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Divorce, Separation, and Remarriage: The Transformation of Family

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Editors



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CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES IN FAMILY RESEARCH
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DIVORCE, SEPARATION, AND REMARRIAGE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF FAMILY

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INFLUENCE OF WORK OBLIGATIONS ON FAMILY COMMITMENT AMONG COUPLES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN KWARA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – Family and work life have always been interdependent, because the increased employment of mothers, rising family hours of work, today's service-intensive globalizing economy, and the trend toward work long hours for some and inadequate family income for the others have rendered this interdependence both more visible and more problematic. The extent to which an individual carries out their duties and responsibilities at work and home varies from one person to the other and how they balance up their roles and duties can be determined by a number of factors which include job-related factors, family-related factors, and individual factors.

Methodology/approach – A total of 255 married participants were randomly selected from the private sector, which includes banks, insurance

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companies, and telecommunication firms, in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. Data was elicited through the use of questionnaires as well as interview.

Findings – Findings from the chi-squared analysis used for this study showed that there is a significant relationship between work obligation and family commitment among couples in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Originality/value – One limitation of this study was that it was concentrated only on workers in the private sector. It was also limited by the methods of carrying out the research. The study emphasizes proper planning and time management, effective work schedule as well as an analysis of factors affecting work performance particularly, family duties, and how these affect the level of performance of individuals in their respective places of work.

Keywords: Commitment; family obligations; work; employment; single parents

INTRODUCTION

Work and family are most important domains in life. The two roles are often in conflict because as one works for long hours, it reduces the presence at home, missed family activities and work such as child care, child illness, and absenteeism. The more preoccupied one is to work duties and obligations, the more it is that there will be conflict of family roles. Also the more committed an individual is to the family roles, the more they will have invested in that role and this has to do with the work at hand of the parents. Those who are work-oriented make accommodations that meet their need for challenges while allowing for career enrichment and those who are family-oriented will seek accommodations to minimize conflicts with family requirements (Cinamon & Rich, 2005).

Work and family life have always been interdependent, but the increased employment of mothers, rising family hours of work, today's service-intensive globalizing economy, and the trend toward work long hours for some and inadequate family income for the others have rendered this interdependence both more visible and more problematic. The increased number of hours family members both individually and in total

are contributing to the paid workforce means that both work and personal lives are not only under stress, but have changed in ways not anticipated by the assumptions, policies, and institutions that have previously shaped experiences in both work and family life. Single parents who work for pay have an even more difficult task juggling their responsibilities at work and home (Tennant & Sperry, 2003).

It is evident that our work lives can either enhance or detract from our family lives. In the same manner, our family lives can have positive or negative influences on our work attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. For example, extensive and inflexible work hours, over-involvement in work, and job stress may produce distress within the family domain, as well as withdrawal from family responsibilities, and adversely affect one's overall quality of life. Similarly, extensive care-giving responsibilities and intensive involvement with family activities can limit individuals' career choices and aspirations and negatively affect their work involvement, job satisfaction, and intention to continue their employment (Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer, & King, 2002).

The influence of work obligations on family commitment as a study deals with the findings of how the level of productivity of the organization is been affected by the roles performed by its workers; this is because there is a level of difficulty in performing their task at home and place of work (Wadsworth, & Owens, 2007). And despite the fact that there is difficulty in performing their roles at home and at work, a number of workers are still committed to their duties. Therefore, how they balance up their duties individually is a point of interest. A number of workers often struggle to perform their total commitment at work and at the same time have such level of commitment to family duties. Therefore, it can be seen that being committed to family responsibility will yield a low level of productivity of the organization in terms of the duties to be performed (Ohlott, Graves, & Ruderman, 2004).

Over the last decade, it can be seen that there has been an increase in the rate of working couples over the globe this is because of the available responsibilities of how to care for the family, economic responsibility and child upbringing which has led to the increase in the number of dual earning couples found in our society today. In recent years, our society has seen a rather dramatic shift in the expectations of both the father and mother. Despite the fact that both parents are working to cater for the family responsibilities, it can be seen that the level of productivity of the working place is been affected and the extent to which work influence family commitment varies from one role to the other (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007).

While the responsibilities and duties may vary depending on income, occupation, or stage in life, these challenges cut across all socioeconomic levels and are felt directly by both women and men. As families contribute more hours to the paid labor force, problems have intensified, bringing broad recognition that steps are needed to adjust to the changed realities of today's families and work (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007). It can be seen that the influence of work obligations on family commitment, it has to do with the various roles perform by the parent at work and in the family.

Work obligation entails the level of commitment of a worker to the organization goals and policy and this can be seen both in their level of commitment and behavior at work. Organizational commitment was defined as psychological state that binds the individual to the organization. The commitment of an individual has three components which are his desire, needs, and obligations (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Furthermore, work commitment has to do with work policies, career opportunities, and the organization standard. The state at which an individual find satisfaction with his work will be determine by the level of its commitment to such work and some of the factors that determine job satisfaction include, the leadership style of the organization, reward motivation, attitudes of the co-workers to each other, job security, etc. Organizational commitment is one of the organizational concepts that have widely been examined in administrative literature due to its importance for organizational performance and effectiveness. Organizational commitment is seen as the degree to which an employee is loyal to their organization. It is characterized by acceptance of the organization's values; willingness to do exert effort on behalf of the organization; and desire to remain an employee of the organization. It is the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

Family commitment covers a wide range of responsibilities both from the father and the mother and this include financial, social, home management, and economic care, child upbringing in the family. Family commitment entails the responsibility of the parent and this can be seen to be affected by the standard and stages of work been done by the parent. This is because work standards and policies do have an effect on the employee and this has in one way or the other affected the family.

Families as a form of social organization represent a support network of mutual obligations with the expectation of reciprocity should the need arise. A family member, depending on their position within the family, can be expected to contribute to the collective unit. The contention is that families will attempt to satisfy these obligations though the priority

attached to each will depend on family composition and stage in the life course. Thus income without household services or leisure will be unacceptable to most families. For families with dependent children less than 12 years of age greater responsibility will be attached to the care and socialization of children. The level and type of job employment that an individual is doing will determine the amount of income and benefits that will be giving to the children. Employment confers socialization benefits for children, adults, and potential self-fulfillment. However uncertainty regarding the employment contract and the associated income can be destabilizing for the individual and the family. Further, the amount of time that must be devoted to earning the family income may have deleterious consequences for the time available for the other family objectives (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997).

Most workers today, regardless of gender have family responsibilities, and most married couples that are working have family responsibilities but it can be seen that the structure of various work organizations are different and does not make available how to carry out the responsibilities of the family. Therefore it is left for the workers to find how possible he can balance the family commitment and work obligations. And this has led to the increasing rate of child daycare, housemaids been employed in other to take care of the children during the working hours of the parents. Furthermore, in the Western societies, it can be seen that most working couples make use of their grandmothers to stay at home to take care of the children and family.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigeria as a developing country is a nation where many families are suffering because of role conflicts, particularly where you have dual earner families where both partners are working outside home, having to spend more time outside the home, for a paid job. Both, particularly the women, strive to cope with achieving the goals of the families, trying to maintain a healthy relationship with the spouse, raising the children effectively, caring for the aging parents and other extended family relations, and maintain a quality standard of livelihood. Most often, these needs are not met because couples concentrate much more on keeping the obligations, demands of their workplace to the detriment of the family, a number of issues surface. For instance, the communication levels between couples drop, because they

which could vary from one family to another. Similarly, George and Ukpong (2013) had identified pressure from work, leading into stress, and then marital conflicts as affecting marriages in Nigeria. To them, when couples face too much stress as a result of poor economic conditions, demands of work, thereby affecting quality of marriage and proper upbringing of the children, they end up with bitterness, resentment, and quarrels.

Previous research have shown that employees are not able to handle work and family roles successfully because of perceptions of insufficient time and energy which could affect their organizational commitment (Haar & Spell, 2004; Rothbard, Phillips, & Dumas, 2005); this is because in other to study the influence of work on family commitment, one will take into consideration the factors responsible starting from the individual factors to work- and family-related factors. Researchers have shown that employees' organizational commitment is derived from their perception of the extent to which the employer is committed to and supportive of them (DeConinck, 2011; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Zhang & Liu, 2011), in assisting them to balance the demands of work and family life. Work-family policy implementation is a promising intervention for increasing employee commitment toward organization (Kelly et al., 2008; Wood & De Menezes, 2010).

Work obligation and family commitment can be seen as an issue that has led to a number of research studies; this is because a number of views and reasons has been provided. This is because in order to look at the influence of work obligation on family commitment, one has to take into consideration the different roles performed by the workers, the factors that motivate workers' obligations, how the workers explain their satisfaction, how the performance of the workers increase or reduce the level of productivity, and how the workers combine their family and work life. Thus, work-family relation has caused an imbalance between work and family life, such that work affects family life or family life interferes with affecting outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover (Akintayo, 2010). 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 respect." This is because the relationship between work obligation and family commitment entails the performance of different roles by both couples. That is the reason why it is simply called work-family conflict.

Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) define organizational commitment as "strong belief in and acceptance of the organizational goals and

values, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership."

Researchers measured work and family unidirectional but now investigations try to look at how families can interfere with work. Thus, Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992), and Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) suggest that in order to get accurate measure of work and family relationship, one must consider it in various directions. According to these researchers, there are three forms of work-family conflict, that is, time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict.

Time-based conflict may occur when time devoted to performing one role makes it difficult to participate in another. This can be seen when the couples are working overtime in their organization and this has restricted the hours if time spent with the family at home. Because in various organizations today, the structure of it has stipulated the hours of work which is eight hours, in other organization it can be more than eight hours or less. Therefore, it can be said that the number of hours been spent and work will limit the hour of leisure the parent have with their families (Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). Strain-based conflict suggests that strain experienced in engaging in one role intrudes and interferes with participating in another role, and behavior-based conflict occurs when specific behaviors required in one role are incompatible with behavioral expectation in another role. Furthermore, it can be seen that the behavioral role performed at home will be different from the role performed at work because the role entails different attitude, skills, and knowledge (Frone et al., 1997).

Subsequently, Gutek et al. (1991) proposed that that Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Family Interference with Work (FIW) could be time-based, strain-based, or behavior-based. From time immemorial women role has concentrated on mothering, so when married women work they face role struggle (Hussain, 2008). Married working women have to fulfill both work and family responsibilities increasing the level of conflict in their role to the family and work. This conflict may have negative effect on managing their jobs ultimately influencing their organizational commitment. Duxbury and Higgins (1991), Duxbury, Higgins, and Lee (1994) and Gutek et al. (1991) have linked gender and work-family conflict and suggest that gender differences affect the ability to balance work and family life in many ways. In particular, women face more conflict from the family domain and men face more conflict from the work domain (Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, & Sincich, 1993). Hochschild, Arlie, and Machung (1989) also determine that women spend more hours on family responsibilities than men and thus spend more total hours in managing work-family

responsibilities. Pleck, Staines, and Lang (1980), in addition, found that there are specific factors; for example, long working hours and scheduling mismanagement that adds to work and family conflict, and married women face work-family conflict due to scheduling incompatibilities and married men fall in work-family conflict due to excessive working hours.

The relationship between work obligations and family commitment has shown that couples that are totally devoted to their work, spend long period at work usually does not have enough time to spend with the family and most of the times devote the housekeep work to either house maid or grandparents. Also couples that spend most time with their family are seen found wanting for work. Therefore it can be seen that the relationship can be viewed at various dimensions (Staines & Pleck, 1983).

The importance of work-family balance, whether implicit or explicit, to the organizations and employees cannot be ignored. This is because when employees struggle to balance their work and family lives, their families, and work will be negatively affected (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). They will be unable to attend to far-reaching family issues, lateness and absenteeism at work will set in, and they will lose concentration at work (Epie, 2010). Conversely, several studies have confirmed that work-family policies can lessen to the minimum level the issue of lateness, absenteeism, stress, work-family conflict, and increased productivity, morale, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Poelmans, O'Driscoll, & Beham, 2005; Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004). Work and family construct are the two important aspects of employees' life and juggling between these two spheres is part of everyday life for millions of employees across the globe (Lapierre et al., 2008).

METHODOLOGY

The participants for the study comprise 255 married men and women sampled from 4 different banks, 3 insurance companies, and 3 Telecommunications firms, all in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. Chi-squared method of analysis was used to determine the relationship between the two variables of work obligations and family commitment. Also, a total of eight respondents were interviewed, which included two bank workers, two insurance workers, and four workers from telecommunication firms. All of the respondents were married to a spouse that was also employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 255 married respondents participated in this study. From the total participants, 93 (36.5%) were males while the females were a total of 162 (63.5%), showing that female representation was higher for this study (Table 1). In addition, 103 (40.4%) of the respondents work in the banking sector, a total of 93 (36.5%) worked in the private telecommunications sector, while 59 (23.1%) worked in insurance companies, all within Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State Nigeria (Table 2). Data was also presented based on the job tenure of the respondents. It reveals that 93 (36.5%) of the respondents had spent from 4 to 6 years in their place of work, 109 (42.7%) reported to have spent from 7 to 9 years in their place of work, while a total of 53 (20.8%) of the respondents had spent more than 9 years in their place of work (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondent by Sex.

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	93	36.5
Female	162	63.5
Total	255	100

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Place of Work.

Place of Work	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Banking sector	103	40.4
Telecommunications	93	36.5
Insurance	59	23.1
Total	255	100

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Respondent by Job Tenure.

Job Tenure	Frequency	Percentage (%)
4-6 years	93	36.5
7-9 years	109	42.7
Above 9 years	53	20.8
Total	255	100

Data on distribution of respondents based on the family commitment mostly affected by commitment to work revealed that 82 (32.2%) respondents maintained that intimacy with their spouse was affected the most, while 72 (28.2%) claimed communication between them and their spouse was affected mostly. And while 58 (22.7%) were of the view that caring for the children, was mostly affected, a total of 43 (16.6%) respondents claimed it was house chores that affected the most by their obligation to work. Data also shows the distribution of respondent based on their level of commitment to work and 232 (91.0%) shows that the workers are highly committed, 16 (6.3%) had been fairly committed, 5 (2.0%) had not been so committed to their work, and 2 (0.8%) claimed they not had been committed at all. This means that most of the workers are highly committed to their work and were very productive (Tables 4 and 5).

DISCUSSION

Findings from the hypothesis of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between work obligation and family commitment among

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Respondents on Family Commitment Most Affected by Commitment to Work.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Intimacy	82	32.2
Communication	72	28.2
Child care	58	22.7
House chores	43	16.9
Total	255	100

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Level of Commitment to Their Work.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very much committed	232	91.0
Fairly committed	16	6.3
Not so much committed	5	2.0
Not committed at all	2	0.8
Total	255	100

Table 6. Chi-Squared Table of Respondents on Influence of Work Obligations on Family Commitment.

Family Commitment	Work Obligation		Total
	Low	High	
Low	58	103	161
Yes	46	48	94
Total	104	151	255

$n = 255$.

$df = 1$.

$\chi^2_c = 4.097 > \chi^2_{1, 0.05} = 3.841$ at 0.05.

couples in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, working in the private sector. This is in line with the view of Akintayo (2010) who stated that, work-family relation has caused an imbalance between work and family life, such that work affects family life or family life interferes with affecting outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover; it can be seen that work obligation does not determine the level of commitment of an individual to work or toward their family commitment. Previous research has also shown that employees are not able to handle work and family roles successfully because of perceptions of insufficient time and energy which could affect their organizational commitment (Haar & Spell, 2004; Rothbard et al., 2005; Wang & Walumbwa, 2007); this is because in order to study the influence of work on family commitment, one will take into consideration the factors responsible starting from the individual factors to work- and family-related factors and taking into consideration how these factors influence organizational commitment. It was discovered that work obligation does not influence the commitment of workers to work and on the other hand, their commitment to the family. According to DeConinck (2011), Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), Zhang and Liu (2011) that states that employees' organizational commitment is derived from their perception of the extent to which the employer is committed to and supportive of them, in assisting them to balance the demands of work and family life means that an individual determines the rate and level at which he is committed to the organization obligations, but there is no rate of influence between work and family commitment.

Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2000) found that committed employees are more likely to remain with the organization and strive toward the organization's mission, goals, and objectives than others. Therefore, if employees

experience high levels of family-work conflict, their roles and responsibilities in family life interfere with the work and develop a negative affect toward the organization (Ajiboye, 2008).

Individual interviews were carried out. Eight respondents were interviewed, which included two bank workers, two insurance workers, and four workers from telecommunication firms. All of the respondents were married to a spouse that was also employed. All communication was in English language, which is the lingua franca of Nigeria. These were based on three themes: support of spouse; managerial support, and work/family conflict.

Support of spouse

When asked if they received support of their spouse when they have to tackle work tasks, one of the respondents, a female banker responded:

My spouse often takes the time to talk with me about my problems, especially when I come home frustrated from work. He does try to give me the emotional support that I need. And that helps relieve me.

Another report:

My spouse helps in taking care of our three children. His own work is not as demanding as my own (private telecommunications worker), and so, he helps out for example, by ensuring their homework is done.

Support of manager/employer

The respondents interviewed were asked how their manager or employer supports them, despite the demands at home. A male banker responds:

Even though my manager is fair man and quite understanding, he does not take it kindly with those that do not meet up with the deadlines at work. And those largely affected are the married staff. He would not take excuse from you for slackness, even if it has to do with family issues. To him, one has to learn to separate family from work.

One respondent, a female private insurance worker, was of the view that her manager accommodates her when she has family issues to take care of, over work:

There was a time I had to keep a doctor's appointment and our accounts were being audited that week. I had to keep from work for two days and he allowed me to go. He even called the following day to find out the health of my daughter.

Work/family conflict

Respondents were interviewed based on how their work obligations interfere with their family commitment.

One of the respondents, a female private telecommunications worker stated that:

My family life certainly is affected by the demands at my place of work. I work shifts that can be so terrible At times, I am away from my family 14 hours in a day, and still have to go for another 8 hour shift the following day. I have an 18 month old baby, and though my husband tries to help, it affects us a lot.

Another respondent, a male bank worker says:

The amount of time my work takes up puts a lot of strain on me that makes it difficult for me to fulfil my family duties. My wife and I don't even have so much time to be alone and enjoy each other's company. Often times, we have misunderstandings ... quarrels.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) expresses that work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect this is because the relationship between work obligation and family commitment entails the performance of different role by both couples and in other for couples to perform their roles, a number of role conflict might set in between the family and work and this helps to explain that they are related and interwoven in each other.

Thus, Frone et al. (1992), and Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) suggest that in order to get accurate measure of work and family relationship, one must consider it in various directions. According to these researchers, there are three forms of work-family conflict, that is, time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict. Time-based conflict may occur when time devoted to performing one role makes it difficult to participate in another. This can be seen when the couples are working overtime in their organization and this has restricted the hours if time spent with the family at home. Because in various organizations today, the structure of it has stipulated the hours of work which is eight hours in other organization it can be more than eight hours or less. Therefore, it can be said that the number of hours been spent and work will limit the hour of leisure the parent have with their families. Strain-based conflict suggests that strain experienced in engaging in one role intrudes and interferes with participating in another role, and behavior-based conflict occurs when specific behaviors required in one role are incompatible with behavioral expectation in another role.

Pleck et al. (1980) in addition found that there are specific factors for example, long working hours and scheduling mismanagement that adds to work and family conflict and married women face work-family conflict due

to scheduling incompatibilities and married men fall in work-family conflict due to excessive working hours and this scholars view has help to buttress more that there is a relationship between work and family commitment. Furthermore, the relationship between work obligations and family commitment has shown that couples that are totally devoted to their work, spend long period at work usually does not have enough time to spend with the family and most times devote the housekeep work to either house maid or grandparents. Also couples that spend most time with their family are seen found wanting in the work. Therefore it can be seen that the relationship can be viewed at various dimensions.

Work obligation influencing family commitment as a social issue in our society today is as a result of how an individual perform their roles at work and toward the family. In a situation where role conflict occurs, how did they balance up their role and it is believe that individual are rational in their thinking and have different perspectives toward a particular social problems.

From the foregoing, work and family are two concepts that needed to be treated differently but there is a level of relationship that exist between work obligation and family commitment. This is because the rate at which an individual performs his duties at work and how such individual creates time for his family varies from one person to the other and it is determined by some factors which include; the job type, job security, role conflict, role overload, family support, child care responsibilities, individual values, gender role orientation, etc.

Furthermore, work and family are two important domains that can be interdependent on each other this is because it is evident that our work lives can either enhance or detract from our family lives. In the same manner, our family lives can have positive or negative influences on our work attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. However, this chapter as the concluding chapter focuses on a brief recapitulation of all that has been said about the variables of this research which are work obligation and family commitment.

CONCLUSION

It can be seen that before making a recommendation on the influence of work on family commitment, one has to take into consideration what factors influences their level of performance that is job-related factors such as leadership style, job type, job stress, role conflict, role ambiguity, etc. also

is the level of influence affected by family-related factors such as dependency care responsibilities, family support, child care and home management responsibilities, etc.

Furthermore, is it affected by individual factors such as; individual values, gender role orientation, individual personality, etc. Also the rate of their commitment varies from individual to another and the level of balancing up of duties varies also because individuals are rational in their thinking and therefore makes them to behave and perform their duties differently from each other.

Also, work and family are seen as necessity of life because we do work in other to meet our family responsibilities but work and family are to be seen as two different entity because the role, duties that are perform at work and at home are totally different from each other therefore the two entity are different. Also work and family are two basic institutions in the society because we have the family institution and the economic institution. These two institutions have different functions that are being performed. For example the family institution performs the function of procreation, socialization, child upbringing, protection and support, etc. while the economic institution performs the function of sustainability, financial support, give status to individual, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made. To start with, work and family are seen as two separate entity that need to be considered separately and the rate at which an individual perform their roles varies from one person to the other in terms of their job type, individual values and consideration for work and family, different family responsibilities, family support, etc.

Furthermore a number of recommendations to be taken into consideration are as follows:

Proper planning and time management: It can be seen that once there is planning in term of how duties are to be performed, role conflict will not set in and in this situation work cannot influence family commitment. Planning deals with how an individual set up his duties in terms of priority and how each duty will be met. Also planning entails time management, time is seen to be precious to each individual and how the time is managed varies from one person to other but it is belief that proper management of

time at work and toward the family commitment will help to reduce the level of conflict of role that might want to set in.

Work schedule: Work schedule includes the days and time an individual work and the work schedule of each organization can vary from the other base on the time and the type of job such individual will perform for example most nurses work on a shifting job and to them they believe that they have time with their families compare to those who work in other organization. Therefore the working schedule of each individual that varies from one person determines the level of their influences in different ways and how they perform their duties will also varies.

Factors hindering work performance and family duties: In order to determine the level of work influence on family commitments, one has to take into considerations which factor influences the level of commitment because the factors are classified into job-related factors, family-related factors, and individual factors. This is because the factors that affect the level of performance vary from one person to the other.

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THE EXTENDED FAMILY: DISHARMONY AND DIVORCE IN KOREA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – Previous studies as well as anecdotes have indicated that parental involvement in adult children's marital conflicts is fairly common in Korea. This study attempts to explain how in-law conflicts – arguably a structural outcome of the traditional Confucian family – lead to marital disruption in contemporary families.

Methodology/approach – This study adopts the hypotheses of the corporate group, mother identity, and gendered-role expectations, which are instrumental to understanding the social context in which the legacy of the Confucian culture interacts with the knowledge-based neoliberal economy to revive in-law conflicts. Divorced-couple data are from in-depth interviews and court rulings, and their analysis illustrates the trajectories of marital breakdown.

Findings – The findings provide support for the hypotheses. Parents, especially mothers, who heavily invested time and money in their children's education and career building meddle in their marriages in hopes

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