THE IMPACT OF WORKING TIME AND WORK FAMILY CULTURE TOWARDS WORK FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG CAREER WOMEN IN SARAWAK

Surena Sabil and Sabitha Marican

ABSTRACT

Participation of women in the workplace can be seen as a basis of excellence of future global competitiveness. In Malaysia, the women workforce comprises 50% of the workforce and 70% of them are married working women. Hence, bringing more women into the workplace is not a choice but a necessity for both economic and global competitive. On the overall, many studies be it in the west or east has focused on the negative implication of work on family. Thus, the objective of the paper is to study the relationship of working time and work family culture towards work family conflict. The following study was conducted in Sarawak among 60 working women. The data was collected through questionnaires that were distributed personally to the respondent at their respective workplace. The findings indicated that working time and work family culture have a positive relationship towards work family conflict. Finally, the paper will discuss various ways whereby organisation can promote family friendly policies at workplace in order to promote the gender equality and also women capital in Malaysia. This is because in the future the involvement of women in the workplace is even going to be at the higher rate than before.

Keywords: working women, working time, work family culture, work family conflict, family friendly policies.

THE IMPACT OF WORKING TIME AND WORK FAMILY CULTURE TOWARDS WORK FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG CAREER WOMEN IN SARAWAK

by

Surena Sabil and Sabitha Marican

Abstract

Participation of women in the workplace can be seen as a basis of excellence of future global competitiveness. In Malaysia, the women workforce comprises 50% of the workforce and 70% of them are married working women. Hence, bringing more women into the workplace is not a choice but a necessity for both economic and global competitive. On the overall, many studies be it in the west or east has focused on the negative implication of work on family. Thus, the objective of the paper is to study the relationship of working time and work family culture towards work family conflict. The following study was conducted in Sarawak among 60 working women. The data was collected through questionnaires that were distributed personally to the respondent at their respective workplace. The findings indicated that working time and work family culture have a positive relationship towards work family conflict. Finally, the paper will discuss various ways whereby organisation can promote family friendly policies at workplace in order to promote the gender equality and also women capital in Malaysia. This is because in the future the involvement of women in the workplace is even going to be at the higher rate than before.

Keywords: working women, working time, work family culture, work family conflict, family friendly policies.

INTRODUCTION

The growing interest in work-life balance may originate from changes in many global and local domains. For example, the traditional family consists of the husband going out to work and the wife staying at home to look after their children is now becoming less common (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) and statistics

demonstrate a greater participation of women in paid work, family structures altering, an aging workforce and the desire for some workers not to be 'married to the job' (Allis & O'Driscoll, 2008). In Malaysia, the increase of women in the workforce is a common phenomenal when it appears 53% of women are the major contributors to the workforce and out of these 61% are women who are in managerial and professional group (PSD, 2010). Of this total, about 70% of working women are married or having families of their own and also contribute to the increasing number of families with dual-careers (Jamilah et al., 2006).

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

As married couples, the wisdom to balance between the roles at home and at work is important to ensure the well-being of the family (Sabitha, 2009). According to the popular belief, work is always believed to be as a burden or a propagator of negative impacts on the family. Therefore, efforts to balance the roles between work and family sometimes cause problems or stress (Kahn et al., 1964). Work and family conflict certainly has been under careful attention ever since to help deal with the pressures of work and family roles. Work and family conflict occurs when there is an overlap of roles which reflect incompatibility between work and family domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Role theory was used as a basis for the approach of conflict between the role and diversity of roles (Kahn et al., 1964). Role theory, which emphasises the role of stress, occurs as a result of an overlap of work and family roles (Kahn et al., 1964). The interrole conflict occurs because it is not possible for the focal person to satisfy all expectations of his or her work and family roles since each role requires time, energy and commitment. Whilst, role strain theory is introduced to focus on the implementation of the role of priority in order to reduce the possible pressure. Goode (1960) has identified that the time constrains, energy and commitment are barriers in performing various roles as he emphasized in the scarcity approach.