

Type A Behaviour and Work-Family Conflict in Professional Women

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The study was designed to investigate work-family conflict in Type A and Type B professional women. Sample consisted of 170 professional women belonging to two different occupations, namely, teaching and medical. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant positive relationship between Type A behavior and work-family conflict and that Type A professional women would experience more inter-role conflict involving work and family roles than Type B women. The sample was classified as Type A or Type B personality on the basis of scores they obtained on Anjum Khalique Type A Scale (Anjum & Khalique, 1991). Family Conflict Scale (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981) was used to measure work-family conflict. Findings indicated a significant positive relationship between Type A behavior and work-family conflict; also Type A women experienced significantly greater work-family conflict as compared to Type B women. The results have important implications for women's adjustment to their familial and professional roles.

Keywords: type A behavior, type B behavior, work-family conflict, professional women

In recent years, psychologists have focused attention on the study of Type A behavior pattern and its relationship with various psychological variables. One important reason for this interest is that Type A people showing this pattern are more than twice likely as Type B to suffer from Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) (Matthews, 1982; Price, 1982). Although the concept of risk factors for CHD is well established, there are many reasons to believe that the reported association between CHD and risk factors are strongly mediated by the surrounding situations in which the individuals live and work as well as by other psychological factors that distinguish one individual from another (Rosenman, 1986).

Type A behavior pattern is a stable, enduring, hard driving, aggressive, competitive, and job devoted life style (Jenkins, 1976). According to Rosenman (1991) Type A behavior pattern includes three elements; (1) a strong competitive orientation; (2) impatience and exaggerated time urgency; and (3) high level of anger and hostility. Type A behavior is not pathological in nature. It is a socially acceptable behavior. Smith and Brehm (1981) found that Type A individuals want to do things perfectly. Several researchers believe that Type A behavior pattern involves a strong need for productivity, hard work, and the most challenging and stressful work conditions (Feather & Volkmer, 1988; Kirmeyer & Biggers, 1988; Matthews, 1982). Type A individuals have been found to work for longer hours, travel more, and are more confident about their own abilities than Type B individuals in occupational settings.

Contrary to Type A, individuals classified as Type B exhibit a different life style that are easy going, relaxed, non competitive, sociable and can cope with the stress easily (Glass, 1983; Matthews, 1982).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) define work-family conflict as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respects. They identified three sources of work-family conflict, namely, time,

strain, and behavior, i.e., any role characteristic that affects a person's time involvement, strain, or behavior within a role and can produce conflict with another role. Time-based conflict includes concepts such as excessive work, work overload, schedule conflict, inflexibility of schedule, marital status, presence of children, and family size. Many studies have found that long working hours contribute to conflict between work and non work roles (Beauregard, 2006; Grzwacz & Marks, 2000; Major, Klein & Ehrhart, 2002; Nielson, Carlson, & Lankan, 2001). Ahmad (2004) examined effect of work load on work-family conflict among Malaysian female physicians and found that 87.7 % of the physicians who experienced moderate to heavy work load experienced a considerable intensity of work-family conflict. Allen (2001) has also found that flexible job schedule is related to decrease in work-family conflict. Strain-based conflict involves work and family stress, negative emotional spill over, and supportiveness of partner. Behavior-based conflict results from incompatibilities between the role behaviors required in one sphere and behaviors in another sphere.

A number of studies have revealed that many individuals experience conflicts in combining work and family responsibilities which affects psychological and physical well being of the workers (Bedeian, Burk, & Moffett, 1988; Burden & Googins, 1987; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Buda & Lenaghan, 2005; Rothbard, 2001). Several forces highlight the work-family interface, for example, the influx of women into the work force, increase in dual career couples, and new life style (Gutek, Reppetti, & Silver, 1988; Nieva, 1985). According to Kanter (1977) certain aspects of the work environment exert significant influence on family life, for example, the relative absorptiveness of an occupation, the effect of work hours and work schedules, reward and resources, and emotional climate of the work.

Research on dual-career families indicates that conflicts between professional and parental roles are especially stressful for married women (Martins, Eddleston, & Veiga, 2002). Burke and Weir (1980) argued that greater the Type A behavior, the more people report their jobs having negative effects on home and personal life resulting greater inter-role conflict. Type A housewives have reported to have poorer marital adjustment than Type B's (Houston

& Kelly, 1987).

One of the first studies which described the extent of work-family conflict was the Michigan Quality of Employment Survey (Quinn & Staines, 1979). These researchers found that 38% of men and 43% of women who were married and had jobs and children reported their job and family life to be conflicted somewhat or a lot. Since then, a number of different occupations and measures of work-family conflicts have been examined. Pleck, Staines, and Lang (1980) using data from the Quality of Employment Survey conducted by the University of Michigan found that the work related factors most strongly associated with work-family conflicts were the number of hours at work, frequency of overtime, afternoon shifts, and physical or psychological demands of work.

Cinamon and Rich (2002) investigated profiles of the married computer workers and lawyers to study the implications of variations in attribution of importance of work and family roles. These researchers found that individuals who gave more importance to professional roles than their family roles or who rated both work and family roles as equally important, had a number of work family conflict than those who placed family above career.

A. L. Saltzstein, Ting, and Saltzstein (2001) argued that job and family involvement measures the degree to which an individual's psychological identity is tied to their family or work roles. They found that individuals who were not married were able to be more involved in work roles causing low work-family conflict.

During the last three decades, the traditional role of a Pakistani woman has gradually evolved into the dual role of a working woman and a housewife. Most of the women have now taken up professional roles in order to create a meaning for them or out of economic necessity to provide better living conditions to their families. Some of the factors responsible for this change are better education, changing socio-cultural values, and need for supplementary income caused by inflation. As a result, working women have to undergo a lot of strain and conflicts. The present study links Type A and Type B behavior pattern with work-family conflict in professional women. The main objectives of the study were:

1. To investigate the relationship between Type A behavior pattern and work-family conflict.
2. To compare Type A and Type B professional women interms of work-family conflict roles.

Hypotheses

1. There would be a significant positive relationship between Type A behavior and work-family conflict.
2. Type A professional women would experience more inter-role conflict involving work and family roles than Type B women.

Method

Sample

Sample consisted of 170 professional women selected from two different occupations namely teaching and medical. The age range of the sample was 30 to 55 years. All these women were residing in the city of Peshawar Pakistan. Purposive convenient sampling technique was used to select the professional women according to predetermined criteria, i.e., women who were married, had 2-5 children and were residing with their families at the time of study.

18.4% were from women colleges, 35.8% from higher secondary schools and remaining 45.8% were selected from hospitals. Most of the sample was between the age range 46-50 years (25.8%). Demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1.

Instruments

1. *Anjum-Khalique Type A Scale (Anjum & Khalique, 1991)*. The Anjum-Khalique Type A Scale is an indigenous scale designed to measure behavioral style of Type A people. It contains 12 pairs of statements designed to assess competitiveness, time urgency, and aggressiveness/hostility. Each pair has one item characteristic of Type A people whereas the other item is characteristic of Type B people. The maximum score on the scale is 12. Scores may be divided into low (1-8 scores) and high (9-12 scores), with higher scores indicating Type A people. Test re-test reliability has found which is from .74 to .66 and internal consistency determined using Kuder-Richardson method (K.R. formula 20) has been reported to be .81 by the authors. Alpha coefficient for current study was .94

2. *Work-Family Conflict Scale (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981)*. This scale measures work-family conflict. It contains 24 items and measures three dimensions namely, work schedule, work load, and child care. Work load refers to the ability of the respondent to meet demands of the job and family responsibilities. An example of statement that measures work load is "I feel I have more to do then I can handle comfortably". Work schedule refers to the working hours required on the job and in the family setup. Example of statement that measure work schedule is "I have a good balance between my job and family life". Childcare refers to the care giving activities by the respondents such as feeding, bathing, dressing the child, taking the child to the day care and to the doctor. Example of statement that measure child care is "I worry about how my kids are when I am working". Respondents are required to indicate on a 5 point rating scale ranging from 1 (always) to 5 (never), the frequency with which they experience conflict while combing work and family (parenting) roles.. The maximum score on this scale is 120 and the minimum possible score is 24. Sum of points earned by a subject on the scale represents the total score. Low score on the scale shows higher work-family conflict experienced by the respondents whereas high score suggests that the work-family conflict experienced by the respondent is low. The reliability coefficient alpha computed by the authors is .88. The alpha coefficient for the current study was .71. The scale also has good validity (Smith & Anderson, 1986). Item-total correlation in the present study revealed that 21 items of the scale had high correlations with the criterion whereas the correlation of items no 1, 5, and 10 with total scores was less than .19. So these items were discarded and a reanalysis of the data was carried out that yielded correlations ranging from .49 to .83. The final form of the Work Family Conflict Scale used in the present study consisted of 21 items.

Procedure

Before visit to each institution, the researcher asked the head for permission to see their subordinates. Each professional woman was contacted according to the time and venue scheduled.

The Anjum Khalique Type A Scale (1991) was administered on the whole sample. As the score on this scale may be divided into low (1-8) and high (9-12), so those subjects who obtained high

Table 1

Institutions	f(%)	Education					Age				
		BA/BSC	MA/MSC	M.Phil/Ph.D	MBBS	FRCS	30-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55
Colleges	31(18.4%)	....	19(61.2%)	12(38.7%)	....	....	4(13.0%)	7(22.5%)	6(19.3%)	8(25.8%)	6(19.3%)
Schools	61(35.8%)	21(34.4%)	40(65.5%)	....	....	....	15(24.5%)	13(21.3%)	10(16.3%)	14(23.0%)	9(14.7%)
Hospitals	78(45.8%)	....	....	....	66(84.6%)	12(15.3%)	14(18.0%)	12(15.3%)	17(21.8%)	19(24.3%)	16(20.5%)

score were classified as having Type A behavior whereas subjects who obtained low scores were classified as Type B. Later, the Work-Family Conflict Scale (1981) was administered on each subject along with the answer sheets one by one. Standard instructions were read out. Subjects were asked to carefully read out each question and mark the most suitable option on the answer sheet in its appropriate box. After completing all tests the researcher checked each answer sheet in order to know if any statement had been left unmarked. Subjects were assured that information provided by them will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to others. At the end, researcher personally thanked each subject for her co-operation.

Results

Correlation and *t*-test for independent sample was conducted to analyze the results.

Pearson product moment correlation indicated a positive relationship between Type A behavior pattern and work-family conflict ($r = .63, p < .01$).

The results in Table 2 show that Type A women have scored significantly lower than Type B women on Work-Family Conflict Scale indicating greater inter-role conflicts in Type A women.

Results in Table 3 indicate that Type A professional women have scored significantly lower on work load, work schedule, and childcare as compared to Type B professional women suggesting that Type B professional women are better adjusted to the work and

Table 2

Mean, Standard Deviation and *t*-value of Type A and Type B Professional Women on the Work-Family Conflict Scale (N = 170)

Personality Type	n	M	SD	t
Type A	71	86.86	3.32	14.64*
Type B	99	96.82	1.13	

* $p < .001$.

Note. Lower scores on Work-Family Conflict Scale indicate greater inter-role conflicts

Table 3

Mean, Standard Deviation and *t*-value of Type A and Type B Professional on Three Components of Work-Family Conflict Scale (N = 170)

Subscales	Type A (n = 71)		Type B (n = 99)		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Work load	13.92	1.05	19.04	2.03	19.42*
Work schedule	9.02	1.41	14.36	2.68	16.81*
Child care	2.43	0.89	6.31	0.86	28.38*

* $p < .001$.

family demands than Type A professional women and Type A professional women experience more inter-role conflicts.

Discussion

The sample of the present study was derived from women working in two different professions, namely, teaching and medical. Our first hypothesis stated that there would be a significant positive relationship between Type A behavior and work family conflict which was supported by the findings of the study. These results are in line with previous research showing that higher work-family conflicts are found in women who exhibit Type A behavior pattern (Greenglass, 1990; B.J. Eberhardt & Eberhardt, 1983). Kelley and Houston (1985) measured Type A behavior and its relationship with work, marital status, stress and tension in employed women. Their findings demonstrated that Type A behavior was significantly correlated with higher occupational and more daily stress and tension in these employed women. Abush and Burkhead (1984) studied relationship between Type A behavior and work family conflict in midwife women and results demonstrated that women with Type A personality reported higher work family conflict. Similarly Cooke and Rousseau (1984) interviewed two hundred teachers and their findings supported inter-role conflict.

Several researchers in the area of work family roles report that tension between balancing work and family roles produce decrements in the psychological and physical well-being of the workers (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conley, 1991; Frone, Russells, & Cooper, 1992; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1992; Karatepe & Tekinkus, 2006; Lennon, 1994). According to Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachy (1962) when individuals simultaneously occupy two positions whose roles are antagonistic, they experience role conflict. The individual may experience difficulty and unable to perform either role adequately. So keeping in view the findings we can say that working women have to balance home and work duties and responsibilities by integrating personal and professional life. As a housewife, her home and family are primarily important while as career women, demands of the job are her first concern. When there is an incompatibility of demands between one's home and work roles, the result is some degree of strain and work-family conflict. According to Marks' scarcity hypothesis (1977), there is a finite stock of physical and psychological energy in human being. Having multiple and diversified roles, an individual is drained out of energy which causes stress and conflict thus, lowering the level of satisfaction. This argument seems particularly plausible in case of the women who combine the roles of work and family together. These women have to play simultaneous roles in contrast to dual earner men who have sequential duties. Thus, women in two roles can neither escape from their socially determined role of homemakers nor can they disregard their role as a professional. This increases the likelihood of work-family conflicts for them. Voydanoff (1988) have identified several variables related to work-

family conflicts, for instance, work hours and schedules, work load pressure, role conflict and role ambiguity, job involvement and job autonomy, time, expectations at work, marital satisfaction, number and ages of children.

Our second hypothesis stated that Type A professional women would experience more inter-role conflict involving work and family roles than Type B women and the results supported the hypothesis. Further the findings revealed that women who had Type A behavior obtained significantly low mean scores on the three components of Work-Family Conflict Scale, i.e., work schedule, work load and childcare than Type B professional women showing greater work-family conflict. These findings are consistent with Kelly and Houston (1985) study who found that middle class Type A women employed full time outside the home reported more daily stress and tension than Type B women. The findings strongly support the description of the personality traits of Type A and Type B individuals. Type A individuals are aggressive, competitive, impatient and experience exaggerated time urgency (Jenkins, 1976; Rosenman, 1991) and Type B individuals are easy going, relaxed, non competitive, sociable and can cope with stress easily (Glass, 1983; Matthews, 1982).

Type A behavior with time may increase with time because the multiple demands of the middle years including family and job involve more demanding and challenging situations which thus elicit and reinforce Type A behavior.

Results of the present study conclude that Type A behavior pattern is linked with work-family conflict. Professional women with Type A personality type tend to experience more inter-role conflict as compared to those having Type B personality.

Limitations

A growing number of studies have indicated that work-family conflict is a concern for women as well as for men. Examination of gender differences might provide useful information to investigate the present issue from a broad perspective. Another limitation concerns the generalization of the present findings. The present study included working women from only two professions, i.e., teaching and medical. It would have been better, if women working in other professions like civil services, law, engineering, banking etc were included in the sample. The sample was selected only from joint family system. The study might have rendered further insight to understand work-family conflict, had the sample been selected from different types of family structures, that is, nuclear, signal-parent, and extended families.

Implications

The present study carries important implications in terms of gender, familial roles, professional adjustment and marital health. It highlights strain and stress experienced by working women and thus is a step towards further research on strategies that may lessen work-family conflict in working women.

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