

# The Relationship of Work-Life Conflict and Organizational Voice in Higher Education Sector: A Case Study in Turkey

Erhan ATAY\*, Serkan BAYRAKTAROGLU\*\*, Gulfem TANRIVERDI\*\*\*

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationships between work-life conflict (WLB) and organizational voice in the higher education sector. We surveyed a population of academicians and administrative staff of two private universities in Istanbul, Turkey. We found that there is a positive relationship between life-work conflict and work-life conflict. The work-life conflict also affects organizational voice negatively. Results reveal that when employees have conflict in their work and life affairs, they prefer to be silent rather than speak up openly about organizational policies. This paper explores the importance of the work-life conflict in regards to remaining silent as a means of creating productive workplaces. This study is an attempt to contribute to the arguments on the situation about how people can remain silent or speak up in the workplace when they are not able to achieve balance work and living domains. This paper investigates the relationship between work-life conflict and organizational voice as perceived by the employees from the higher education sector.*

**Keywords:** Work-life balance; work-life conflict; organizational voice, silence, Turkey.

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\* Senior Lecturer Monash University Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia E-mail: [erhan.atay@monash.edu](mailto:erhan.atay@monash.edu)

\*\* Independent Researcher, Sakarya, Turkey. E-mail: [sbayraktaroglu@hotmail.com](mailto:sbayraktaroglu@hotmail.com)

\*\*\* Ph. D. Candidate, Gazi University, Ankara E-mail: [gulfemtz@gmail.com](mailto:gulfemtz@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Both family and work-life face several challenges, including an increase in competition, advances in technology and knowledge, as well as an increase in the participation rate of both men and women in the work-life (Clark, 2000). Work-life conflict as a research framework has been discovered by the western world (Sirgy & Lee, 2018). However, it is significant to analyze the work-life conflict issues from the developing countries' perspective (Munn & Chaudhuri, 2016). Academic organizations are more intense and busy environments with heavy workloads, and irregular work shifts, as academics are also considered as workaholics (Selvanathan et al., 2019). When they fail to maintain the work-life balance, especially with policies of the school management, they feel irritated, dissatisfied, and one of the outcomes may be keeping silent or raising their voices. This issue is directly related to the wellbeing and satisfaction of the academics (Bayraktaroglu et al., 2019).

The modern life makes the situation harder for the employees to achieve work-life balance as a result of the pressure put on the employees by the work system (Mellner, Aronsson, & Kecklund, 2014). Allocating more time for a job, an individual lacks energy and time in their family life as creating work-life conflict (Wu et al., 2013). Universities are essential actors in the technological, economic, social development of the nations. One of the driving pillars of knowledge creation is cooperation and communication. Universities need to be pluralistic organizations that value differences among employees and are open to different perspectives. Academicians need to work in a free atmosphere where they can express their opinions, collaborate, and share their experiences and outputs with other researchers. It is also a responsibility for the university administration to create such a knowledge-sharing environment to have useful research outputs. Recent studies have concluded that the scene of employees' meeting the organizational expectations with silence may be a sign of the dissatisfaction (Brinsfield et al., 2009); as silence may be a different method of protesting and message to the organizational practices (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003; Akcin et al., 2017). Earlier research also has shown that employees must believe that expressing their opinions will have adverse effects on them (Withy & Cooper, 1989). There is a need for HRM practices should be applied to universities as the role of HRM has been changing (Khalifa & Truong, 2010).

Earlier research on work-family conflict indicated several work-related outcomes such as job satisfaction (Perrewe, Hochwarter, & Kiewitz, 1999), intention to quit (Shaffer et al. 2001), work-related strain (Netemeyer et al., 1996) and organizational citizenship behavior (Netemeyer et al., 2005). We need more evidence to understand what makes individuals remain silent or speaking up about organizational practices and procedures in different organizational settings (Milliken et. all. 2003). There is no study found in the literature showing whether there is a linkage between WLB and voice and silence. This study is an attempt to contribute to the arguments on the situation about how people can remain silent or speak up

in the workplace when they are not able to achieve balance work and living domains. We are going to investigate the relationship between work-life conflict and organizational voice as perceived by the employees from the higher education sector to see whether there is a positive or negative effect of work-life conflict on the organizational voice that is one of the job-related attitudes.

## **2. Theoretical Basis of Work-Life Conflict**

Some theories have been developed about the relationship and interaction between work and living areas. Two of them are rational perspective theory and compensation theory. According to rational perspective theory, the reason for work-family (life), conflict is fundamentally time pressure. According to the theory, workers demand to compensate for non-satisfaction that is experienced as related to one of the work and living areas (Martin, 1999). Thus, they make an effort to compensate for this dissatisfaction in a living area and focus on other life areas to have satisfaction. At the end of this, the time between work and living areas is unbalanced, and the workers have a conflict problem. Spillover theory states that the favorable or adverse conditions that occur in an area can influence other areas. Therefore, employers, societies, and individuals cannot ignore one sphere without potential peril to the other (Clark, 2000). For instance, if a worker is not happy with his/her job, this unhappiness directly affects his/her family life. The work-family border theory explains how individuals manage and negotiate the work and family areas and the borders between them to achieve the balance. The work and family create different fields which affect each other, and people are border-crossers who perform activities between the work world and the family world (Clark, 2000). The theoretical base of this research has been placed upon the frameworks of spillover theory and work-family border theory.

## **3. Work-Life Conflict**

The terms of work-family conflict and work-life conflict have been used in the literature extensively, applying to the same notion (Quick, 2004; Reiter, 2007). The literature on work-life conflict has received much consideration in academic writing (Lewis et al., 2007; Moore, 2007; Koyuncu et al., 2009; Gregory & Miller, 2009; Chandra, 2012). Many cited factors for this rise in interest include the changing workforce, introduction of technology, shifting gender roles, and efforts by employers to maximize retention and job satisfaction among employees (Fleetwood, 2007; Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). The work-life balance (WLB) is "the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in -an equally satisfied with- his or her work role and family role" (Greenhaus et al., 2003). The work-life balance represents a balance of time, engagement, and satisfaction across multiple roles (Evans et al., 2013). Also, work-family balance (WFB) is an individual's perception of the fit between work and family roles as it also implies that how much a person is similarly involved and glad about its work and family part (Brown and Clark, 2017). It is the proper balance between the employees' working life with the goal that they ought to have the

capacity to concentrate on the organization, daily life, and family time activities. Work-life balance has been depicted as the capacity of people, without concern to their sex, age, or sexual orientation, to discover a time that will enable them to coordinate their work with their non-work objectives, obligation, and activities (Huges & Bozionelos, 2007). Life includes activities outside of work, namely family life and free time (Guest, 2002). In connection with this, some factors have a substantial influence on work-life balance such as the change like the workforce (Shaw et al., 2003), long working hours (Brown et al., 2011), organizational support (Denson et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2013), supervisor support (Anderson et al., 2002), an increase of roles in life and work (Sánchez-Vidal et al., 2012), marital satisfaction (Bradbury et al., 2000) and life satisfaction (Bayraktaroglu et al., 2019). Many studies have found a negative relationship between supervisor support and work-family conflict (Behson, 2005; Greenhaus et al., 2012; Kossek et al., 2011; Thompson & Prottas, 2006). A rationale for the relationship between work-family conflict and supervisor support is that supervisors express support for employees' need to balance the allocation of times for the family and work-life that in turn conserves and produces the perception of more resources of energy and time that can be invested in family roles (Anderson et al., 2002). A work-Life conflict is a form of inter-role conflict whereby the role demands of one domain interfere with meeting the demands of a role in another domain and the time spent for the work purposes significantly contribute to the conflict between work and family roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Gutek et al., 1991). The statement has supported this idea that long working hours make it impossible for an individual to satisfy the needs of his/her family roles (Major et al., 2002). Work-life conflict may be in two different forms as work occupying a greater place and thus creating an obstacle of the family roles and vice versa (Carlson et al., 1985; Gutek et al., 1991). The name of the conflict changes according to the direction of the conflict, from work to life and from life to work. In other words, while you are in one domain, the other domain creates conflict. The work-life conflict and life-work conflict have an enormous influence on many attitudes such as job stress, performance and absenteeism, organizational commitment, job, and life satisfaction, productivity, organizational citizenship, happiness, retention, empowerment, and wellbeing of the individuals in general (Lewis 1997, 2001; Koyuncu et al., 2009; Russell et al., 2009; Haar et al., 2014; Pradhan et al., 2016). Negative work attitudes and effects such as cynicism, work alienation, and workplace deviance have remained neglected in explaining certain organizational phenomena, such as commitment and citizenship (Ucanok Tan, 2016). The work-family balance is also associated with quality of life when there is substantial time, involvement, or satisfaction to distribute across roles (Greenhaus et al., 2003). It is also revealed that the work-life balances of employees have positive and meaningful effects on organizational citizenship behavior and work-life happiness (Erdogan et al., 2012). Also, if the work and life are not balanced, there may be some negative results, including job dissatisfaction, damaging mental and physical health, a decrease in work performance, and unhappiness in private life

(Burke, 1988; Kinman & Jones, 2008). As a dimension of job satisfaction, if the working conditions are improved, this situation may create a positive change in the employees' perceptions of their work (Wu et al., 2013). So, there are many family-friendly managerial applications in order to balance personal and work life of people such as flexible work schedules and family-friendly work settings, compressed workweeks (Fleetwood, 2007), policies and work schedule programs (Brown et al., 2011), and telework (Shaw et al., 2003). Work-life balance literature may be classified into cultural and structural dimensions (Kossek et al., 2009). Cultural dimensions of work-life balance include some concepts such as time work (Beham et al., 2018), managerial support (Thompson et al., 1999), co-worker support (Breugh & Frye 2008), and reducing levels of work intensity (Koyuncu et al., 2009). Structural dimensions of work-life balance include some formal HR policies ensuring that workers have some flexible work practices allowing them more time to spend with their family life. Additionally, gender makes a difference regarding conflict perception levels in different cultural settings (Emslie & Hunt, 2009; Merluzzi, 2017). Globally, work pressure has continuously been rising within academia for nearly the last two decades. There is hugely increase in the stress level, pressure, and organizational change in the universities, which lead to many studies of the relationship of work-life balance with job stress factors among academicians (Bell et al., 2012). There has been a plethora of academic literature on the topics of work-life conflict and work-life balance (Perrigino et al., 2018). However, an academic-employee understanding of WLB is different from corporate WLB practices (Adeniji et al., 2016). It has been a dilemma of balancing work and life domains and hence overcoming overcome work-life conflict for academics (Bell et al., 2012). There are still relatively few studies that have examined theoretical models of work-life conflict and stress concerning academia (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005; Morris, 2019). Academicians have naturally higher occupational stress that resulted in a tendency towards work-life conflict, and this trend has been evident in most of the countries globally (Gillespie et al., 2001; Darabi et al., 2017). Academic jobs are increasingly insecure, more accountable, more entrepreneurial, and less well paid while also losing autonomy, power, and social reputation (Locke et al., 2011). This is a natural outcome of the profession that academicians have different roles in their family or work lives resulting in a conflict inevitably (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005; Ren & Caudle, 2016). The issues relating to maintaining and obtaining a work-life balance have received substantial attention over recent years (Deery, 2008) but less attention, however, has been given to find the reality of work-life balance satisfaction in the higher education sector (Denson et al., 2017; Doherty & Manfredi, 2006). University employees consist of not only academicians but also the administrative staff. The work and life balance issues of the administrative staff at the universities are also crucial for the effectiveness of the organizations. Not surprisingly, the research results show considerable differences between the experiences of administrative, professional, technical, and clerical staff and academics (Doherty, 2006; Vasumathi et al., 2019).

#### 4. Theoretical Basis of Organizational Voice and Silence

The concepts of voice and silence have been considered since the 1980s derived from the justice theory. The justice issues of the organizations included ethics of conduct and the voice in the forms of whistleblowing. Until recently, researchers focused on mechanisms of voice, and in the year 2000s, scholars starting considering focusing on organizational violence in connection with managerial issues and organizational practices creating a “climate of silence.” While silence is considered significant beyond merely the absence of voice, the two constructs are inexorably related, and hence much of the voice literature informs a deeper understanding of silence (Bagheri et al., 2012). The tendency of the individual to speak up or to be silent is the beginning of the spiraling process, which increasingly establishes one opinion as for the dominant one (Noelle-Neumann, 1974). Another theory is self-monitoring theory individuals are different in their sensitivity to contextual cues, and in their capacity to adapt their behavior to the necessities of the condition to create a good impression (Premaux & Bedeian, 2003). Over the last decade, researchers devoted their efforts to understand employee voice behavior (Greenberg & Edwards, 2009). Employee voice has many positive effects on any management practices, and overall, the organization's performance. For instance, voice improves the quality of decision-making, helps to detect and to solve potential complications, enhancing learning as well as developing the workplace safety standards and providing effective teamwork (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Edmondson, 2003). Although it has benefits to both individuals and organizations, many people prefer staying silent (Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison, & Milliken, 2003; Perlow & Williams, 2003). Employees may speak out with the following conditions as intending to solve the problems effectively, or voice behavior is considered to be safe for the individual. However, Kwon and Ferndale (2020) opposed to this idea that individuals might be supported to speak out when the organizational climate is considered as appropriate so that the voice may solve the problems effectively. The main reasons to remain silent are fear and risk, as speaking up requires courage and confidence (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Detert & Edmondson, 2011). The concept of employee silence may be considered as a process whereby individuals intentionally censor some of their opinions as a result of the intention to protect their positions in their workplace (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Nafei, 2016). The concept of silence in this respect may not necessarily be considered as the opposite of voice as intentionally speak out their opinions in their workplace (Rusbult et al., 1988; LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Zhou & George, 2001; Prouska & Psychogios, 2018). Some researchers considered voice as an opportunity to express opinions and explain them to the decision-makers, and some others defined voice as an opportunity to express job dissatisfaction (Liu et al., 2010). The importance of the climate of silence is expressed by Morrison and Milliken (2000) as employees may hide some of their real intentions when they see risk, and also the decisions of the employees depend on the possibility of the future organizational improvements (Pinder & Harlos, 2001).

Morrison further (2011, p. 375) explains the organizational voice as "discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, concerns, or opinions about work-related issues with the intent to improve organizational or unit functioning." Organizational silence can be defined as a mindful, deliberate, and determined behavior, and consecutive experiences of disinterest and rejection result in a state of acquiescent silence (Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Akin & Ulusoy, 2016). Employee silence that is based on selfish motives is called opportunistic silence (Knoll & van Dick, 2013).

## **5. Literature Review of Organizational Voice and Silence**

At first, the silence was considered to be a passive attitude against an unpleasant situation, a passive acceptance of the present situation, or a sign of commitment. Organizational silence occurs when employees intentionally withhold their knowledge and ideas regarding organizational issues. Employees generally have to make this decision whether to share or hide information and opinions. The first alternative is to remain silent in the organization. The silence can be preferred by fear and social pressures or to avoid unwelcome ideas (Morrison & Milliken, 2003). Another reason for remaining silent is the culture of the organization. In addition to the remaining silent, the voice is another alternative to choose for the persons in the organization. Aldrich and Kolarska (1980) defined voice as to express dissatisfaction to superiors, either directly or indirectly, from inside or outside an organization. There are two types of voice as direct and indirect. The direct voice is the direct expression of problems and concerns to authorities within the organizations, while the indirect voice is the expression of problems with applying to an outside authority without formal authority. Researchers emphasized that although organizational voice can be considered an authoritative source of organization and workers can know many concerns and problems related to the organization, they are generally unwilling to speak up (Bowen & Blackman, 2003), and many organizations face this conflict. There are several studies about the relationship between organizational voice and some job and life-related factors such as loyalty (Hoffman & Lowitt, 2008), organizational commitment (Pradhan et al., 2016), job satisfaction (Koyuncu et al., 2013; Settles et al., 2007), productivity (Bryson et al., 2006), cultural norms, and support of other people (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003; Kwon & Farndale, 2020; Yee et al., 2018), and engagement (Koyuncu et al., 2013). Employee silence is exceptionally detrimental to organizations, often causing an "escalating level of dissatisfaction" among employees, "which manifests itself in absenteeism and turnover and perhaps other undesired behaviors" (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003). Interpersonal trust should be ensured for positive outcomes (Bakay, 2015).

## **6. Research Model and Hypotheses**

The work-life conflict affects many attitudes and factors as job stress (Losonczi & Bortolotto, 2009), performance and absenteeism (Siegel et al., 2005), organizational commitment (Pradhan et al., 2016), job and life satisfaction (Erdogan et al., 2012),

quality of life (Greenhaus et al., 2012; Shaw, 2003), productivity (Bryson et al., 2006), organizational citizenship and happiness (Erdogan et al., 2012) and intention for leaving the job (Koyuncu et al., 2012). The organizational voice is likely an attitude that can occur in the work-life and whether there is a relationship between work-life conflict and organizational voice or not has been previously studied. In this research, the research model explaining the effect of work-life conflict on the organizational voice has been examined. Since there is no study found investigating work-life balance and organizational voice, we wanted to find out whether there is any relationship. So, the research question of the study is, “Is there a positive or negative effect of work-life conflict that results from an imbalance between work and life area on organizational voice?” The hypotheses are as follows;

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a positive relationship between family-work conflict and work-family conflict.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a negative effect of work-to-family conflict on organizational voice.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a negative effect of family-to-work conflict on organizational voice.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is a negative effect of work-life conflict on organizational voice.

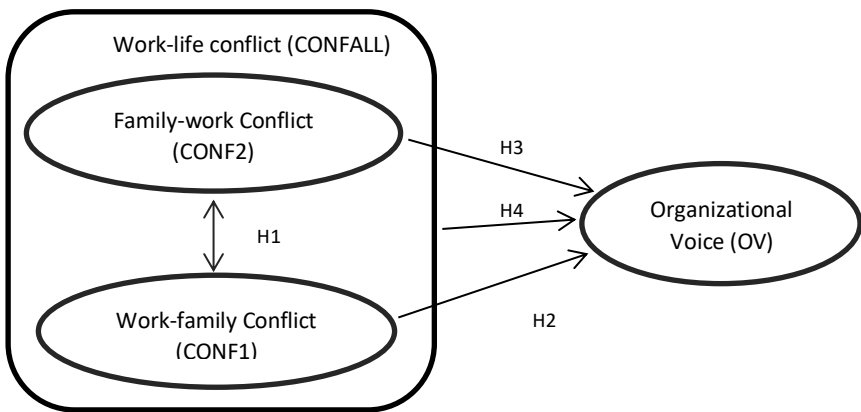


Figure 1. Research Model

## 7. Methodology

### 7.1. Data Collection Process

Academics and administrative staff have included the population of this research in two private universities in Istanbul, Turkey, as it would be more logical to research some OB concepts including an organizational voice in private universities as public universities are centrally-controlled and bound by legislation. In this research,



conformity sampling has been selected as sampling methods as we had a chance to reach a limited number of private universities due to the sensitivity of the topic. In other words, a sample of the research has been chosen from 2 well-known private universities. We used *case study* research to explore the relationship between two concepts as there is no generalization intention. A total of 117 academicians and administrative staff in two private universities have taken part in the survey.

### 7.2. Research Sample

The sample includes 18 research assistants, 19 lecturers, 16 assistant professors, six associate professors, four professors, and 54 administrative staff. 37.6 % of the sample is female, and 62.4 % of the sample is male. The age ranges of the sample are as follows; 10 people take part in the range 25 and below, 64 people take part in the range 26-35, 34 people take part in the range 36-45, 8 people take part in the range 46-55, and 1 person takes part in the range 56 and over (Table 1).

**Table 1: Participant Demographics**

Academic Title	Age		Education	Tenure (years)		Marital Status		Dependent			
<i>Research Assistant</i>	15.4	18-25	8.6	<i>High School</i>	4.2	1	1.7	<i>Married</i>	65	<i>No Kids</i>	42.7
<i>Lecturer</i>	16.2	26-35	54.8	<i>Associate</i>	2.6	1-5	35	<i>Single</i>	35	<i>Have Kids</i>	57.3
<i>Assistant Professor</i>	13.7	36-45	29.0	<i>Under graduate</i>	22.2	6-10	21.4			<i>Dependents</i>	7.7
<i>Associate Professor</i>	5.1	46-55	6.8	<i>Master</i>	32.5	11-14	14.5	<b>Gender</b>			
<i>Professor</i>	3.4	<i>Over 56</i>	0.8	<i>Ph.D.</i>	38.5	<i>Over 15</i>	27.4	<i>Female</i>	37.6		
<i>Administrative Staff</i>	46.2							<i>Male</i>	62.4		

Note: All values are in percentages

According to marital status, it has been stated that 65 % of them are married, and 35 % of them are single. 4.3% of the sample has a high school degree, 2,6% of the sample have an associate degree, 22,2% of the sample have an undergraduate degree (26 people), 32,5% of the sample have a master degree, and 38,5% of the sample have a doctoral degree. According to the work-life experience of the sample; 1.7% of the sample has less than 1-year work-life experience, 35% of the sample have 1 to 5 years work-life experience, 21,4% of the sample have 6 to 10 years work-life experience, 14,5% of the sample have 11 to 14 years work-life experience, and 27,4% of the sample 15 years and over work-life experience. Moreover, 57,3% of the participators have children. 7.7 % of the sample is also obligated to look after people in need of care (elder, disabled, patient, etc.).

### 7.3. Measures

University staff was measured by their engagement frequency in “voice” behaviors (OV) at work with a scale consisting of six items (a=0.874) as proposed by Van Dyne

and LePine (1998). As an example of these items, one of the items was, "I speak up in my workplace with ideas for new projects or changes in the way we do things." The measurements were made by a five-point Likert scale (1=never to 5=very frequently).

Two dimensions of conflicts in family-work and work-family were aspects of work-family, and family-work conflicts were evaluated by the scales of Netemeyer et al. (1996). Respondents indicated their agreement with each item on a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, 5=strongly agree). The scores of the work-family conflict scale were ( $\alpha=0.88$ ), and family-work conflict scale was ( $\alpha=0.89$ ) as some items included: "The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life" and "My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime."

#### **7.4. Turkish Universities as a Context**

The centralized structure of the Higher Education Sector in Turkey has created the problems of the lack of institutional autonomy as well as the lack of academic freedom in higher education institutions (Gok, 2016). As a general explanation of this negative situation may be the heavy influence of politics in most of the areas in Turkey. Although there has been a rapid increase in the number of universities being opened up in every city in Turkey, the problems related to the poor administration and short-vision of the system prevailed, including the lack of accountability in the institutions. More recently, with the legislative changes in the higher education sector; academic freedom has been declining, and one of the examples of this negative trend is the fact that university vice-chancellors are not elected by the academic personnel, and the candidates are selected through a somewhat political system not based on the competency but patriarchal traditions. Furthermore, the powers given to the Higher Education Council (YÖK) by the new legislative arrangements may result in the removal of a countless number of academicians from their universities. The centralized higher education system in Turkey created a political and ideological atmosphere where the political institutions will control even the curriculum development process and all academics' appointments and promotions. There is a tendency towards the politicization and centralization of the authority in the universities' administration imposing the official government (Gok, 2016; Acar & Coskan, 2020).

#### **8. Findings**

Reliability analysis, factor analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis methods have been used. Reliability analysis Cronbach's Alpha value of the work-life conflict scale consisting of 10 items has been measured as 0.899. The reliability coefficients of two dimensions of the work-life conflict have been found as 0,906 for the work-family conflict scale and 0,837 for the family-work conflict scale. Cronbach's Alpha value of the organizational voice scale consisting of 6 items has been measured as 0,883.

### **8.1. Factor analysis**

For the work-life conflict scale, ten items have been grouped under two factors, as measured in the previous studies in the literature. The First five items have been grouped under the first factor; the remaining five items have been grouped under the second factor. Thus, it has been verified that the work-life conflict scale has two factors as work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict, as stated in the research model. For the Organizational voice scale, six items have been grouped under one factor, as measured in the previous studies in the literature. Thus, it has been verified that the organizational voice scale has one factor, as stated in the research model.

### **8.2. Correlation analysis**

In the study, the Pearson correlation analysis method has been used to determine the direction of relationships and the significance level of the relationships between demographic variables, the work-life conflict variable, the two dimensions of work-life conflict, and organizational voice variable (OV).

It has been found that there is a negative relationship between CONF1 and OV ( $r=-0.178$ ), CONF2 and OV ( $r=-0,107$ ), and CONFALL and OV ( $r=-0,165$ ). A positive relationship between CONF1 and CONF2 ( $r=0,569$ ) has been found at the  $p<0.01$  significance level. It has also been found that there is a positive relationship between organizational voice (OV) and age ( $r=0,286$ ) at the  $p<0.01$  level, which means if age increases, organizational voice also increases. There is a negative relationship between OV and marital status ( $r=-0,231$ ) at the  $p<0.05$  level; that means if people are married, they tend to not speak up in the workplace. There is a positive relationship between OV and education level ( $r=0,218$ ) at the  $p<0.05$  level, which means if education level increases, organizational voice also increases. There is a positive relationship between OV and work-life experience ( $r=0,370$ ) at the  $p<0.01$  level that means when people have work-life experience in a long time, they speak up in workplaces more. There is also a positive relationship between OV and having a person in need of care ( $r=0,203$ ) at the  $p<0.05$  level, which means if there is a person in need of care in the house, people prefer to remain silent in the workplaces (Table 2).

### **8.3. Hierarchical Regression analysis with controlling demographic variables (Hierarchical regression)**

The hierarchical regression analysis has been used with controlling demographic variables to measure that whether a work-life conflict affects organizational voice or not and by how many percent work-life conflict variables predict organizational voice variable when demographic variables are controlled. Five demographic variables have been chosen as control variables that are gender, age, education level, work-life experience, and having children (Table 3).

**Table 2. Correlation matrix**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1 Gender	1														
2 Age	.14	1													
3 Marital Status	-.02	-.39**	1												
4 Education	-.06	.29**	-.05	1											
5 Title	-.07	.46**	-.09	.68**	1										
6 Work Life Experience	.19*	.74**	-.46**	.06	.26	1									
7 Organizational Experience	-.04	.11	-.19*	.09	-.00	.17	1								
8 Income Level	.16	.57**	-.38**	.57**	.44**	.46**	.20*	1							
9 Child	-.11	-.50**	.77**	-.08	-.12	-.53**	-.19*	-.44	1						
10 Number of Child	.15	.70**	-.65**	.08	.23*	.69**	.15	.48	-.82	1					
11 Dependent Care	.10	.05	-.19*	.15	.03	.07	-.04	.09	-.07	.07	1				
12 Voice (OV)	.04	.28**	-.23*	.22*	.12	.37**	.05	.29**	-.34**	.34**	.20*	1			
13 Family-Work Conflict (CONF1)	-.30**	-.07	-.05	.12	.07	-.08	.08	.00	.01	-.04	-.15	-.017	1		
14 Work Family Conflict (CONF2)	-.14	-.03	-.16	.06	.00	-.04	.01	-.02	-.14	.03	.04	-.10	.57**	1	
15 Work-Life Conflict (CONFALL)	-.26**	-.06	-.12	.10	.04	-.07	.05	.01	-.06	-.01	-.07	-.16	.91**	.085**	1

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

Predictor	Dependent Variable (Organizational Voice, OV)			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Intercept	3,806**	4,303**	3,806**	4,394**
Control Variables				
Education	0,221*	0,250**	0,221*	0,245**
Work Life Experience	0,358**	0,363**	0,358**	0,352**
Child	-0,215*	-0,227*	-0,215*	-,248*
Gender	-0,152	-0,178	-0,012	-0,064
Age	-0,012	-0,073	-0,152	-0,178
Independent Variables				
Work-Family Conflict (CONF2)		-0,211*		
Work-Life Conflict (CONFALL)				-0,209*

It can be interpreted that organizational voice takes shape depending on work-to-family conflict (CONF1) by 21% with controlling gender, age, education level, work-life experience, and having children variables. In other words, variable work-to-family conflict can predict variable organizational voice by 21% with these control variables. Also, there is a negative and significant effect of variable CONF1 on variable OV with controlling demographic variables ( $\beta=-0,211$ ;  $p=0.017<0.05$ ).

It can be interpreted that organizational voice takes shape with depending on work-life conflict (CONFALL) by 20.9% with controlling gender, age, education level, work-life experience, and having children variables. In other words, variable work-life conflict can predict variable organizational voice by 20.9% with these control variables. There is also a negative and significant effect of variable CONFALL on variable OV with controlling demographic variables ( $\beta=-0,209$ ;  $p=0.018<0.05$ ).

First of all, correlation analysis has been used to determine the direction of relationships and the significance level of the relationships between the variables of the research. According to this analysis, a positive relationship between work to family conflict and family to work conflict has been found, so our first hypothesis H1 (There is a positive relationship between family-work conflict and work-family conflict) has been accepted. This finding supports the spillover theory. Thus, it can be interpreted that when a person has one of these conflicts, this conflict usually triggers another conflict. In other words, work to family conflict and family to work conflict usually trigger each other.

The hierarchical regression analysis has been used with controlling demographic variables to measure whether a work-life conflict affects organizational voice or not. Five demographic variables have been determined as control variables that are gender, age, education level, work-life experience, and having children. In this part, the effect of the family-to-work conflict on the organizational voice has not been taken into consideration because of being away from the significance level. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is rejected. It has been found that there is a negative and significant effect of work-to-family conflict on organizational voice with controlling

demographic variables, and there is a negative and significant effect of work-life conflict on organizational voice with controlling demographic variables. Thus, hypotheses H2 and H4 have been accepted according to hierarchical regression analysis. These findings also support the work-family border theory.

## **9. Discussion and Conclusion**

Work and life are two critical components of a person's life. Some of the people are in the tendency to delay his or her work when giving importance to the family; some of them are in the tendency to delay his/her family activities when giving importance to the work. This paper explored the importance of the work-life conflict in regards to remaining silent as a means of creating productive workplaces. This study attempted to contribute to the arguments on the situation about how people can remain silent or speak up in the workplace when they are not able to achieve balance work and living domains. This paper investigated the relationship between work-life conflict and organizational voice as perceived by the employees from the higher education sector. It is found that there is a positive relationship between life-work conflict and work-life conflict. The work-life conflict also affected organizational voice negatively. Results revealed that when employees have conflict in their work and life affairs, they prefer to be silent rather than speak up openly about organizational policies.

### **9.1. Theoretical Implications**

The results of the analysis propose a model of the employee voice framework with some dimensions initiating and preventing employee voice from the work-life conflict perspective. Although much of the research concentrated on the factors affecting the employee voice behavior, this paper analyses the relationship of work-life conflict with organizational voice.

Further studies may investigate other contextual variables that may have silence as well as taking work-life conflict concepts from different perspectives. Scholars in this field may use different mediators and moderators to explore different relationships that may contribute to the present literature.

### **9.2. Implications for Practice**

The issues related to the job satisfaction of the employees are essential for better workplace conditions in private universities (Azmi, 2008; Danchev & Sevinc, 2012). Managers and professionals should give importance to work-family balancing issues and should deal with the work-family conflicts that their staff may be facing. They should have various means to identify such problems experienced by their staff, and they should develop strategies for solutions.

Firstly, they should usually be aware of the attitudes and behaviors of the workers because work-life conflict may directly affect these jobs related attitudes like voice,

silence, job stress, satisfaction, loyalty, etc. The negative effects of work-life conflict may trigger other work-related problems.

Secondly, they should develop more effective managerial strategies and policies to help workers regarding balancing work life and personal life. For example, they should organize seminars to help workers and academicians to decrease the adverse effect of work-life conflict on their job-related attitudes and to balance their work and living areas. With the help of this type of managerial applications, they may importantly contribute to the lives of academicians and workers. Our study suggests that the implementation of family-friendly practices may be useful as a comprehensive program that offers employees a broad enough spectrum of practices to choose from to enhance the employee voice policies.

Furthermore, organizations may develop flexible work systems, including “work from home” opportunities enabling their employees to cope with possible work-life conflicts. Organizations and managers should be aware of the possible risks in the work environment as a means of creating more work-life conflict issues. The well-being of the employees is important in terms of the productivity and effectiveness of the organizations. Work-life conflict processes should be monitored closely, including employee satisfaction surveys as well as managers having a close relationship and communication with employees. The employees should be given opportunities to reflect on their complaints and recommendations. As a result, a friendly environment and atmosphere must be created to prevent possible work-family conflict issues.

Work-life balance issues should be taken seriously by the managers as the process may be stressful and burning-out. The severe effects of such a process may cost more than it looks like for the organizations. The organizations consider the negative signs reflected by the perception and behavior of the employees responsively.

### **9.3. Limitations**

This study has some limitations. Firstly, it has to rely on cross-sectional data. Future studies may consider longitudinal studies collecting more real-time and in-depth data from the universities. Secondly, this study focused solely on two private universities based in İstanbul, Turkey, that may render the empirical findings to be less representative. Nevertheless, we used case study research, as there is no generalization intention. Future studies in this field may be expanded to other international universities abroad in the context of other cultures.

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