

Job Characteristics as Antecedents of Intention to Stay and Mediating Effects of Work Family Facilitation and Family Satisfaction among Single Mothers in Malaysia

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Abstract

Employee turnover is crucial to be investigated since it diminishes organization effectiveness and impedes the capacity to meet its goals. This study was conducted to test the mediating effects of work-family facilitation and family satisfaction on the relationship between job characteristics, and intention to stay among 240 single mother employees in Malaysia. Data was collected using self-administered research questionnaire on simple randomized respondents whereby six out of 24 single mother associations were selected to obtain research samples. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to describe the respondents and Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the relationships among variables. Structural Equation Modeling using AMOS version 16.0 was utilized for model testing and to check the presence of mediation effects in the relationships between independent and dependent variables. The Sobel's z-test was used to test whether the mediators carry the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The findings indicated that single mothers have moderate levels of job characteristics in their lives, so as their levels of work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay. There were positive and negative significant relationships among variables. The results also established the presence of mediation effects between the independent and dependent variables. Organizations may utilize work-family facilitation and family satisfaction as mechanisms to promote longer retention among employees.

Keywords: Intention to stay, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction, job demand, job autonomy, single mother, Malaysia.

Research Background

Introduction

Employee turnover is proven to have a general negative impact on organizational effectiveness (Price & Mueller, 1986) and reduces profitability (Johnson, 1981). These negative impacts include extensive financial costs, disruption of coworkers, additional work-unit stress, reduce in quality of work-unit and diminish of ability to adapt to uncertain environments. Firth, Mellor, Moore and Loquet (2004) define employee turnover as the individual who may be thinking about quitting a job. The theory of reasoned action suggested that intention was a psychological precursor to the actual behavior act (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). This means that an individual's intention to perform or not to perform a behavioral act is the immediate determinant of action. Based on this notion an individual who nurtures the thought of quitting his present profession is more likely to do so if the right condition exists, or if the adverse condition that warranted the thought of intent persists (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

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Intention to stay, however is simply the converse of the turnover intention (Kim, Price, Mueller & Watson, 1996). According to Mobley (1982); Steers and Mowday (1981); Black and Stevens (1989) intention to stay is significantly negatively correlated with turnover. Since intention to stay is referred to as employees' willingness to stay with an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993), it consistently demonstrates a stronger relationship with turnover than did other turnover precursors (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Igharia & Greenhaus, 1992). Therefore although the construct of the study was turnover intention, but the focus of investigation was from the perspective of intention to stay.

This study using intention to stay as the focal point to be researched due to several reasons: The use of archival data did not always specify why employees left their employers. Records that included only technical information about employees' exit activity did not sufficiently discriminate between voluntary and involuntary terminations (Thompson & Terpening, 1983). If termination records were unclear, the results of studies based on these records also became unclear because involuntary turnover activity was not dependent upon employer affective determinations in the same way as voluntary turnover. Further, the study using intent to stay could be completed earlier since the employees are still around to give appropriate information about their intention, therefore yielded more immediate actionable results than research that waited for employees to terminate their employment (Thompson & Terpening, 1983). As intention to stay is accepted as the single best predictor of turnover, the effort has to be made to understand the relationship between this concept to other variables (Igharia & Greenhaus, 1992).

The problem statement

Employee turnover hinders the organization function to meet its goals and results in negative economic and social impact. Economic impact could be seen from the cost involved for training and orientation of new employees whereas social impact from destabilization of human resource supply that led to destabilization of work-client relationship (Montague, 2004). Hiring and training being a compulsory agenda after the employees' resignation, indicated that turnover was adversely correlated to performance, thus disrupting the process to meet organizational goals in both the public and private sectors (Meier & Hicklin, 2008). This study was meant to investigate what is the level of turnover intention among single mother employees in Malaysia? Is there any relationships between independent (job autonomy), mediation (work-family facilitation and family satisfaction) and dependent (intention to stay) variables? The study was also meant to test whether work-family facilitation and family satisfaction function as mediating effects on the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay?

In this country there were about 70 percent mothers with children below 12 years of age working full-time (Yunos & Talib, 2009). The presence of single mothers creates a new life region that demands attention from their contemporary society. Although working women are caught in between work and family demands, not much they could do when they are left alone to cater for themselves and at the same time to raise-up several dependents, other than jumping into the job market. Sohlberg (2006) expressed that within a limitation of capability and resources, single mothers still tended to be "triple-workers-father-children-paid work". When the capability and resources used to meet these demands were not mutually exclusive, women would be caught in domain conflict. Being a working single mother not only conflicted a woman to a burden of caring for dependents with the burden that coming from work (Frone, 2003) but also has thrown a woman to the risk that leads to the numerous dysfunctional outcomes at both domain. Among the negative outcomes in the work domain were tardiness, poor role performance, low occupational wellbeing, job dissatisfaction, burnout, high intention to quit and high turnover (Bruck, Allen & Spector, 2002; Carlson & Kacmar, 2000).

Research framework

Figure 1 depicts the variables tested in the study. The independent variable consists of job characteristics which include job demands and job autonomy. It is predicted that job characteristics significantly predicted intention to stay. Work-family facilitation and family satisfaction; served as mediator variables between antecedent factors and intention to stay. It measured the single mother employee's level of facilitation and satisfaction related to multiple role demands and resource scarcity in dealing with the work and life responsibilities. It is predicted that facilitation and family satisfaction are good mediating variables for the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The dependent variable in this study is intention to stay.

Intention to stay measures the extent to which single mothers' intent to remain working with their organization in response to job characteristics with the influence of mediating effects of work-family facilitation and family satisfaction. The dependent variable is expected to be the outcome of the interrelationships between independent variables and mediating variables of the study.

Insert Figure (1) about here

Theoretical Background

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

Conceptual Overview and Definition of Intention to Stay

Intention to stay mirrors the employee's level of commitment to his organization and the willingness to remain employed (Hewitt, 2004). It refers to as the propensity to leave, intent to quit, intent to stay, behavioral commitment and attachment (Halaby, 1986; Mueller et al., 1999). Several studies have revealed that this concept whether it was called 'intent to stay' or 'propensity to leave', it was clearly the most important determinant of turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Igharia & Greenhaus, 1992). According to Steel and Ovalle (1984), Carsten and Spector (1987) and Iverson (1996) intention to stay had a strong negative relationship with turnover (-.50, -.47, -.57 respectively). Dalessio, Silverman and Shuck (1986) have emphasized that more concern should be given on intention to stay rather than turnover, as whenever an employee exit, an organization has to incur the cost of recruiting and maintaining another employee. Social exchange theory as foundation of intention to stay Social Exchange Theory (SET) developed by Thibaut and Kelley (1959), had explained the reasons why individuals had personal relationships with others (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). The theory also specified the appropriate time when the relationships started and ended. Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) theory also emphasized on personal relationships, its costs and benefits.

What rewards did people receive from a given relationship, and what costs did they pay to obtain those rewards? Social Exchange Theory posited that good deeds should be reciprocated (Blau, 1964). Mossholder, Settoon and Henagan (2005) had pointed to Social Exchange Theory which proposed that individuals who felt that they had received benefits from others would later feel an obligation and then compensate through effort and loyalty. Effort and loyalty usually could be seen from a sheer commitment to their job and strong intention to remain with the present employer. Employee's loyalty clearly fit within the framework of SET since it focused on citizenship behaviour whereby employees stop looking for a new job elsewhere since they felt obligated to stay and repay the organization for support they had received (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). SET provides an avenue of transaction between sense of obligation that had led to the sense of feeling responsibility in compensating what had been given by another party which in turn would motivate positive psychological responses as suggested by several researchers (e.g. Bunderson, 2001; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). Through this positive psychological responses employees would tend to be more committed and loyal to the organization and stop looking for a job elsewhere (Bunderson, 2001; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000).

Conceptual overview and definition of work-family facilitation

Previous research on work-family arrangement mostly focused on the outcomes, or the influence of an individual's involvement in one domain either family or work which led to the change in performance and quality of life in the other domain (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) conceptualized facilitation as the extent to which experience in one life sphere improved the quality of life in the other. For the purpose of the present study, work-family facilitation is defined as occurring when, by virtue of participation in one role (work), one's performance or functioning in another role (family) is enhanced. The study imposed theoretical attention on the topic of facilitation that brought to an explicit definition of the construct.

Theoretical foundation of facilitation

In this study, three complementary frameworks were integrated to build a theoretical foundation for facilitation called the Resource-Gain-Development (RGD) perspective proposed by Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, (2007).

(a) Positive Organizational Scholarship

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

(b) Ecological Systems Theory

Ecological systems theory (EST) by Bronfenbrenner (1979), an emerging theory within the work-family literature (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Voydanoff, 2001) which emphasized that people had natural desire and the capacity for growth and development, serves as a framework for work-family experiences (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Voydanoff, 2001) and provides a clear direction for informing facilitation. First, ecological theory complemented the function of POS in explaining the factors leading to the occurrence of facilitation. EST argues that individuals had the natural potential toward higher levels of functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Ecological systems theory is also instructive for explaining how facilitation occurred and broadly, likely antecedents. According to EST, individual development resulted through ongoing interactions between the individual and his/her environment (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). Therefore EST suggested that resources within an individual's environment were the primary sources of facilitation since they bridged the interactions between individuals and their work and life environment (Carlson et al., 2007).

(c) Conservation of Resources Theory

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by Hobfoll (1989) which also had been applied to the work-family interface provided a heuristic approach in identifying the specific type of resources for the facilitation of the positive interaction between work and family domain. Hobfoll (2001) provided a basis for identifying the specific type of resources. Resources are valued articles people seek to acquire and manage, and properties of the environment that can be utilized for a certain purpose such as personal characteristics, objects, conditions, energies, and support that serve as a means for the attainment of these objects (Hobfoll, 1989). Personal characteristics are traits or skills that resulted from one's orientation to the world such as self-efficacy and internal locus of control. Objects are valued because of their physical nature or the status obtained through their ownership such as one's car, home, clothes or other material goods. Energy resources, such as time, money, knowledge, and skills are those that aid in the acquisition of other resources such as time for work or family and opportunities for advancement. Conditions are resources that are sought after such as marriage, divorce, job characteristics, or seniority. Finally, support such as loyalty or intimacy preserves other types of resources (Carlson et al., 2007).

(d) The Resource-Gain-Development Perspective

Positive Organizational Scholarship (Cameron et al., 2003), Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), and Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1998) were a cluster of theories that laid the foundation for understanding work-family facilitation. Briefly, POS and EST consisted of theoretical notions that addressed why facilitation might occur. The RGD perspective posited that antecedents of facilitation consisted of personal characteristics and environmental resources (objects, conditions, energies, and support) that contributed to the development of new skills and perspectives (developmental gains), positive emotion (affective gains), economic, social, or health assets (capital gains), and greater efficiency (efficiency gains) in one system which enhanced functioning of the other systems (Carlson et al., 2007). The greater of any single resource an individual has, the greater the potential for facilitation is; likewise, the greater the overall accumulation of resources, the greater the potential for facilitation.

Relationships between job demand, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay

The focus of the study was to examine the relationships between job demand and work-family facilitation and how this construct related to family satisfaction and intention to remain working among single mother employees in Malaysia. Karasek (1979) conceptualizes that job demands are work stressors emanated from the physical nature of work, such as physical exertion, as well as psychological aspects of the job, like repetitiveness and highly management supervision.

(a) Relationship between job demand and work-family facilitation

Voydanoff (2004a), in two different national surveys, examined the relationship between work demands and work-to-family facilitation. Women with rewarding jobs were protected from the negative mental health caused by troubled relationships with their children. Barnett et al. (1992) found that challenging work was the only job factor that mitigated parental stress. If employed mothers experienced higher reward from challenging work they reported less distress, regardless of their level of disaffection in their relationship with their children. They suggested that perhaps women who enjoyed rewards from challenging work, experienced greater self-esteem and confidence which enabled them to cope with stressors in their relationships with their children (Barnett et al., 1992). Based on theory and evidence the following hypothesis was tested.

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive linear relationship between job demand and facilitation.

(b) Relationship between job demand and family satisfaction

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

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive linear relationship between job demand and family satisfaction.

(c) Relationship between job demand and intention to stay

Karasek's (1979), suggested that high job demand-high decision latitude could lead to the development of new behavior both on and off the job (Karasek, 1979). This new behavior pattern will link to job satisfaction, high self esteem and less intention to quit the job (Karasek, 1979). Literature has reported the correlation between work demands and work role quality and work-family facilitation. For example, research has shown that on days of high work stress, individuals were more prone to experience parent-child conflict (Crouter & Bumpus, 2001), and more family conflict (Crouter et al., 1989). Voydanoff (2004) in her study discovered that job demand might enhance an employee's family satisfaction. This satisfaction serve as internal motivation for employees to work hard and at the same time be more committed with their job and high loyalty to organization (Butler, Viet, Narrigon & Taylor, 2005). Therefore this study suggests that:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive linear relationship between job demand and intention to stay.

Relationships between job autonomy, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay

Job autonomy is conceptualized as personal freedom to decide where, when, and how one does one's job (Karasek, 1979). Karasek's (1979) job demands-control model provided the explanation of how control influenced work outcomes. Guest (2001) found that those who reported more scope for direct participation in determining work activities and work autonomy reported less conflict. Clark (2000), tested a sample of American workers, also found that autonomy over the content of work was associated with better work-life balance.

(a) Relationship between job autonomy and work-family facilitation

In a study by Voydanoff (2004b) job autonomy and work pride showed strong positive associations with work-to-family facilitation. The study suggested that psychological rewards such as pride and respect may increase self-esteem and gratification which may then be transmitted to the family through a positive psychological spillover process contributing to work-to-family facilitation. The Karasek's (1979) model may be used to predict how autonomy might be related to positive spillover.

Since high-demand, low-control jobs lead to less strain, this will be a good evidence to argue that having control enables one to manage demands and motivates to higher levels of vitality. Since vitality energy might transfer to another life domain, this vitality also might spillover into the home domain or vice-versa (Clark, 2001). Therefore the following hypothesis was tested.

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive linear relationship between job autonomy and facilitation.

(b) Relationship between job autonomy and family satisfaction

In a similar vein, Voydanoff (2004) examined the effects of resources (e.g., autonomy and learning opportunities) and psychological rewards (respect and meaningful work) on positive spillover. She found that job autonomy, respect, and meaningful work were each related to work-to-family positive spillover. In another research, Clark (2001), found that operational flexibility (job autonomy) was significantly related to less role conflict and higher family satisfaction. Temporal flexibility (also a component of job autonomy) was related to lower levels of role conflict. Based on Karasek's job-demand job-control model and past research on work-family and autonomy, it could be predicted that job autonomy would be positively related to family satisfaction. Thus, based on available literature and evidence, the following prediction was made:

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive linear relationship between job autonomy and family satisfaction.

(c) Relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay

Voydanoff (2004) in her study discovered that job autonomy might enhance an employee's job satisfaction. This satisfaction motivates employees to work hard and at the same time be more committed with and high loyalty to organization (Butler, Viet, Narrigon & Taylor, 2005). The finding suggested that certain job characteristics might increase an employee's family satisfaction and boost up organizational commitment and loyalty among employees (Butler et al., 2005). Therefore this study suggests that:

Hypothesis 6: There is a positive linear relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay.

Mediation effects of work-family facilitation on the relationship between job demand and intention to stay

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

Hypothesis 7: Facilitation mediates the relationship between job demand and intention to stay.

Mediation effects of work-family facilitation on the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay

Job autonomy refers to the degree to which the employee is granted freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Job autonomy has often been linked with motivation that directs employees to the increase in productivity (Barker, 1993; Langfred, 2000). Like linkages between work and family that occur at the individual-level, facilitation is posited to be a bidirectional process such that engagement in work could contribute to family growth (work-to-family facilitation) and engagement in family could contribute to workplace growth (family-to-work facilitation). Therefore this study suggests that:

Hypothesis 8: Facilitation mediates the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay.

Mediation effects of family satisfaction on the relationship between job demand and intention to stay

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

Hypothesis 9: Family satisfaction mediates the relationship between job demand and intention to stay.

Mediation effects of family satisfaction on the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay

Research had shown that, facilitation positively affected family life, family satisfaction and family effort (Hanson et al., 2006). Research finding indicated that men and women who experienced more work-family facilitation tend to be more satisfied with their family role (Brockwood, 2002). Stephens and Franks (1995), found that positive spillover from the caregiver role to the wife role was significantly related to family satisfaction. Certain job characteristics (i.e. job autonomy) might enhance an employee's family satisfaction. Family satisfaction will motivate employees to work harder and at the same time employees become more committed since they believed they are trusted. Reciprocally employees become more committed and regard themselves as part of the organization and will result in high loyalty to organization (Butler et al., 2005). The Karasek's (1979) model may be used to predict how autonomy might be related to positive spillover and loyalty. Based on Karasek's job-demand job-control model (1979) and past research on work-family and autonomy, it could be predicted that job autonomy would be positively related to work-family facilitation and family satisfaction and employees' loyalty. Thus, based on available literature and evidence, the following prediction was made:

Hypothesis 10: Family satisfaction mediates the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay.

Materials and Methods

Sample and procedure

The subjects of the study were single mother employees employed either by government or private sectors. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2000), single mothers was defined as (1) woman as the head of household; (2) widow or separated/divorced wife; and (3) unmarried woman that possess a child/children. In this study single mother was operationalized as a woman who was divorced and separated or a woman whom her husband had passed away. The selection process went through simple random sampling by selecting single mothers from all the six associations meeting the following criteria: currently employed, having at least one child and aged 45 years and below, and willing to participate in the research.

Measurement

(a) Job demand

Job demand was measured by using the Job Content Questionnaire developed by Karasek, Brisson, Kawakami, Houtman, Bongers and Amick (1998). Job demands was measured using 12 items (e.g., My job requires working very hard). All of the items comprising the scales reported below were measured using a 7-point response scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). A seven response option was included for respondents to indicate their agreeableness to each statement. For the current study the reliability coefficient value is 0.70.

(b) Job autonomy

Job autonomy was assessed by using the Job Content Questionnaire developed by Karasek et al. (1998). Job autonomy was measured using 8 items (e.g., I have a lot of say about what happens on my job). All of the items comprising the scales were measured using a 7-point response scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). A seven response option was included for respondents to indicate their agreeableness to each statement. For the current study the reliability coefficient value is 0.83.

(c) Work-family facilitation

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

(d) Family satisfaction

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

(e) Intention to stay

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

Statistical analysis**In this study four types of statistical analyses were utilized:**

(i) SPSS for Windows, a system that accesses and analyzes data (Norusis, 1977) to calculate many of the descriptive statistics: mean, standard deviations, percentage, range, reliability coefficients and zero order correlations. Descriptive analysis was also used to report demographic data and to check the level of all independent, mediator and dependent variables. (ii) Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation, was used to determine the linear relationships between two quantitative variables between job characteristics, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay.

(iii) Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or path analysis, were utilized to examine the goodness of fit of the proposed model, and subsequently to estimate the structural coefficients pertaining to the hypothesized path model. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was also used to verify the hypothesized relationships between job autonomy, work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intent to stay in the organization. This technique is allowed for the estimation of causal relations among variables as well as mediating effects (Kline, 2005) of direct and indirect effects of mediator variables in the relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable.

(iv) The Sobel’s z-test conducted to test equation of z-value to examine whether the mediators carried the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

Results

The respondents’ age ranged from 29 to 45 years ($M = 39.6$, $SD = 3.63$). About half of the total respondents (47%) aged between 30 to 40 years old and majority of the respondents (89.5%) were below 44. The study also revealed that 42.9% of the respondents had working experience of ten years and below, 35.4% of the total respondents had experience between 11 to 14 years and about 20% of the respondents (19.6%) had work experience between 15 to 20 years ($M = 12.26$, $SD = 4.38$) (Table 1). The income received by the respondents ranged from RM700 – RM4000 ($M = RM1682.17$, $SD = RM692.72$). Most respondents (60.0%) earned between RM1001 to RM2000, with a very small number (5.4%) of respondents took the largest amount of income of between RM3001 to RM4000 a month.

Single mothers who were qualified to participate in the study must have at least one child. From the study, there were about 60.0% of the respondents had one and two children and about 18.0% had more than four children ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.34$). The mean score for variables on a seven-point scale was as follow: Job demand 4.06, ($SD = 0.63$), Job autonomy 3.64 ($SD = 0.94$), work-family facilitation 4.55 ($SD = 0.99$), family satisfaction 4.92 ($SD = 0.90$) and intention to stay 4.40 ($SD = 0.94$) (Table 2).

Insert table (1) about here

Insert table (2) about here

Correlation Analyses

Correlation analyses results revealed that job demand was positively related to work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay ($r = 0.177$ to 0.332). The findings from data analysis as presented in Table 2 shows that as the level of job demand of single mothers increased, their level of facilitation increased ($r = 0.332$, $p = 0.001$). The result also shows that as the level of job demand of single mothers increased, their level of family satisfaction ($r = 0.177$, $p = 0.001$), and intention to stay ($r = 0.082$, $p = 0.101$) increased. On the other hand the correlation results revealed that job autonomy was inversely related to work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay ($r = -0.108$ to $r = -0.276$). The findings from data analysis as presented in Table 2 shows that as the level of job autonomy of single mothers increased, their level of facilitation decreased ($r = -0.108$, $p = 0.047$). The result also shows that as the level of job autonomy of single mothers increased, their level of family satisfaction ($r = -0.171$, $p = 0.004$), and intention to stay ($r = -0.276$, $p = 0.001$) decreased.

Mediation Analyses

Mediation analysis was conducted to test the effect of work-family facilitation and family satisfaction as mediators in the relationship between job demand, job autonomy and intention to stay.

(a) Job demand and intention to stay via work-family facilitation

Table 3 shows that the direct effect of job demand [Demand] on intention to stay [Stay] was significant ($pc = 0.047$, $p < 0.05$) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of job demand [Demand] on intention to stay [Stay] via work-family facilitation [Facilitation] was estimated by the product of the effect of job demand [Demand] on work-family facilitation [Facilitation] and the effect of the work-family facilitation [Facilitation] on intention to stay [Stay] which was $(0.156^{**})(0.186^{**}) = 0.029^{**}$. The indirect effect (0.029^{**}) was weaker than the direct effect (0.047). This means that indirect effect of job demand [Demand] on intention to stay [Stay] was partially mediated by work-family facilitation [Facilitation]. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 3.319$; $p < .001$). In other words, work-family facilitation was partially mediated the relationship between job demand and intention to stay. The result indicated that job demand could increase the work-family facilitation of single mothers which in turn would increase intention to stay with organization. Job demand explained 16% of the variance in work-family facilitation and 5% of the variance in intention to stay.

(b) Job demands and intention to stay via family satisfaction

Table 3 shows that the direct effect of job demand [Demand] on intention to stay [Stay] was significant ($pc = 0.045$, $p < 0.05$) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of job demand [Demand] on intention to stay [Stay] via family satisfaction [Family] was estimated by the product of the effect of job demand [Demand] on family satisfaction [Family] and the effect of the family satisfaction [Family] on intention to stay [Stay] which was $(0.060^{**})(0.482^{**}) = 0.029^{**}$. The indirect effect (0.029^{**}) was weaker than the direct effect (0.045^{*}). This means that indirect effect of job demand [Demand] on intention to stay [Stay] was partially mediated by family satisfaction [Family]. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 1.225$; $p < .001$). In other words, family satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between job demand and intention to stay. The result indicated that job demand could increase the family satisfaction of single mothers which would in turn increase intention to stay with organization. Job demand explained 16% of the variance in family satisfaction and 5% of the variance in intention to stay.

(c) Job autonomy and intention to stay via work-family facilitation

Table 3 shows that the direct effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on intention to stay [Stay] was significant ($pc = 0.029$, $p < 0.05$) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on intention to stay [Stay] via work-family facilitation [Facilitation] was estimated by the product of the effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on work-family facilitation [Facilitation] and the effect of the work-family facilitation [Facilitation] on intention to stay [Stay] which was $(0.156^{**})(0.186^{**}) = 0.029^{**}$. The indirect effect (0.029^{**}) was the same value of the direct effect (0.029^{*}). This means that indirect effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on intention to stay [Stay] was partially mediated by work-family facilitation [Facilitation]. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 3.12$; $p < .001$). The result indicated that work-family facilitation was partially mediated the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay. This means that job autonomy could increase the work-family facilitation of single mothers which in turn would increase intention to stay with organization. Job autonomy explained 16% of the variance in work-family facilitation and 0% of the variance in intention to stay.

(d) Job autonomy and intention to stay via family satisfaction

Table 3 shows that the direct effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on intention to stay [Stay] was significant ($pc = 0.029$, $p < 0.05$) the indirect effects were estimated by products of direct effects. Thus, the indirect effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on intention to stay [Stay] via family satisfaction [Family] was estimated by the product of the effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on family satisfaction [Family] and the effect of the family satisfaction [Family] on intention to stay [Stay] which was $(0.066^{**})(0.482^{**}) = 0.032^{**}$. The indirect effect (0.032^{**}) was stronger than the direct effect (0.029^{*}). This means that indirect effect of job autonomy [Autonomy] on intention to stay [Stay] was fully mediated by family satisfaction [Family]. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was no different from zero ($z = \text{infinity}$; $p < .001$). This means that family satisfaction was fully mediated the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay. Job autonomy factor could increase the family satisfaction of single mothers which would in turn increase intention to stay with organization. Job autonomy neither explains the variance in family facilitation nor the variance in intention to stay.

Insert table (3) about here

Discussion**Correlation Analysis**

The correlation coefficients among job demand, job autonomy and work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay derived from the data analyses indicated that there were linear relationships among variables. The correlation coefficient among variables was varies from 0.082 to 0.340 which indicated that the relationships among variables were considered small to moderately small.

Mediation Analysis

Job demand indicated indirect effect of 0.047 stronger than its direct effect of 0.029. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 3.319$; $p < .001$). In other words, work family facilitation partially mediated the relationship between job demand and intention to stay. The analysis of mediation effect of job demand to intention to stay through family satisfaction indicated indirect effect of 0.045 stronger than its direct effect of 0.029. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 1.225$; $p < .001$). This indicates family satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between job demand and intention to stay. Mediation analysis on job autonomy and intention to stay through work family facilitation indicated indirect effect and direct effect of 0.029. The Sobel's z-test indicated that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was significantly different from zero ($z = 3.12$; $p < .001$). This means work-family facilitation was partially mediated the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay. Further job autonomy indicated indirect effect of 0.032 stronger than its direct effect of 0.029 on the relationship to intention to stay through family satisfaction. The Sobel's z-test showed that the indirect effect of the independent value on the dependent value via the mediator was no different from zero ($z = \text{infinity}$; $p < 0.001$). This evidence indicates that there was full/complete mediation effect of family satisfaction in the relationship between job autonomy and intention to stay.

Implication of the study

This study has several implications on intention to stay as the research outcome from interaction between job demand, job autonomy and its mediating variables. This study has established a kind of relationships between work-family facilitation and family satisfaction and how these variables help promote organizational commitment among employees. Besides, this study has built a new structure of relationships between job demand, job autonomy to work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay among employees. First, from the field of human resource development (HRD) this study has established an additional insight about the relationships between work-family facilitation, family satisfaction and intention to stay among employees in Malaysia. This study concerted several theories and assumptions including Social Exchange Theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) (Cameron et al., 2003); Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979); Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989) in a single model. Second, two antecedent variables were chosen on the basis of sampling across job characteristics in order to broaden perspective about its relationships to work-family facilitation and family satisfaction on intention to stay. By testing the importance of job characteristic to an individual employee, new insights emerged regarding the work-family arrangement in general and work-family facilitation specifically. Third, this study utilized the constructs of work-family facilitation and family satisfaction as mediating variables between job demand, job autonomy and intention to stay; the factor that had not been well explored in education. These mediating constructs have proven to have influence on the employees' decision to remain working with the present employers.

Conclusion

The primary focus of this research is to examine the level of intention to stay and its independent variable employed in the study with the intervention of mediating variables. Moving towards answering all the research questions and hypotheses, the study has been designed to examine the relationships of its exogenous and endogenous variables. Work-family facilitation was examined as the first mediating variable and how this mediating variable influenced single mothers' job demand and job autonomy to make decision on their intention to remain working with organization. Family satisfaction follows the same path and has been examined its function as another mediating variable and how this mediating variable have influence single mothers' job demand and job autonomy to make decision to remain working. The first and second mediators bridged the chain of correlation between the antecedent variables to the research outcome: intention to stay that lastly results in loyalty and cohesion among employees towards their organizations. The findings suggest the importance of the job characteristic through job demand and job autonomy and provide actionable elements to alter to increase facilitation and satisfaction between work and family. Understanding work-family facilitation provides value to family domain and it is important not only for family members and managers but also for expanding our understanding of the conceptual phenomenon of work-family facilitation.

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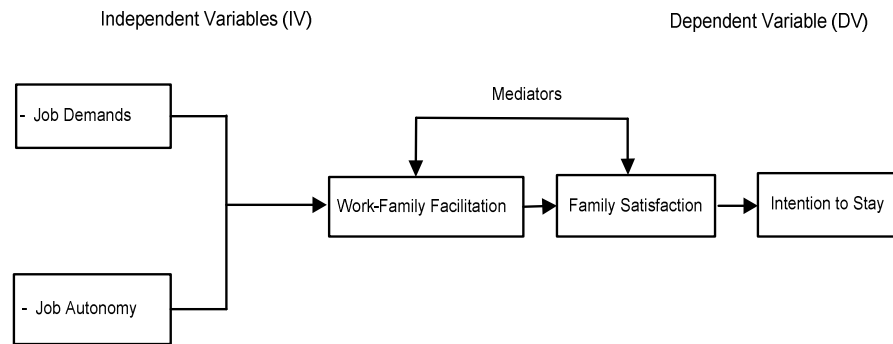


Figure 1: Research Framework

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	M	SD	Frequency n=240	Percentage
Age	39.6	3.63		
Below 30 years old			1	0.4
30 – 35 years old			15	6.2
36 – 39 years old			98	40.8
40 – 45 years old			126	52.5
Working Experience	12.26	4.38		
Below 5 years			14	5.8
5 – 10 years			89	37.1
11–14 years			85	35.4
15– 20 years			47	19.6
21– 24 years			4	1.7
25 years and above			1	0.4
Income Per-Month	1682.17	692.72		
RM 1000 and below			42	17.5
RM 1001 – RM 2000			144	60.0
RM 2001 – RM 3000			41	17.1
RM 3001 – RM 4000			13	5.4
Number of Children	2.48	1.34		
1			50	20.8
2			91	37.9
3			55	22.9
4			9	12.1
5 and above			15	6.3
Total			240	100.0

Table 2: Means, standard deviations, reliability and intercorrelations of the variables (n = 240)

Variable	M	SD	Demand	Auto	WFF	FSat	ITS
Demand Pearson Correlation	4.06	0.63	0.70				
Sig.value							
Auto Pearson Correlation	3.64	0.94	0.340**	0.83			
Sig.value			.000				
WFF Pearson Correlation	4.55	0.99	0.332**	-0.108	0.84		
Sig.value			.000	.047			
FSat Pearson Correlation	4.92	0.90	0.177**	-0.171**	0.550**	0.85	
Sig.value			.003	.004	.000		
ITS Pearson Correlation	4.40	0.94	0.082	-0.276**	0.443**	0.369**	0.74
Sig.value			.101	.000	.000	.000	

Note: N = 240. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

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

Cronbach Alpha reliabilities are shown in bold. M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Demand = Job Demand
Auto = Job autonomy, WFF = Work-Family Facilitation, F Sat = Family Satisfaction, ITS = Intention to Stay.

Table 3: Direct and indirect effects of the relationship between job characteristics and intention to stay

Dimension of Job Characteristics	Direct Effect	Indirect effect via work-family facilitation	Sobel Z-test	Result of mediation
Job Demand	0.047	0.029	3.319	Partial
Job Autonomy	0.029	0.029	3.12	partial
		via family satisfaction		
Job Demand	0.045	0.029	1.225	Partial
Job Autonomy	0.029	0.032	infinity	full