often expected to take work home at night and/or on weekends.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree

Strongly Agree

5. Higher management in this organisation encourages supervisors to be sensitive to employees' family and personal concerns.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree

Strongly Agree

6. Employees are regularly expected to put their jobs before their families.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree

Strongly Agree

7. To turn down a promotion or transfer for family-related reasons will seriously hurt one's career progress in this organisation.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

8. In general, managers in this organisation are quite accommodating of family-related needs.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

9. Many employees are resentful when women in this organisation take extended leaves to care for newborn or adopted children.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

10. To get ahead at this organisation, employees are expected to work more than 50 hours a week, whether at the workplace or at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

11. To be viewed favourably by top management, employees in this organisation must constantly put their jobs ahead of their families or personal lives.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

12. In this organisation employees who participate in available work–family programs (e.g., job sharing, part-time work) are viewed as less serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

13. Many employees are resentful when men in this organization take extended leaves to care for newborn or adopted children.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

14. In this organisation it is very hard to leave during the workday to take care of personal or family matters.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

15. This organisation encourages employees to set limits on where work stops and home life begins.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

16. Middle managers and executives in this organisation are sympathetic toward employees' child care responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

17. This organisation is supportive of employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for family reasons.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

18. Middle managers and executives in this organisation are sympathetic toward employees' elder care responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

19. In this organisation employees who use flexitime are less likely to advance their careers than those who do not use flexitime.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

20. In this organisation employees are encouraged to strike a balance between their work and family lives.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Strongly Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

APPENDIX E

**Work Centrality Scale**

(Paullay, Alliger & Stone-Romero, 1994)

The following set of statements deal with your beliefs regarding the degree of importance you attach to your work. Please indicate with an X the response which indicates your feelings most closely.

1. Work should only be a small part of one's life.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

2. In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be work oriented.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

3. Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

4. The major satisfaction in my life comes from my work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

5. The most important things that happen to me involve my work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

6. I have other activities more important than my work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

7. Work should be considered central to life.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

8. I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

9. To me, my work is only a small part of who I am.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

10. Most things in life are more important than work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

11. If the unemployment benefit was really high, I would still prefer to work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

12. Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

APPENDIX F

**Home Centrality Scale**

(Linington, 2008)

The following set of statements deals with your beliefs regarding the degree of importance you attach to your family/home. Please indicate with an X the response which indicates your feelings most closely.

1. It is important for me to share in the process of making decisions concerning my household.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

2. When a family member is faced with an important decision, my opinion is valued.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

3. I find personal value and satisfaction in meeting my family responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

4. It is important for me to develop close relations with those at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

5. I believe it is important for both partners to be equally involved in carrying out family responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

6. I feel good about my involvement in childcare or family responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

7. I am able to determine how I deal with the demands of my family.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

8. I am able to structure my day in a way that enables me to meet my personal needs.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

9. I am able to structure my day in a way that enables me to meet my family needs.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

10. My responsibilities at home are similar to what I believe my role at home should be.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

11. My involvement at home is in line with how I see myself as a person.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

12. I feel confident about my ability to deal with demands at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

13. It is important for me to be a key “player” in my household.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

14. Involvement in my family and home add meaning to my life.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

15. I actively try to manage my work so that it does not interfere with my involvement at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

16. I actively try to manage demands from home so that they do not interfere with my work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

APPENDIX G

**Work-Family Balance Scale**

(Hill, Hawkins, Ferris & Weitzman, 2001)

The following statements measure the extent to which individuals are able to balance their work and home demands. Please indicate with an X the response which indicates your feelings most closely.

1. How easy or difficult is it for you to balance the demands of your work and your personal and family life?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very Easy | | Neutral | | Very Difficult |

2. I have sufficient time away from my job to maintain adequate work and personal/family life balance.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

3. When l take a vacation, l am able to separate myself from work and enjoy myself.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

4. How often do you feel drained when you go home from work because of work pressures and problems?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Never | | Neutral | | Almost always |

5. All in all, how successful do you feel in balancing your work and personal/family life?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Extremely

Extremely Successful Agree

Unsuccessful

APPENDIX H

**Work-Family Conflict Scale**

(Carlson, Kacmar & Williams, 2000)

The following set of statements measures the extent to which you perceive your work and family roles to be incompatible and conflicting. Please indicate with an X the response which indicates your feelings most closely.

1. My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

2. The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

3. I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

4. The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

5. The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

6. I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time l must spend on family responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

7. When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/responsibilities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

8. I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

9. Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when l come home l am too stressed to do all the things l enjoy.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

10. Due to stress at home, l am often preoccupied with family matters at work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

11. Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

12. Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

13. The problem-solving behaviours I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

14. Behaviour that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

15. The behaviours l perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

16. The behaviours that work for me at home do not seem to be effective at work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

17. Behaviour that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |

18. The problem-solving behaviour that work for me at home does not seem to be as useful at work.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | | Neutral | | Strongly Disagree |