



THE MODERATING EFFECT OF SUPERVISOR
SUPPORT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS,
WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE



ENI SURIANA BINTI ALIAS

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS,
WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

ENI SURIANA BINTI ALIAS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the moderating effect of supervisor support (SS) on the relationship between flexible working arrangements (FWAs), work-family conflict (WFC) and employee performance (EP). This study primarily focused on the organizations that adopted flexible working arrangement (FWA). The selected organizations were obtained from the report by TalentCorp Malaysia FWAs in collaboration with Malaysian Employer Federation (MEF). The questionnaires were distributed to 304 employees of the selected organizations through Human Resource Department. The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique. The data were analysed using Binary Logistic Regression. This study found that there was a significant negative effect of work interference with family (WIF) ($B = 2.672, p = .015$) and family interference with work (FIW) ($B = 3.425, p = .022$) on job quality performance (JQP); and WIF ($B = 1.868, p = .034$) and FIW ($B = 2.001, p = .041$) on task performance (TP). The findings also showed the significant and negative effect of FWAs on JQP ($B = -3.495, p = .045$) and TP ($B = -3.686, p = .001$). The findings showed supervisor support (SS) as significant moderator in the relationship between FIW-JQP ($B = -.793, p = .042$), and FWAs-TP ($B = 1.045, p = .001$). In conclusion, FWAs and WFC are significant predictors of EP which the relationship is in a negative direction. SS only served as a significant moderator in the relationship between FWAs-TP; and FIW-JQP. In implications, to enhance employee performance, the managers of the organization need to encourage the family supportive supervisor's culture; flexible working arrangements and work-family conflict.





KESAN PENYEDERHANA SOKONGAN PENYELIA DALAM HUBUNGAN DI ANTARA PENGATURAN KERJA FLEKSIBEL, KONFLIK KERJA DAN KELUARGA SERTA PRESTASI KERJA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan penyederhana sokongan penyelia dalam hubungan di antara pengaturan kerja fleksibel (PKF), konflik kerja-keluarga (KKK) dan prestasi kerja (PK). Kajian ini tertumpu pada organisasi yang mengamalkan Pengaturan Kerja Fleksibel (PKF). Organisasi yang dipilih diperolehi dari laporan oleh TalentCorp Malaysia FWAs kerjasama dengan Malaysian Employer Federation (MEF). Soalan kaji selidik diedarkan kepada seramai 304 pekerja melalui Jabatan Sumber Manusia di setiap organisasi terlibat. Sampel dipilih menggunakan teknik persampelan bertujuan. Data dianalisis menggunakan Regresi Logistik Binari. Kajian ini mendapati bahawa terdapat pengaruh negatif yang signifikan gangguan pekerjaan dengan keluarga (GPKD) ($B = 2.672$, $p = .015$) dan gangguan keluarga dengan pekerjaan (GKDP) ($B = 3.425$, $p = .022$) terhadap prestasi kualiti kerja (PKK); dan GPKD ($B = 1.868$, $p = .034$) dan GKDP ($B = 2.001$, $p = .041$) terhadap prestasi tugas (PT). Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan pengaruh PKF yang signifikan dan negatif terhadap PKK ($B = -3.495$, $p = .045$) dan PT ($B = -3.686$, $p = .001$). Dapatan kajian turut menunjukkan sokongan penyelia (SP) sebagai moderator yang signifikan dalam hubungan di antara GKDP-PKK ($B = -.793$, $p = .042$), dan PKF-PT ($B = 1.045$, $p = .001$). Kesimpulannya, PKF dan KKK adalah peramal yang signifikan ke atas PK, dan hubungannya adalah negatif. SP hanya berperanan sebagai moderator yang signifikan dalam hubungan antara PKF-PT; dan GKDP-PKK. Implikasinya, untuk meningkatkan prestasi pekerja, pengurus organisasi perlu mendorong budaya sokongan keluarga oleh penyelia; pengaturan kerja fleksibel dan konflik kerja-keluarga.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| MEF | Malaysia Employer Federation |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Over the past years, the competitive working environment has become a factor in redesigning the workplace (KPMG, 2019). It was primarily to meet the global employment market trends that have adopted the borderless information technology (IT) environment, enabling the employees' workforce to connect 24/7 (Kossekk & Thompson, 2015b). The advancement of information technology has made accessibility become portable and allows employees to work virtually. In Malaysia, it has demonstrated significant workforce demographic changes with more women entered the labour workforce, the aged of baby-boomers generation reaching towards retirement, single working parents and the millennials start to develop their own families and the responsibilities caring for the elderly that creates the demands for job flexibility (SHRM, 2016). Thus, the labour workforce becomes more diversified and the demands of job flexibility were seen as the favourable demands to suit their preferences due to the said conditions (Mee Choo, Desa, & Abu Hassan Asaari, 2016). Parallely, technology innovation emerged across the occupational workplace setting and impacted most employees around the globe (Kengatharan, 2015; Lake, 2016).





Moreover, the competitive technology environment also creates the revolution in which the flexible working arrangement (FWA) was introduced as a new way of working (SHRM, 2015). It has become the most favourable working preference (TalentCorp, 2016) instead of regular work hours and stationed workplace (Subramaniam, Overton, & Maniam, 2015). The reason for employees enquires about the flexible working arrangement (FWA) is because they were able to choose their working hours and location (Regus, 2017) so that they can fulfil the home roles demands and expectations (Kossek & Thompson, 2015b; Masuda et al., 2012).

On the other hand, reviewing the work and home demands increased the work-family conflict that persistently affected employees' daily lives. Specifically, it was highlighted that the employees were often struggling to manage work and home role demands as they were affected by the consequences of the difficulty in managing work and home responsibilities (Kossek & Thompson, 2015b). Certainly, the employees, especially those who have a family, have multiple roles and expectations to accomplish. It was critically important that the organization has taken a step forward to review the conflict occurs. Knowing how to manage the roles demands and expectations of work and the home domain is essentially substantial because it does have implications not only on employees' home domain but also on their work domain.

The diversified group of labour workforce encompasses dual working couple employees, baby boomer's generation and single working parents insisted on the demand for job flexibility. It has become a trend that most employees prefer to look at a job that offers flexibility because they realize winning quality time in managing the roles between work and the home was significantly important (Regus, 2017). The employees opted to seek the organization's job opportunity with the package that offers





the flexibility benefits such as flexible working arrangement (FWA) to improve their coordination between work and home responsibilities (Ko & Kim, 2018; Matthijs Bal & Jansen, 2016). The flexible working arrangement (FWA) at the workplace has been perceived to lessen the effect of work-related stress (Mee Choo et al., 2016). Instead, with the flexible working arrangement (FWA), the employees could arrange their work time or work location to accommodate the work and their home daily roles demand and expectations.

Obtain a work-life balance could give employees gaining job satisfaction and the employees' willingness to perform better in their jobs (Choo, 2016). Subsequently, it was shown an increasing number of organizations adopted the flexible working arrangement across the globe (Regus, 2017) that intentionally supports employees in managing both work and home demands (Kossek, Thompson, & Lautsch, 2015).

Considering the implications from work-family conflicts' occurrence creates the low job performance, work stress, job burnout, job turnover, and poor health conditions on employees that the organization should not be neglected (Idris, 2014). The work performance literatures demonstrated that the employees' capacity of managing the task responsibilities and has influences the successful results for organizational growth (Mohd Nasurdin, Tan, & Naseer Khan, 2020).

The employees were often spent a longer time at work might create the unfavourable effect in a home domain, which the less remaining time to fulfil the home roles demand. Regus has reported in the year 2017, the percentage of employees working longer hours unpaid overtime claims was reached billion dollars. Besides, in the year 2018, AIA Malaysia has highlighted the mental health issues that most





impacted the employees that have brings many negative consequences towards employees' work performance. Furthermore, the work-family conflict (WFC) occurrence ascended more than a decade ago. It was highlighted that the organization should not take for granted the employees' critical issues. This study was an overview of the relevant issue and the insights about flexible working arrangements (FWA) and the understandings about the occurrence of work-family conflict (WFC) that impacted the employee's work performance and home life. The practice of FWA and support from supervisors was seen to be a good mechanism in alleviating the occurrence of WFC and work performance-related issues.

1.2 Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA) in Malaysia



FWA has been seen as an alternative to work practices that could be potential tools to engage with the occurrence issues of work-family conflict (WFC). In Malaysia, FWA was not prevalent working practice (Shaari & Amirul, 2020), and not many organizations adopt it into their organization working practice (Ahmad et al., 2015; TalentCorp, 2018) and it has limited advancement of its utilization in the private sector (Shaari & Amirul, 2020). However, the government has continuously encouraged the enhancement of FWA as it has become the strategic goal in giving out to the competitive organization which they are entitled to employers' tax reduction (Crowe Malaysia PLT, 2020). In addition, there have been a large shift in Malaysian employees' perception and attitudes towards the enforced FWA particularly remote working (RM) that created the positive transformation that confronted the established norm due to the pandemic of Covid-19 started in 2020 (TalentCorp & UNDP, 2021).





Many Western studies highlighted the utilization of FWA as an alternative to overcome work-family conflict occurrence (Kossek & Thompson, 2015b). In Malaysia, the conducted studies revealed that 32 per cent of professional employees were considering FWA availability as the top three preferences and reason for accepting the job (Michael Page, 2015). In March 2019, the Malaysian government implemented the pilot flexible working hours (FWH) in selected government offices. The option of working hours start time would be between 7.30 till 8.30 am as an employee may opt to begin work between the mentioned hours, and the finished off time was equivalent to 9 hours working time. Recently, the government has announced FWA incentives for the individual employees entitled to special individual income tax relief on the digital equipment purchases (Deloitte Malaysia, 2020).



Flexible working arrangement (FWA) practice in Malaysia was observed in multinational organizations namely Siemens, Dell and IBM that strategized the competitive working environment and they were intended to maximize the flexible working arrangement (FWA) benefits (TalentCorp, 2016). The local conglomerate organizations such as CIMB Group, UEM Group, Maybank, Sunway Group and UEM also have initiated the flexible working arrangement (FWA) in their organizations (TalentCorp, 2014).

However, according to a survey made by TalentCorp Malaysia and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) in 2015, and there was only 10 per cent out of 130 organizations in Malaysia intend to adopt the flexible working arrangement (FWA).

It was indisputable that the flexible working arrangement (FWA) availability has benefited most for the dual working couples, single working parents, and employees





with elderly dependents. It was revealed that the flexible working arrangement (FWA) practice in the organization also had shown various positive results on employees, including the improved quality in balancing between home and work (SHRM, 2015). In Malaysia, the women employees have fluctuated percentage of labour participation as they left the labour workforce due to caring responsibilities. It was obvious that many employees demanded flexibility, but the organizations were lacking to offer job flexibility to their employees (Noor & Mahudin, 2016). In addition, when the organization is willing to adopt the FWA, relatively the performance becomes a concern in managing their employee performance because it was often perceived that the flexible employees were lacking in performing well and their performance at work cannot be monitored (MassDot, 2019).



Flexibility at work was particularly given control for the employees over their job and improves the balance between their work and home responsibilities (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). Workplace flexibility has allowed employees to manage work demands simultaneously with home demands; thus, the FWA benefits, improving the employees' willingness to stay longer (Kossekk & Thompson, 2015b). It was reported by participated organizations in the programme called Flex Programme launched by TalentCorp responded that Malaysian employees have a perception on taking up the flexible working arrangements (FWAs) may harm their career growth (TalentCorp, 2016).

Meanwhile, employers are reluctant to adopt FWAs because they feel insecure about the protection of company data (TalentCorp, 2016). Meanwhile, Allen, Golden & Shockley (2015) stated that supervisors fear that they cannot oversee and manage their subordinates when working away from the office. Besides, organizational culture





elements, such as a low sense of accountability, were revealed as challenges of flexible work practices to be implemented at the workplace (Idris, 2016). Following TalentCorp Malaysia, the Government has launched initiatives to support and promote a parent-friendly work environment and employee retention in the labour workforce by providing grants and tax incentives to employers (TalentCorp, 2014).

1.3 Global Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA)

Organizations in western countries have adopted flexible working arrangements (FWAs) extensively more than one decade ago. It has been governed by its national policies and organization policies. For instance, in Australia, the Government has ruled out the flexible working arrangements (FWAs) policies under Fair Act 2009, in which the employee has the right to request FWA. Furthermore, the UK government has implemented a flexible working arrangement (FWA) policy. The information details of the flexible working arrangement (FWA), including guidelines on handling the request FWA for employers, has been published online through their official government website.

As per Table 1.1, it has demonstrated that the major family-friendly employment policies governed in Asian countries, including South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, that implemented the flexible working arrangement (FWA). For instance, South Korea has enacted the Framework Act on Healthy Families 2004, which is dedicated to family policy.



Table 1.1

Major Family-friendly Employment Policies in Selected Places in Asia

| Description | Hong Kong | Singapore | South Korea | Taiwan | Japan |
|--|-----------|-----------|--|---|---|
| Availability of statutory right to flexible work arrangement | No | No | Reduction of working hours for caring a child under the age of eight | Reduction of one working hour per day for caring a child under the age of three | Exemption from non-scheduled work and shorter working hours for caring a child under the age of three |

Source: Legislative Council Secretariat (2017)

Meanwhile, the research by TalentCorp in 2016 has surveyed the option of the adoption rate of FWAs offered by employers in Asia. Figure 1.1 has illustrated the adoption FWA rate offered by the organization in Asian countries. It was showed that flexible working hours (FWH) was the most preferred type of FWA provided by the organizations.



Figure 1.1. 2016 Adoption FWA rate (%) offered by employers in Asian countries



Source: (Embracing the Winning Formula for Flexible Working Arrangements by TalentCorp Malaysia 2016)

Specifically, the employees' formal written request to the human resources department is considered a formal flexible working arrangement. The request does not go through the organization's rules, and a procedure is known as an informal flexible working arrangement (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). The main impetus for introducing a formal policy and request procedure for a flexible working arrangement was to expand the competitive organization position in the labour market (Kelliher & Anderson, 2014). The informal flexible working arrangement is easier to handle from the supervisors' perspective since the procedure could be between their subordinates.

In United Kingdom (UK), remote working (RM) was seen as the most common form of flexible working Kelliher & Anderson (2014). According to Kelliher & Anderson (2014) findings, only 18 per cent of flexible workers who responded to the survey had a formal arrangement to allow them to work flexibly. The majority percentage of 82 per cent defined their flexible working arrangements (FWAs) as informal practice.

1.4 Reason for Seeking Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs)

The recent studies revealed that the competing demands of work and home were the factors that affected employees' lives (Hammer, Demsky, Kossek, & Bray, 2015). Implementing a flexible working arrangement (FWA) always has to consider the employee's needs and preferences (Kossek et al., 2015). Besides, the FWAs availability in the organization has empowered employees to decides and manages their work and



home (Beigi, Shirmohammadi, & Stewart, 2018; Shockley & Allen, 2007). It makes an employee feel valuable to the organization and lessens work-related stress since they can manage their roles. Hence, the availability of FWAs would reduce absenteeism among employees. It does improve their job productivity (Regus, 2013). However, there still lacking awareness of whether the implementation of FWAs is indispensable to become a work practice in the organization (Hammer et al., 2015).

Based on the CPA Australia study in 2016, employees seeking to work flexibly mostly because the employees have to take care of the children, and the following reason was to gain the work-life balance. The survey conducted by CPA Australia has revealed that employers were more likely to approve the flexible work requests if the employees’ reasons to care for the children compared to other reasons. It can be concluded that Malaysian employees have shown the highest percentage of 37.7 per cent compared to Australian employees and Hong Kong employees, which they aimed to have FWAs so that they would gain the work-life balance.

Table 1.2

Reason for Seeking to Work Flexibly – Comparison of Australia, Hong Kong and Malaysia

| For what reason would you most likely seek to work flexibly | Australia (n=373) | Hong Kong (n=99) | Malaysia (n=114) |
|---|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Caring for children | 38.6% | 25.3% | 30.7% |
| Seeking work/life balance | 35.7% | 32.3% | 37.7% |

Source: The CPA Australia Workplace Flexibility Survey (2016)

Job flexibility was demanded by employees to obtain a work-life balance and minimize work commuting time. So that they have more time with family and doing physical activities (Regus, 2017). Besides that, the survey of employee preferences for flexible work arrangements indicates that 79 per cent of Malaysian employees preferred to work with an organization that offers flexible working arrangements (FWAs) (TalentCorp, 2014). Certainly, it has been found that the organization offering the flexible working arrangements (FWAs) at the workplace obtain greater staff retention (Byrne & Canato, 2017). Also, FWA was preferred by the organizations to adapt the changing conditions to suit the competitive working environment (Altindag & Siller, 2014).

1.5 Trends of Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs)

The millennial or young working employees considered flexible working hours as an important benefit compared to remuneration payment. While it was stated that 50 per cent of Malaysian employees are willing to sacrifice the higher pay for flexible working arrangements, they tend to look for a balanced work-life (PWC, 2012). In the following study by Jason Flynn, Andrew Coccia, Senior, Patricia Ryan, Kelley Lewis, Yon-Loon Chen & Feinstein (2017), many US organizations have provided FWAs as perquisites for the employees. It was proved that the FWAs was an option that may become an effective resolution in improving the employees' coordination managing roles since there were many organizations was adopting it as their working practice.

As per Table 1.3, flexible working arrangements (flexible work schedule and working from home) were among the top five highest of employees’ perquisites utilized by the employees, respectively, which shows 81 per cent and 69 per cent.

Table 1.3

Employees’ Perquisites Offered by the Employer

| Benefits | Per cent of Respondents |
|--|-------------------------|
| Casual dress days | 78% |
| Cell phone allowance | 47% |
| Certification or licensure pay reimbursement | 26% |
| Company car/car allowance | 28% |
| Employee discounts on products and services | 83% |
| Financial planning benefit | 39% |
| Flexible work schedule | 81% |
| On-site daycare | 11% |
| On-site fitness | 58% |
| Paid parking | 36% |
| Subsidized meals | 22% |
| Tuition reimbursement | 36% |
| Working from home | 69% |

Source: Deloitte Total Rewards Practices Survey (2017)

1.6 Types of Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA)

Flexible working arrangements (FWA) can be categorized under three main categories (Lake, 2016): flexible work time options, flexible work location options and flexible work contract options.



1.6.1 Flexible Worktime Options

Clarke & Holdsworth (2017) defined the flexible work time options as flexible working hours (FWH) in which the start and end times of work time may vary. The flexible work time category includes compressed work-week, annualized hours, part-time working, job share, and term-time working. Compressed work-week means where employees were working for the full week's total hours in lesser days.

A compressed work-week (CWW) is defined as a reduced number of working days but was rendered work for more than 8 hours per day (Paje, Escobar, Ruaya, Sulit, & Paje, 2020). Working hours equivalent to a five-day standard working day became four or three days (Hammer et al., 2015). Job share was the less attentive type of FWA, among others (Wheatley, 2017). Wheatley (2017) defined job share as a job scope of the two employees' full-time positions. The job sharer's challenges were about the communication barrier between them and the work intensity (Wheatley, 2017). Term-time working where an employee was only working during the school term time (Acas, 2017).

The flexible work time options, also known as flexible working hours, have been widely practiced to manage both family and work-life (Galea, Houkes, & De Rijk, 2014). The advantages of using flexible working hours (FWH) could benefit both the employees or the organization. It was said that FWH could be utilized to fulfil the roles demand in the home domain (Kosseck & Thompson, 2015b).



It would reduce absenteeism since flextime is an ideal type of FWA that enables employees to control daily work schedules and accommodate their role demands (Kossek & Thompson, 2015).

1.6.2 Flexible Work Location Options

The work flexible location options refer to home-based working, mobile working, working remotely outside of the office, such as working from the client's office and local hub centres (Lake, 2016). Remote working is a similar term used for telecommuting (Sushil, Connell, & Burgess, 2016) that refer to working remotely outside of the office (MassDot, 2019). Another term that falls under this category of flexible work location options is telework. Telework means the employee conduct the work remotely from home during the work week (Hammer et al., 2015). In this study, the researcher used the term remote working (RM) that referring to this type of flexible work option. The advancement of information technology allows the organization to utilize this type of FWA. It requires the employees to have an internet connection while working away from the office.

1.6.3 Flexible Work Contract Options

The flexible work contract option is referring to working as contract staff, agency staff, freelancers and associates (Lake, 2016). The most prominent and controversial employment contract option is zero-hours; the contract defines no mutual obligation between employer and employee to accept the job (Kew & Stredwick, 2016). The zero-



hours contract is normally referred to as “on-call work” and a substantially part-time employee working fewer hours than full-time employees (ILO, 2016a).

The selected type of FWA such as Flexible Working Hours (FWH) and Remote Working (RM) was selected to be a focus of the present study because it was the preferred type of FWA adopted by most organizations across Malaysia (TalentCorp, 2016). Furthermore, TalentCorp has highlighted that Compressed Work-Week (CWW) has become one of the types of FWA that could provide greater benefits for employees in managing their job roles (TalentCorp, 2017). Therefore, the researcher has included the CWW, so that the investigation of the study would give more insights into the various types of FWA.



1.7 Implications of Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA)



It was perceived that the employees who use remote working (RM) were encountered challenges on the detached relationship between the office colleagues and clients (Kosseck et al., 2015). It was found that the traditional employees that based at the office feel uneasy about working with the remote employees and they believe that the physical interaction by face to face was more practical when conducting projects work-based (Kosseck et al., 2015). Likely, the type of remote working (RM) is anticipated in the borderless boundary environment situation. They could access checking their office emails and hard to logging off from office network. This working habit jeopardizes the family relationship (Kosseck, 2016b).

It was shown that remote working (RM) had permitted the interaction boundaries between work and home domain (Allen, 2014). Moreover, on the productive





side, the employees can utilize remote working (RM) in the first place, it assumes that it can facilitate both roles of work and home since they can schedule daily office work from home while observing the home roles. Rationally, when the employees were working remotely, the organization presume it could reduce the employees' turnover and absenteeism and save operational costs (Mahmud, Lim, Yee, Pazim, & Mail, 2020).

Meanwhile, flexible working hours (FWH) is the most favourable type of FWA by employees because it does significantly reflect the relevant use at the most time for the employees. It was the most preferred adoption type of FWA in Asian countries (TalentCorp, 2016). FWH was the practical type of FWA that allows the employees to adjust their time accordingly to suit their daily home and work daily task preferences. Reviewing on compressed work-week (CWW), the implication of using compressed work-week was perceived as burnout because the employees worked longer in work-week (Hyatt & Coslor, 2018).

FWA is also seen as a favourable option that reciprocates on its positive outcomes (Azar, Khan, & Van Eerde, 2018). On the other perspective, the presence of flexibility in the organization may alter the working environment and creates a fairness concern for non-flexible employees (Kossek et al., 2015). Flexible employees have limited the employees' daily interaction with colleagues and supervisors. (Masuda, 2012). Relatively, it was said that supervisor support is the key factor that contributed to the success of FWA implementation (ACAS, 2017).





1.8 Employee Performance

In major studies, employee performance was considered unidimensional because it can comprehensively capture realistic measurements in employee performance (Tabiu, Pangil, & Othman, 2016). Employee work performance can be defined as a multi-dimensional perspective that mainly views the quality of work, efficiency, productivity, creativity, and organizational profitability towards achieving the organization's objectives (Tangen, 2005). In the organization, the employee's work performance was usually evaluated to quantify the effectiveness and efficiency action by the employees (Neely, Gregory, & Platts, 1995). However, the employee performance in the organization is not only about what the employee achieves but how they achieve it. Following Brumback (1988), the comprehensive of work performance means the behaviours that accomplished the results. Employee performance should be reflected on both behaviours as input and results as output (Brumback, 1988). The output has been referred as the productivity of work. On the other hand, the employee performance should comprise the work behaviours that are related to the organizational goals so that they can be measured based on the contributions made by the individual employees (M. L. Wang & Tsai, 2014). Moreover, the work behaviours and characteristics are the important criteria when measures the employee's work performance because it is needed to perform and fulfil the job responsibilities. It was also known as job competency that was considered as a comprehensive concept of employee performance.

Hence, the present study has perceived that the employee performance should be captured in multidimensional (Koopmans et al., 2011) so that every aspect can be discovered. Therefore, the present study has deliberated that each dimension; Job





Quality Performance (JQP) and Task Performance (TP) could exhibit their unique contribution towards achieving the organizational performance expectation. The present study was hypothesized to have the outcomes on the relationship between the employee performance that involves the FWA and Work-Family Conflict (WFC). The employee job performance was conceptualized as the expected value of the organization that has been produced by an individual employee (Motowidlo & Kell, 2012).

For the organizational objective of performance management, it was to gain greater results in the context of the individuals' performance that expected to perform work as per strategic organizational goals and standard requirements (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). The researcher has included the ability, judgment, accuracy, job knowledge and creativity component that renamed as Task Performance (TP) lied as work behaviours in reviewing the job core characteristic of employee performance in the organization. The job characteristics determine the suitability of the employee in the relevant field of work to enables employees to successfully perform (Senen, Masharyono, & Edisa, 2020). In this study, the employee work performance has encompassed two main sections that focus on the basic performance task, renamed as job quality performance (JQP) that include the component of quality, quantity and efficiency in reviewing the output result of employee performance. The second section represented Task Performance (TP).



1.8.1 Job Quality Performance (JQP)

The first sub-category of employee work performance; the Job Quality Performance has been regarded as the character of quantity, quality and efficiency in an employee's job performance that contributes towards achieving the organization's core objectives. It was mainly referring to the core assigned task in producing the job outcomes. In this study, the employees' job quality performance assessed the essential element of performance including quantity, quality, and efficiency assessment. The quantity was measured based on the number of works completed and the percentage of finished work on schedule. It was an outcome of the result achieved (Koopmans et al., 2011). The quality of the work performed requires the organization's participation in providing leadership and motivation to their employees so that optimal work performance can be achieved (Munthali, George & Xuelian, 2020). Meanwhile, efficiency can be described as observing the performed work as per the schedule and within the allowed budget (Yaakobi & Weisberg, 2018). It is often related to the employees' productivity of work. Efficiency at work defines as when the employees have carried out the correct task in a rightful way with minimal waste of time and effort. However, it linked that the high workload resulted in lower job efficiency (Motowidlo & Kell, 2013). Quality assessment can be defined as meeting the condition at a certain level of quality standard with the target of several works accomplished (Sapada, Modding, Gani, & Nujum, 2017). Specifically, quality of work can be defined as a percentage of a free error on completed work (Koopmans et al., 2011), it describes the thoroughness of the extent to which assigned work is completed as per the requirement of the job scope. It is important because the quality of work performance reflects the organization's final product or service quality. On the occasion, there was a possibility that the target in



producing the product was not achieved because the employees lacking the right skills or probably the work processes were not in order. For instance, an organization that prioritizes excellent customer service features should pay close attention to how the quality of their employees' performance can be regulated and improved over time.

1.8.2 Task Performance (TP)

In this study, the Task Performance (TP) can be defined as an employees' capacity in performing the activities that contribute to the organizational expectation on performance core characteristics (Sonnetag & Frese, 2005). The employee task performance was measured based on the employees' core characteristics such as the employee's overall ability, judgment, accuracy, job knowledge, and creativity (Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997). The employees that portray the work characteristic and behaviours contribute to the organizational objectives that support producing goods and services (Motowidlo & Kell, 2013). These core characteristics are viewed as the components that the employees should possess so that they can perform their work as expected by the organization. Furthermore, the career development skills of the employees are meant for their career growth and are essential for organizational productivity (Karikari, Opoku Boadi, & Sai, 2018).

The ability in employee performance referred to the employees' capacity to evaluates actualities, making a decision, and provide the relevant recommendations. Ability is a sort of quality possesses by the individual employees that make the action possible (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). It has been perceived that the employees with a high level of cognitive ability perform better than a low level of cognitive ability



(Sonnentag & Frese, 2005). It has become the determinant for successful work performance (Sonnentag & Frese, 2005). Besides, the accuracy assessment can be defined as the extent to which work deviates from errors or omissions. Accuracy measures the quality of behaviour such as percentage errors in work (Lan, Wargocki, & Lian, 2014).

A study by Sonnentag & Frese (2005) has described the elements of ability, job knowledge and skill are influential components in employee performance. It was suggested that the component was necessary because it can be the reference under the specific context in which the job performance was accomplished (Sonnentag & Frese, 2005). The judgment in task performance can be defined as the employee's aptitude that may gain from relevant experiences and knowledge to infer a situation and form an opinion and make decisions (Likierman, 2020).

Job knowledge is referring to an individual employee's declarative knowledge that consists of job requirements, technical knowledge and skills about the job roles (Knapp, 2013). It serves as a resource for the employees to look up work processes and procedures. Knowledge was required for the individual employee as a function for what is necessary to be done in the job (Peiró, Bayona, Caballer, & Di Fabio, 2020). The enhancement in job knowledge and skills was perceived to influence an increased level of employee's task performance (TP) (Motowidlo & Kell, 2013).

Creativity can be defined as an individual employee's behaviour from the particular ability to produce new ideas in a novel way and appropriate (Ngo, Nguyen, Lee, & Andonopoulos, 2020). The engaged employees are always committed to getting things done in their novel ways (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). It was revealed that when





the employees are allowed to think differently in creating new resolutions to tackle the challenges, they may help the organization to beat their competitors with the generation of new ideas and ways (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). Creativity was a successful key improvement for organizational innovation (Zhang, Ma, Ye, Guo, & Liu, 2021). It has been highlighted that the proactive traits from the formation of creativity in employee personality work behaviour are likely to induce more initiative learning that exhibits high work performance and contributes to greater organizational performance (Zhang et al., 2021).

1.9 Background of the Study

The male employees often being recognized as breadwinner and obliged for the family (Medved, 2016); the women were traditionally tied with home responsibilities (Allen, 2012; H. Kim & Gong, 2017) and women themselves has perceived the family is the priority to be emphasized (Hirschman, 2016). However, there was a significant rise percentage rate of women participation in the labour force over the years. It shows a significant growth rate in the labour workforce since the 1970s, which roots the emergence of the working dual-couples (Allen, 2012). Dual couples or breadwinner for families has become common in recent years (Linda Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994; Radcliffe & Cassell, 2015). Women and men were no longer held responsible for specific home or work roles (Duxbury & Higgins, 1993; Noor & Mahudin, 2016). The combination of career and family for both men and female employees emerges the effect of the intersection of these two domains (Allen, 2012). It was reported that managing between both roles of work and home domains concurrently was challenging and creates the complication among working couples (Leineweber, Baltzer, Magnusson





Hanson, & Westerlund, 2013). The significant progress of women entering the workforce created a greater talent pool (Mercer LLC, 2017) and emerged the demands of cumulative workplace flexibility (Harrington & Hall, 2014; Kossek & Michel, 2011).

On the other hand, the globalization and competitive technology environment affect the labour workforce entirely and significantly affects flexibility utilization (Regus, 2017). To be precise, the technology revolution created a borderless working environment and workplace innovation (Forum, 2016; Lake, 2016). As discovered, most industries adopted the flexible working environment (FWA) into their organizations (Forum, 2016). Somewhat, the trends of flexibility were seen as valuable practice at the workplace to accommodates the demands of their roles (Kossek & Michel, 2011); and consequently to mitigate the effect of WFC (Erden Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019). Flexibility at the workplace was significantly concentrated as an alternative to help out the employees to overcome the imbalance of home and work responsibilities (Fiksenbaum, 2014; Kitterød & Lappegård, 2012) and to lead a better employee job performance (Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen, 2012; Kossek, 2006).

Information technology (IT) advancement proliferates portable devices such as laptops and cell phones that can easily navigate office work from anywhere, facilitating the rising demand for flexible working arrangements (FWA). It has been perceived that information technology (IT) enablement has blurred the boundaries between work and home (Allen et al. 2014, Kossek & Lautsch 2012). Information technology (IT) advancement makes employees associated with work without boundaries regardless even when they were at home (Kossek & Lee, 2017).



In Malaysia, it was reported that the employees were affected by the issue of productivity loss that contributed to low performance (AIA, 2018). Major studies have revealed that the mental health issue such as work stress was related to employee work performance (Chan, Ng, In, Wee, & Siau, 2021) (AIA, 2018). The absenteeism and job turnover was severely impacted the employees' productivity performance (AIA, 2018).

1.10 Problem Statement

Over the past years, there have been major changes in workforce competitiveness trends (KPMG, 2019). The changes in workforce demographic composition changes demonstrated that the increasing number of dual-career couples and single parents created an increase of multiple role conflicts. The working dual-career couples must cope with combining their daily work and home responsibilities. It was reported that many working employees get impacted on non-parallel between work and home responsibilities that cause conflicts (Fiksenbaum, 2014) and create complications in employees' careers (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). However, the complications that arises does not only influenced an employee's career but also affecting both domains; home and work (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014). The topic of work-family conflict has become leading and critical debate in the past research of work and family studies (Allen, Cho, & Meier, 2014; Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011a; Powell, Greenhaus, Allen, & Johnson, 2019; J. C. Williams, Berdahl, & Vandello, 2016). The critical debates highlighted that the trends in gender roles, families, work and employment were contributor factors of work-family conflict and advances the enormous impact on



employees' work and home life (Powell et al., 2019). The employees encountered difficulties in managing time and responsibilities in the home and work domain, which they cannot accomplish the duties they need to perform. Fulfilling the role demands together with the high-level expectation, was tough for employees to manage and caused the higher WFC occurred (Oshio, Inoue, & Tsutsumi, 2017).

The work-family conflict was unceasingly increased over time (Kengatharan, 2015) as the workforce becomes diversified. It was seen that the majority group involves were the employees who have families and are dependent (Kossek & Lee, 2017). Moreover, the work and home responsibilities were said to be inseparable for employees (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014), especially those with parental status (Allen, 2012). The working parents with younger children were the most affected, and experiencing the work-family conflict (Allen & Finkelstein, 2014). Contrary, Kossek & Lee, (2017) stated that regardless of parental status, all employees were affected by the work-family conflict in which those were living together.

In a work setting, the scenario of the multiple work demands and higher workload often interferes with employees' home life (Kecklund, Beckers, Leineweber, & Tucker, 2017) because the multiple responsibilities for both domains clashed and created negative consequences. It was reported that working longer hours at the workplace also has caused the employees to conflict with their family responsibilities due to insufficient time (Choo, 2016). In Malaysia, the employees were reported overworked and encountered work performance-related issues such as low productivity, work stress, absenteeism and presenteeism (unwell at work) (AIA, 2018). The Malaysian employees were struggling with the reduced conditions of well-being and were impacted by mental health issues (Zafira, Rozlan, & Subramaniam, 2021).





Furthermore, the various complication and issues were linked and significantly connected with those who encountered work-family conflict. Occasionally, it has been revealed that the employees who have the excessive impact of work-family conflict (WFC) becoming less committed to work (Acas, 2017). Regardless of work-family conflict (WFC) direction whether FIW or WIF, it has been claimed that this bi-directional of WFC have impacted not only productivity in work performance but also created mental health distress (Fiksenbaum, 2014). Work-family conflict (WFC) has been seen as a burden on employees' daily lives, impacting employees' physical symptoms (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014; Kelly et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the consequences of work-family conflict (WFC) also emerged in organizations (Dolcos & Daley, 2009) that leads to many adverse effects such as poor job performance that is linked with the decrease productivity cycle and employee turnover (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014). Consequently, when the employees have constantly encountered difficulties in managing the spillover for both domains, it has created the role strain and it gives an impact on the employee's health and work performance.

For instance, working longer hours at the office was said to contribute to work-family conflict (WFC) (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014). Working longer hours makes the most spending employee's time at the workplace, thus, it is seen as reduced or limited quality time with their families (Bellavia & Frone, 2005; Powell, Greenhaus, Allen, & Johnson, 2018). When the conflict occurred in the home domain, and the unavailable additional support in the organization limits the employees to obtain the assistance. Many employees were seeking a resolution to overcome the occurrence of WFC.

Hence, the present study has adopted flexible working arrangements (FWA) as the main variable in the context of Malaysia work setting as resolution tools to be



utilized in managing work roles that possibly to improves the performance at work. Although, many employees used FWA to help them to alleviate the effect of work-family conflict (WFC) (Masuda et al., 2012; Warokka & Febrilia, 2015). In other perceptions, the support of flexible working arrangement (FWA) has been regarded as a part of family-friendly benefits often creates a greater reduction effect of work-family conflict at the workplace (Beigi et al., 2018; Halinski & Duxbury, 2019).

1.11 Research Objectives

1. To identify the relationship between the variables of FWAs, WIF, FIW and Demographic Factors (Age, Gender, Number of Children, Spouse Working, and Level of Position).
2. To identify the relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Job Quality Performance (JQP).
3. To identify the relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Task Performance (TP).
4. To identify the relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Job Quality Performance (JQP).
5. To identify the relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Task Performance (TP).



6. To identify the relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Job Quality Performance (JQP).
7. To identify the relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Task Performance (TP).
8. To examine whether Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Job Quality Performance (JQP).
9. To examine whether Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Task Performance (TP).
10. To examine whether Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Job Quality Performance (JQP).
11. To examine whether Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Task Performance (TP).
12. To examine whether Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Job Quality Performance (JQP).
13. To examine whether Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Task Performance (TP).





1.12 Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between the variables of FWAs, WIF, FIW and Demographic Factors (Age, Gender, Number of Children, Spouse Working, and Level of Position)?
2. Is there a relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Job Quality Performance (JQP)?
3. Is there a relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Task Performance (TP)?
4. Is there a relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Job Quality Performance (JQP)?
5. Is there a relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Task Performance (TP)?
6. Is there a relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Job Quality Performance (JQP)?
7. Is there a relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Task Performance (TP)?
8. Does Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Job Quality Performance (JQP)?





9. Does Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) and Task Performance (TP)?
10. Does Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Job Quality Performance (JQP)?
11. Does Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Task Performance (TP)?
12. Does Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Job Quality Performance (JQP)?
13. Does Supervisor Support (SS) moderate the relationship between Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Task Performance (TP)?



1.13 Definition of Terms

1.13.1 Work-family Conflict (WFC)

In this study, the researcher defined WFC as intersect role of conflict that emerges between work and family that occurred due to both domains that were not aligned and imbalance.





1.13.1.1 Work Interference with Family (WIF)

In this study, the researcher has defined work interference with family (WIF) as the incompatible roles of work responsibilities affect the roles of home responsibilities in which unaccomplished roles of work starts interferes with employees' home roles.

1.13.1.2 Family Interference with Work (FIW)

In this study, the researcher has defined family interference with work (FIW) as the incompatible roles of home responsibilities that affect work responsibilities. The unaccomplished home responsibilities start interferes with employees' work roles.



1.13.2 Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA)

In this study, flexible working arrangement (FWA) is defined as the employees' job autonomy, whether working on remote, flexible working hours or compressed work-week mutually agreed by both organizations and the employees.

1.13.3 Job Quality Performance (JQP)

In this study, the researcher has defined job quality employee performance (JQP) based on employees' basic task performance such as quantity, quality and efficiency. The element of quantity, quantity and efficiency was defined as an outcome result of performance.



1.13.4 Task Performance (TP)

The researcher has characterized that Task Performance (TP) mainly represented employees' core job responsibilities, such as job knowledge, accuracy, ability, judgement and creativity. In this study, the element of Task Performance (TP) is defined as work behaviours that lied in individual employees to be measured on periodically basis.

1.13.5 Supervisor Support

In this study, the researcher has defined supervisor support as the supervisor's received support that may help the employees alleviate the burdening effect in managing work and home responsibilities.

1.14 Significance of the Study

The developed conceptual framework in the present study was expected to contribute to the alternative resolution of the prevalence of work-family conflict (WFC) and employee performance-related issues that were affected the most employees with children and dual-career couples' employees. It also purposely acquires the moderation relationship overview of supervisor support between FWA, WIF, FIW towards, JQP and TP. FWA and SS were deemed to be the relevant mechanism that may help the employees with their work-related issues and FWA utilization would facilitate the employees in managing their home responsibilities.

1.15 Chapter Summary

In Malaysia, employers and organizations' competitive awareness has been seen as indispensable in gaining a positive climate to redesign the conducive working environment and work practice. It was triggered that employees were tentatively seeking out the resolution to help them accommodate the demands and expectations of their role of work and home to be balanced. When the organization was expecting competitive businesses, it demands the greater achievement of the employee's work performance.