# The Moderating Effect of Ethnicity on Relationship between Role Demands and Work-Life Balance among Women Lecturers in Sri Lanka

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**Abstract**

Women lecturers participate in various work and life roles, which can create challenges when trying to balance the pressures and responsibilities associated with each role. That means that, as lecturers, they face great demands, which must be met diligently. The current study seeks to argue that the constructs of role demand and ethnicity have been neglected in the work-life balance literature in Sri Lankan context.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the moderating effect of ethnicity on role demand and the work-life balance of women lecturers in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the study examines the relationship between two aspects of role demand (work and family) and work-life balance among women lecturers in Sri Lanka as well as the role of ethnic identity as a moderator of the relationship. First, to investigate the direct relationship, two exogenous constructs; work demand and family demand and two endogenous constructs namely work satisfaction, family satisfaction were identified. Next, the study was to decide whether the relationship between role demand and work-life balance among women lecturers in Sri Lanka differ on the basis of ethnicity. To test this, ethnicity used as a moderating variable and considered the two major ethnic groups in Sri Lanka namely, Sinhala and Tamil.

The sample has been selected through the disproportionate stratified random sampling method and the quantitative research approach has been applied. A questionnaire survey was used to gather data from state universities in Sri Lanka. There were 265 responses were obtained. The structural equation model was used in analyzing the data. First, the result of the study demonstrates that the significant negative relationship between role demand and work-life balance, and it fills a gap in the literature by validating the associations between role demand and work-life balance dimensions. finally, the study shows that the relationship between role demand and work-life balance is not moderated by ethnic identity. This result is remarkable as this is the first study that presented the outcome of relationships between role demand and work-life balance among women lecturers' in Sri Lanka as not differing on the basis of ethnicity. This finding implies that when living under the same economic and social system different ethnic groups gain similar perceptions.

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**Introduction**

Globally, there has been a considerable increase in women's participation in careers/occupations as well as a steady increase in dual-career earners in the family (Munn & Chaudhuri, 2015). Hence, work life balance (WLB) is an increasing problem worldwide, and consequently research into WLB has increased (Kossek, Bales, & Matthewa, 2011). In other words, more employees are now playing a dual role as an employee and parent; in combining work and family roles it is difficult for them to achieve WLB.

Early researchers treated work and family systems as if they operated independently because work and personal life are most often physically and temporally separated and because men traditionally assumed the role of breadwinner and women the role of a homemaker (Clark, 2000). However, regardless of this traditional view, the number of dual professional couples who have more responsibilities towards their families has increased (Greenhaus & Allen, 2010). Most Western workers, including those with responsibilities to care for family and those without, value a positive relationship between their work lives and personal lives (Skinner, 2008). But these activities are rather different in the case of men and women in Asia.

Asian women perform many domestic activities such as cooking, babysitting, aged care, and childcare (Greenhaus et al., 1989). Even though they have many family roles, the proportion of educated women employees in Asia has increased (Flores & Day, 2006). At present, this phenomenon is largely a consequence of women entering the teaching profession, which job entails great responsibility in terms of disseminating knowledge, serving simultaneously as educators, managers, planners, and facilitators, and being exemplary to the community (Johanim et al., 2018).

The women employees' who are engaging in teaching professions personal lives are intimately linked to their performance of the professional lives and that means the multiple roles are influenced both of professional and personal lives of the academics. Therefore, academic identities are shaped and reshaped over time and these identities are influenced by personal and professional histories, professional training, academic culture and leadership influences (Flores & Day, 2006). Most studies find that there is an imbalance in the work and personal lives of

women in the teaching profession (Bridges & Searle 2011; Goyal & Arora 2012; Punia & Kamboj 2013), therefore making it necessary that academics find a solution to this problem.

**Research Problem**

Most research on WLB experiences has been carried out in Western contexts (Cohen & Kirchmeyer 2005; Poelmans et al.,2003; Roehling, Jarvis, & Swope, 2005). Those researches have directly addressed the ethnic groups of the West in identifying the effects of work and family life balance only. Hammer (2004) notes this lack of studies of work–family interactions among different ethnic groups and individual perceptions and experiences regarding the demands of work-family roles. There is a dearth of research that addresses the role demands (RDs) and WLB experiences of women employees of different ethnic groups in developing countries like Sri Lanka. Furthermore, reviewing literature, it was identified that there were no studies conducted on RDs and WLB experiences among women academics in the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, the current study is trying to fill this gap by determining the relationships between RDs and WLB experience of women academics in different ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.

*Research questions:*

1. What are the relationships between RDs (work and family) and WLB among women in the academic profession in Sri Lanka?
2. Do relationships between RDs (work and family) and WLB among women in the academic profession in Sri Lanka differ on the basis of ethnicity?

**Objectives of the study**

Researchers have further demonstrated with limited empirical evidence that a strong ethnic identity will predict the experience of WLB (Aziz & Chang, 2013; Grzywacz, Carlson, Kacmar, & Wayne, 2007). However, empirical findings to date do not indicate this with regard to Sri Lankan ethnicity and WLB. In response to blind literature of Sri Lanka, the purpose of this study is to examine RD and WLB experiences in a more diverse grouping of both Sinhala and Tamil women academics. Therefore, this study aimed to:

Determine the relationship between RD (work and family) and WLB among women in the academic profession

Decide whether the relationship between RD (work and family) and WLB among women in the academic profession in Sri Lanka differ on the basis of ethnicity.

**Literature Review**

**Work Life Balance**

As researchers have suggested, there is no exact definition of WLB (Chandra, 2002; Felstead, Jeson, Phizacklea, & Walters, 2002). The concept of balance is an inter-role phenomenon that reveals personal attention across various life roles (Marks & McDermid, 1996). In spite of the hierarchy of importance of multiple roles, individuals have equal responsibilities related to different life roles which they have to balance through balanced orientation (Marks & MacDermid 1996). However, WFB literature has revealed that this concept of balance has not received extensive research attention (Greenhaus et al., 2003). Though many researchers (Blunsdon, Blyton, Reed, and Dastmalchian, 2006; Chan, 2008; Clark 2000; Kirchmeyer, 2000; Marks & MacDermid 1996) have suggested different definitions for WLB those are not completely consistent with each other (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

According to Carlson et al. (2013) WLB as a composition of work satisfaction (WS) and family satisfaction (FS). As well, Higgins, Duxbury, and Johnson (2000) defined WLB as a "*perceptual phenomenon characterized by a sense of having achieved a satisfactory resolution of the multiple demands of work and family domains*" (p.19). Furthermore, Hill (2005) interpreted WLB is referring to how an individual simultaneously balances the temporal, emotional, and behavioral demands of both paid work and non- paid work activities. Also, researchers such as Chan (2008) and Blunsdon et al. (2006) supported Hill's (2005) definition, presenting the same ideas of their definitions. They described WLB as the successful integration of an individual's life and work, also elaborated on this expression by looking at psychological factors. Consequently, it was noted that WLB is about attaining a satisfying quality of life, overall satisfaction with less stress. Clark (2000) defines WLB as *'satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict'* (p.751). This definition reflects that WLB is how people play a successful role in both domains of work and family with minimum role conflict. Based on Clark (2000) the WFB definition includes five dimensions such as WS, FS, work functioning, family functioning, and role conflict. Competing demands from workplace and family life cause conflict and it negatively affects the individual's satisfaction (Clark, 2000; Frone, 2004). Therefore WLB can be achieved when individuals are satisfied with their work and family roles (Clark, 2000).

**Role Demands of work and family**

Experiences of WLB and work family conflict may be the result of both work and family responsibilities. These responsibilities become emotional and physical demands and they badly affect each other because of limited personal resources. Increasing role demands of work and life are probably deleterious to individual psychological health as well as work attitudes (Lu, Gilmour, Kao, & Huang, 2006; Spector et al., 2004). These aspects of role demand require individuals' resources such as time, energy, and attention. Some scholars use the term 'role stressor' to describe the consequences of work family roles (Spector et al., 2004).

Demerouti, Bakker, and Nachreiner (2001) define WD as *'physical, social, or organizational aspect of a job that requires sustained physical or mental effort, and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs'* (p.501). Individuals have to devote available limited resources to multiple roles in life. Thus, time or energy allocated to one role is restricted from another. According to Voydanoff (2005) time- and strain-based demands are two kinds of WD. Long working hours, over time and organizational time expectations can be identified as examples of time-based WDs and strain-based demands may comprise work overload, work stress, work pressure and job insecurity (Voydanoff, 2005). Past literature shows that several WDs were associated with high work family conflict and work family imbalance (Batt & Valcour, 2003; Valcour, 2007; Voydanoff, 2005).

Boyar, Carr, Mosley, and Carson, (2007) define FD as '*a global perception of the level and intensity of responsibility within the family domain'* (p.103). They also pointed out that this demand pertains not only to objective characteristics of the family domain but also subjective characteristics. The family role is essential for an individual, as it is an integral part of one's identity. Therefore an individual's perception regarding family is a threat to works, consuming energy and time. Fulfillment of FS and responsibilities depends on spending time on family members. Thus, high demands and expectations in the family domain lead to work-family conflicts (Beutell, 2010). Hours spent providing care in the family is the most prominent factor which impacts FD (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999). Some researchers argue that the number of children in the family directly affects the degree of FD (Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, & Beutell, 1996) because parents are responsible for their children and to provide their day to day requirements. So reserving time and energy for that purpose is essential. Moreover, in the family domain, demand has been linked with the number and age of dependents at home and hours spent on household responsibilities (Lu et al., 2006).

**Ethnicity**

The word ethnicity is generated from two Greek terms such as 'ethnos' and 'ethnikos' which stands for the nation, national, clan or caste (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993 as cited in Lawrence & Fabian, 2014). Among characteristics such as nationality, culture, language, race, religion, and descent, one or several common to any group can be defined as ethnicity (Venkatesh, 1995). The literature identifies ethnicity as a strong tool which can be used to join or separate people because interpersonal communication is a major aspect of the cultural identity of a people. (Ebiai & Akpomuvie, 2005).

However, more scholars such as Choi and Park (2006); Sen and Chowdhury (2006) mention that ethnicity refers to a collective identity. Furthermore, Choi and Park (2006) state that it comprises various combinations of factors including religious, origin and national heritage, and patterns of social interaction, shared values and beliefs.

**Sri Lankan Ethnicity**

Sri Lanka is a small tropical island off the southern tip of India. The island nation covers approximately 65,100 square kilometers. Like other nations in the South Asia region, Sri Lanka has a diverse population which speaks several languages and follow different religions. Based on the two main characteristics that mark a person's ethnic group – namely, language and religion four major ethnic groups are created in Sri Lanka (Bandaranayaka, 1985). The largest ethnic group of the country is the Sinhalese, officially comprising 22 million as of 2018. The second largest group is Tamil which is subdivided into two groups, Sri Lankan Tamil and the Indian Tamil. Altogether, these two groups of Tamils account for 18 percent of the country's population, of which the Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils present ages are 12.5 and 5.5 percent respectively. The next group of Moors of Arab origin, recognized as Muslims, who constitute seven percent of the total population in Sri Lanka. The remainder of the population consists of numerous ethnic minorities such as Burghers, Mixed European, Malays, aboriginal Veddahs and others (Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka - 2017).

In Sri Lanka ethnic group may provide some basis for expected differences in WLB experiences. Therefore, ethnic identities such as cultural backgrounds, perceptions, attitudes, religious of Sri Lankan women may moderate the relationship between work and family roles and WLB. Hence, in the current study, the researcher explores the women academics' ethnicity as a moderating construct.

According to the literature mentioned, the following conceptual framework (figure 1) was developed for the study.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**
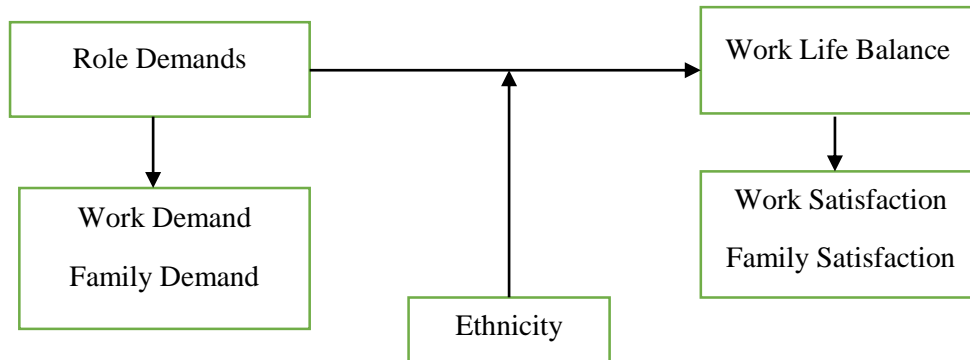


Source: Author construct, 2018

**Hypotheses**

Amongst widely cited WDs, several are associated with higher levels of work-life conflict and lower WLB (Batt and Valcour, 2003; Major et al., 2002; Valcour 2007; Voydanoff, 2005). These WDs include long working hours, hours worked, work overload, and work pressure and work distress. Valcour (2007) has developed his own multi-item scale and used it in his empirical study which reveals that a high level of work-life conflict leads to low satisfaction with the ability to balance their work and family responsibilities. Furthermore, Valcour (2007) proves satisfaction with the WLB is negatively related to working hours. Moreover, Yilldirim and Aycan (2008) observe a strong positive relationship between work-life conflict and work overload. This means the WLB of individuals is negatively correlated with WDs.

Noor (2004) proposes that women are principally responsible for the home, even if she is working. However, fulfilling these responsibilities for family facilitates WLB and helps reduce work-family conflict (Elisabeth, 2003). Huang et al., (2004) found that work-family conflict has a positive correlation with FD for childcare. This means WLB of individuals is negatively correlated with FDs.

FS is the individual attitude or positive feeling towards family life (Edura et al., 2012). Samsinar et al., (2010) empirically proves that overall satisfaction with family life has a significant positive relationship with quality of non–work (family) life. Likewise, they report, that the quality of family life is gained from having personal time and spending time with family members. Consequently, spending time with family significantly influences FDs such as child care, household chores, and perceived FD.

Past studies observe the relationship between RDs of work and family, within the domain as well as cross-domain. RD variables within domains strongly affect outcome variables in those domains (Biggsq & Brough, 2005; Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). In contrast, the cross-domain relationship between RDs and outcomes have been searched in previous studies, but their relationship (eg: WD and family domain outcome) are contradictory (Lu et al.,2006). Hence, the current study only focuses on within-domain factors (eg: FDs and family domain outcomes and WDs and work domain outcomes).

Considering the above facts, the researcher hypothesizes that there is a negative relationship between RDs and WLB dimension of satisfaction. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H₁**: Work demand is negatively associated with work satisfaction of women academicians in Sri Lanka.

**H₂**: Family demand is negatively associated with family satisfaction of women academicians in Sri Lanka.

Research in the cross–cultural field rarely examines the variation in work life experiences across ethnic groups (Clauss & Ehlers, 2007). Although these studies explore the relationship between ethnicity and WLB experience, they do not often specify the ethnic background of individuals (Clauss & Ehlers, 2007). However, a majority of this research relating to WLB and ethnicity has been conducted in the Western context.

Roehling et al. (2005) conducted a study of Hispanic women's work life experience and found that the women experienced a highly negative work family spillover relative to black women than white. But these findings cannot apply for non-Western context, because cultural values of ethnicities in non- Western countries are different from those in the West.

Another comparative study has done by Banduer (2004) reveals ethnic differences in perception towards work and attributes it to the influence of economic status differences, between groups. Furthermore, this study examines the moderation effect of the ethnicity of perception towards work and the economic status of Chinese and South Africans.

Smith et al. (2004) empirically examines ethnic differences in work stress and work life conflict among ethnic minorities and white workers. They found an association between ethnicity and work stress. A recent study (Lawrence et al., 2014) has examined the work family conflict

among Nigerian workers and found that ethnic difference is a significant factor in the experience of work life conflict among Nigerian employees.

However, empirical findings to date do not address Sri Lankan ethnicity and WLB. Also, the results of past studies lack consistency. Therefore, regardless of countries, nations, or any other cultural units, ethnicity can moderate the relationship between RDs and WLB. Based on the above argument, the following hypotheses are formulated,

**H3**: The relationship between work demand and work satisfaction is differed significantly among ethnic groups.

**H4**: The relationship between family demand and family satisfaction is differed significantly among ethnic groups.

**Research methodology**

*Sample data collection and measurement*

To fulfill the study objectives four hypotheses were advanced. The quantitative research approach is used to verify the hypotheses. A self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data on WLB and work- family demands. The population element has known, the researcher used a stratified random sampling technique. This study, the population elements are grouped into strata based on the criterion of two ethnicities (Sinhala and Tamil), and women lecturers from each stratum are then chosen randomly. The respondents were Sinhalese or Tamils from all state universities of Sri Lanka. However, this study chose a disproportionate type of stratified random sampling method. Because through the disproportionate stratified random sampling technique, the researcher can use an equal number of participants from each group that leads to achieving realistic findings. Questionnaires were distributed to 325 lecturers in state universities. Out of 325 questionnaires distributed, 265 questionnaires, which constitute of 81.5 percent response rate, were returned and usable for analysis. In the study, the questionnaire adapted from original sources and some modifications were made to suit the context of the study. A total of 19 items with the five-point Likert scale were used to measure all variables under study.

There were two latent constructs constructed for role satisfaction such as WS and FS in WLB following Clark's (2000) model. WS was assessed with five items by Clark (2000), while FS was assessed with three items based on the same study. Sample items for the WS construct are 'I receive a lot of satisfaction from carrying out my responsibilities at work' and 'I love what I

do at work'. Sample items for the FS construct are 'I receive a lot of satisfaction from carrying out my responsibilities at home' and 'I love what I do at home'.

Two exogenous latent constructs of WD and FD were measured by using 6 items scales and 5 item scales for each respectively, which had been previously used by Boyar et al. (2007). Sample items for WD construct are "I feel like I have a lot of work demands" and "I feel like I have a lot to do at work" and sample items for FD construct are "I have to struggle when managing family – related activities" and "My family requires all of my attention".

**Data Analysis**

In this study there were two exogenous constructs; WD and FD and the endogenous constructs were WS and FS. The data were prepared and screened before performing the analysis. Descriptive statistics analysis was performed as a pretest of data cleaning. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to decide whether the data at hand suits the underlying constructs, thereby ascertaining their appropriateness. Ensuring validity and logical solution, multivariate assumptions were tested for the data set. The measurement model was assessed with the test of the item's loading and reliability. Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA) employing AMOS 22.0 was used to examine the measurement component of each latent construct. Unidimensionality, validity, and reliability of all latent constructs were assessed using CFA. The validity of each measurement model was assessed using three measures: convergent validity, construct validity and discriminant validity. The convergent validity was verified by computing the average variance extracted (AVE) and examining the statistical significance of all items in a measurement model. Construct validity was achieved using numerous goodness - fit indicators. Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) indicators were used to confirm the absolute model fit. The incremental model fit category was measured using goodness-of-fit indicators of Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker- Lewis Index (TLI). Parsimonious fitness achieved was tested with Chi-square /df value. Discriminant validity of the measurement model was tested when comparing AVE estimates and square of the correlation of each measurement model.

Internal reliability of each measurement model was achieved when testing the value of Cronbach's Alpha. Composite reliability was measured using the standard formula in order to achieve internal consistency of latent constructs. Then the structural model assessed to test the hypotheses that reflect the direct relationships of RDs and WLB. In assessing the indirect effect

of moderator variables, the Multi- Grouped CFA method was utilized through the structural model. All data were analyzed using SPSS 21.0 and AMOS 22.0 packages.

**Results**

*Measurement model*

Factor loading for all items was above 0.5, were considered acceptable reliability. For Bartlett's test of sphericity also were significant with p-value 0 and KMO statistics were above 0.6 for all constructs (WS=0.87 FS= .76, WD= 0.81, FD=.77). KMO also supports factor analysis. In addition to EFA, CFA was utilized to test the validity and reliability of the measurement model and assess modify the proposed research model. Figure 2 depicts the modified full measurement model which was incorporated all latent constructs indicated by respective items pertaining to each scale.

Internal consistency reliability was confirmed by examining the composite reliability (CR) coefficients and Cronbach's alpha coefficients of each construct (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). All CR and Cronbach's alpha values were above 0.7 suggested that internal consistency reliability for each construct were achieved. In addition to that, the values of the average variance extracted (AVE) were also examined to determine the convergent validity of WS, FS, WD, and FD. The results showed that the values of AVE for all constructs were above 0.5, suggest adequate convergent validity (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Table 1 shows the summarized results of assessing the measurement model.

**Table 1: Result of assessing the measurement model**

| Construct | Items | Item Loading | Item Reliability | Cronbach's Alpha | CR | AVE |
|-----------|-------|--------------|------------------|------------------|------|------|
| WS | WS1 | .933 | .943 | .801 | .706 | .651 |
| | WS2 | .955 | .901 | | | |
| | WS3 | .968 | .854 | | | |
| | WS4 | .970 | .821 | | | |
| | WS5 | .946 | .806 | | | |
| FS | FS1 | .969 | .870 | .733 | .702 | .601 |
| | FS2 | .998 | .904 | | | |
| | FS3 | .946 | .871 | | | |
| WD | HWD1 | .550 | .502 | .791 | .878 | .701 |
| | HWD2 | .875 | .782 | | | |
| | PWD1 | .906 | .813 | | | |
| | PWD2 | .961 | .785 | | | |
| | PWD3 | .942 | .782 | | | |
| | PWD4 | .905 | .804 | | | |

| FD | HFD1 | .949 | .806 | .701 | .797 | .661 |
|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|    | PFD1 | .942 | .709 |      |      |      |
|    | PFD2 | .955 | .881 |      |      |      |
|    | PFD3 | .955 | .811 |      |      |      |
|    | PFD4 | .940 | .799 |      |      |      |

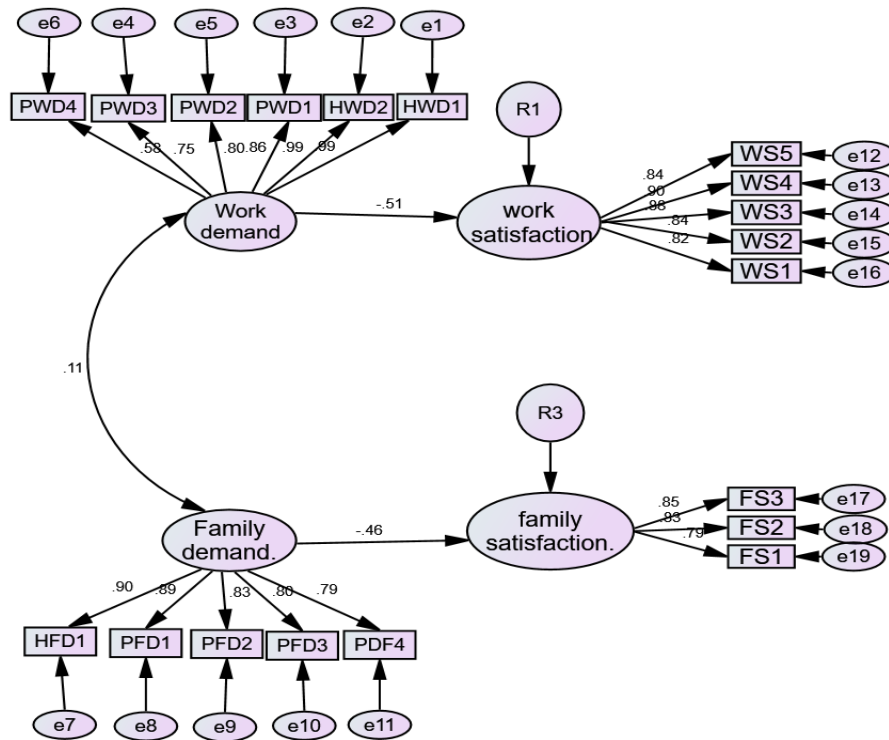Source: Data analysis results, 2018

**Figure 2: Measurement Model**
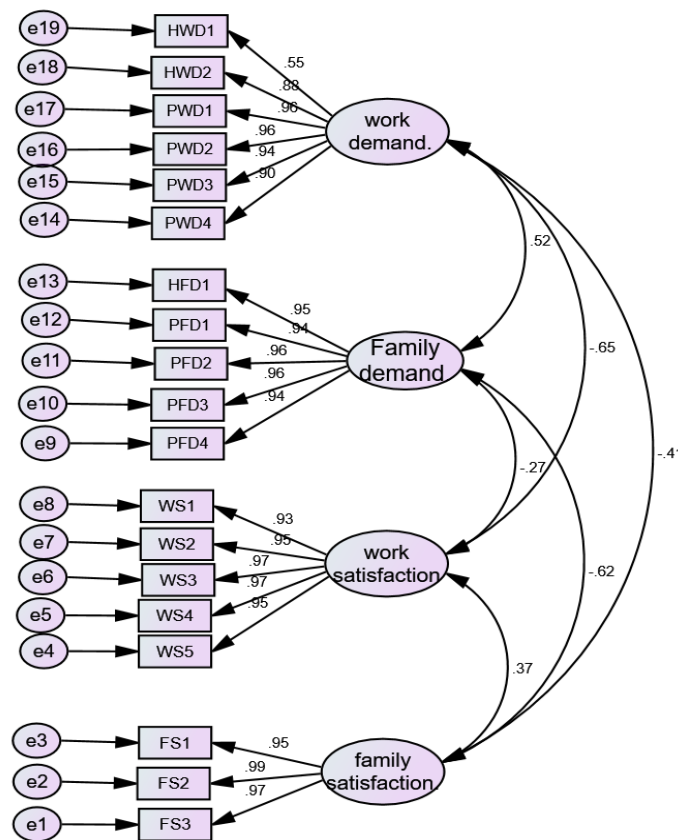


Source: Results of AMOS graphics, 2018

*Assessment of structural model*

The overall model fit for the structural model was examined by using the fitness indices. Proposed structural model shown in Figure 3. Model fit indicators exhibited a good fit, as CMIN/DF less than 3, GFI and CFI are greater than 0.80, and RMSEA is less than 0.8 (Hair et

al., 2010) between the data and conceptualization model. The model fit statistics in table 2 shows the acceptability of the structural model.

**Figure 3: Structural equation model**



Source: Results of AMOS graphics, 2018

**Table 2: Model fit statistics of the structural equation model**

| Fit Indications | CMIN/DF | GFI | CFI | TLI | RMSEA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Value | 2.660 | 0.91 | 0.921 | 0.910 | 0.51 |

Source: Adapted from data analysis, 2018

*Hypotheses Testing (Direct effects)*

The direct hypotheses were tested through the SEM using AMOS 22. The path that connects work demand to WS yields a significant coefficient value of -0.51 (SE= 0.57, CR= -13.567, P=0.000). Hence, a significant negative path coefficient is suggested that WD is negatively

associated with WS. Thus, the result of standard regression weights output is providing support for $H_1$. The path coefficient value that is produced FD and FS is -0.0.46. This is significant results (SE=0.050, CR= -12.345. P=0.000). In effect, this path is also considered that FD is significantly associated with the degree of FS at a significant level of 0.000, which provides support for $H_2$. The results of the direct hypotheses testing of AMOS output extract are

| Path | Hypothesized Direction | Path Coefficient | SE | Critical Ratio | P value | Supported |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Negative | -0.51 | 0.57 | -13.567 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H2 | Negative | -0.46 | 0.05 | -12.345 | 0.000 | Yes |

presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Direct hypotheses testing: AMOS output extract**

Source: Adapted from data analysis results, 2018

**Hypotheses testing (Moderating effects)**

This study was performed a multiple group CFA analysis to estimate the moderating effects of ethnicity on relationships between RDs on WLB. Some of the goodness of fit indices were not at the recommended level, but all indices were very close to the recommended level, hence, on the whole, it was acceptable (Hair et al., 2010). The result indicated that the chi-square difference in the unconstrained and constrained models was 33.182 (1632.75-1599.568) for both groups. A standard chi-square value with 28 degrees of freedom at the 0.05 significance level is 41.337 and it is confirmed that there is no moderating effect of ethnicity on the relationship between WD and WS; not supporting $H_3$. The results of the moderating effects of ethnicity on the relationship between WD and WS for Sinhala and Tamil groups are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: The results of the moderating effects of ethnicity (Sinhala and Tamil) on the relationship between WD and WS**

| Group | Sinhala | | Tamil | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | Constrained | Unconstrained | Constrained | Unconstrained |
| Chi-Square | 1599.568 | 1632.75 | 1599.568 | 1632.75 |
| Df | 778 | 750 | 778 | 750 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chisq/df | 2.056 | 2.177 | 2.056 | 2.177 |
| GFI | 0.825 | 0.857 | 0.825 | 0.857 |
| CFI | 0.899 | 0.937 | 0.899 | 0.937 |
| RMSEA | 0.048 | 0.038 | 0.048 | 0.038 |
| NFI | 0.854 | 0.891 | 0.854 | 0.891 |
| TLI | 0.889 | 0.931 | 0.889 | 0.931 |
| Result on Moderation | Significant | | Significant | |
| Result on Hypothesis | Not Supported | | Not Supported | |

Source: Adapted from data analysis, 2018

The difference between chi-squared values that were found between constrained and unconstrained models of the path FD to FS was 34.505 (1667.254-1632.75). The analysis involved determining whether this difference was statistically significant or not. For the test to be significant, the difference in chi-square values of constrained and unconstrained models must be higher than the value of chi-square with 28 (778-750) degrees of freedom (critical value), which is 41.337 at the significance level 0.05. When comparing these values, it was indicated that the moderation test was not significant since the difference in chi-square values was less than 41.337. Thus, $H_4$ was not supported in this study. The results of the moderating effects of ethnicity on the relationship between FD and FS for Sinhala and Tamil groups are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: The results of the moderating effects of ethnicity (Sinhala and Tamil) on the relationship between FD and FS**

| Group | Sinhala | | Tamil | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | Constrained | Unconstrained | Constrained | Unconstrained |
| Chi-Square | 1667.254 | 1632.75 | 1667.254 | 1632.75 |
| Df | 778 | 750 | 778 | 750 |
| Chisq/df | 2.143 | 2.177 | 2.143 | 2.177 |

| GFI | 0.825 | 0.857 | 0.825 | 0.857 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CFI | 0.899 | 0.937 | 0.899 | 0.937 |
| RMSEA | 0.048 | 0.038 | 0.048 | 0.038 |
| NFI | 0.854 | 0.891 | 0.854 | 0.891 |
| TLI | 0.889 | 0.931 | 0.889 | 0.931 |
| Result on Moderation | Significant | | Significant | |
| Result on Hypothesis | Not Supported | | Not Supported | |

Source: Adapted from data analysis, 2018

**Discussion**

Due to the lack of research in WLB, specially focusing on the higher education sector in the Sri Lankan context, this study was examined the WLB experiences among university lecturers. The aims of this study, namely to identify relationships between RDs of work and family and WLB among women academic staff in Sri Lankan Universities, and to decide whether the relationship between RDs (work and family) and WLB among women in the academic profession in Sri Lanka differ on the basis of ethnicity.

The results indicate that there is a negative relationship between RDs and WLB. This is in line with previous research findings by, Valcour (2007), Aycan (2008), Elisabeth, 2003, and Samsinar et al. (2010). It is evident that when individuals have a heavy workload and more responsibilities in their work and family roles it will be big challenged to attain their work and family satisfaction. In the previous literature, WLB often assists to be explained in term of work life conflict (Byron, 2005; Ford et al., 2007). When an individual's participating in multiple roles such as work and life, inter-role conflict may arise. (Higgins, et al., 2010). Thus, WLB means the absence of work life conflict or, work life conflict means work family imbalance. Therefore, through the related literature of work life conflict, the relationship between RDs and WLB can be identified. However, Carlson et al., (2013) highlighted that the absence of work life conflict is the historical definition of WLB.

Based on such considerations, the researcher designed in this study RDs of work and WLB would have a negative relationship. The reason for that university lecturers' dedication to and

enthusiasm for their job, because they have to build their academic career and fulfill professions goals (higher studies, research publications). Therefore, they might consider WD (heavy workload, working long hours) is a challenge contributing toward their overall WLB.

Noor (2004) has proposed that women are the principal responsible person for the home yet, even if she is working. However, doing these responsibilities for family, it facilitates WLB and helps reduce work family conflict (Elisabeth, 2003). Huang et al. (2004) found that work family conflict has a positive correlation with the family demand for childcare. This means the WLB of individuals negatively correlated with family demands. Based on this argument, the research design in this study RD of family and WLB would have a negative relationship. Similar to the previous result, the study was confirmed that there is a negative relationship between FD and WLB.

This finding is consistent to some extent with Smith et al. (2004) who examined ethnic differences in work stress and work-family conflict and reported the association between work stress and the work-family conflict among different groups to be at similar levels. Smith and colleagues' study focused on the work-family conflict which also related to this study concept. Moreover, this finding may be explained by the cultural differences that not exist between these ethnic groups (Sinhala and Tamil) which influence the association between RDs and WLB.

Contrary to expected hypotheses, different ethnicities did not show any moderating effect among relationship between RDs and WLB, which differs from the result by Lawrence et al. (2014). However, this study has followed the idea posited from Western context (Joshi et al., 2006; Grzwacz et al., 2007) of positioning ethnicity to moderate the relationship between RDs and WLB as opposite ends of a continuum, although the researcher is aware that there is no consensus about this understand in the literature.

**Conclusion, Limitations and Further research**

This study indicated that WD had a particularly moderating negative association with WS. Women academics who perceive high WD may receive the lower WLB, along with lacking their WS. Moreover, the study results show a significant negative association between FD and FS. That means when women in the academic profession are unable to fulfill their family responsibility, they receive less FS and also face work-family imbalance.

However, the ethnic base did not moderate the relationships among RDs and WLB of Sri Lankan women academics. Women in different ethnic groups in Sri Lanka seem to share

common cultural values which tend to influence their WLB in many other ways such as work and family tasks, responsibilities, not the ethnic identity. This result is remarkable as this is the first study that presented the outcome of relationships between RDs and WLB among women in the academic profession in Sri Lanka as not differing on the basis of ethnicity. This finding implies that when living under the same economic and social system different ethnic groups gain similar perceptions. It is noted that this is a new contribution to the literature on the WLB of diverse ethnic women in the academic profession in Sri Lanka.

The current research was conducted amongst women academics in the government sector only, omitting women who are working in private universities. In order to gain a better understanding of characteristics across women academics in Sri Lanka, it is recommended to conduct similar research amongst the private and public sector.

In the current study WLB is measured by using only the constructs of WS and FS, thus the researcher suggests to include in future studies more dimensions to measure WLB. Recent research argued that men experienced higher work family conflict and they also have work life imbalance. Thus, future research is needed that replicates the study for men to generalize the results at hand. The present study found that RDs and WLB experiences do not differ in groups of different ethnicities. This will allow researchers to find out the reasons why this result contradicts with previous literature. Another recommendation for future research is to investigate other aspects of WLB, such as imbalance work-life or work-life conflict, to determine the relationship with RD. This may produce a more meaningful result and enhance current studies in terms of Sri Lankan women academics' perspective.

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