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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISOR BEHAVIOR AND THE WORK-FAMILY-CONFLICTS OF EMPLOYEES IN LOGISTICS SECTOR SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Work-family conflict has been shown/highlighted in numerous studies to have a negative impact on both physical and psychological health with many consequences. Most jobs in the logistics sector requires working round the clock and involve high job pressure. Under these grounds, the employees in this sector require committing themselves more to work, therefore face work-life conflict which consequently this leads to family conflicts. This is mainly due to lack of time for family matters and subsequently leading to poor outcomes at the workplace as well. The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between Family Supportive Supervisors Behavior and the Work-Family-Conflicts of employees in logistics sector Sri Lanka, thereby to provide them with the required level of assistance to overcome their Work-Family-Conflicts. This is a quantitative research and a total of 250 employees belonging to various sections of the logistics sector such as procurement, shipping, warehousing, customer service was surveyed using convenient sampling method. A questionnaire method was deployed as the data collection technique. Since excessive working hours and high work pressure are mostly associated with the logistics' sector operations employees, the questionnaire was distributed mainly among them. The results suggest that employees in the logistics sector of Sri Lanka experience high level of Work-Family-Conflicts, as a result of not having the required level of assistance and attention from their immediate supervisors. Subsequently, results reveal that there is a negative relationship between Family Supportive Supervisors Behavior and the Work-Family-Conflicts of employees in logistics sector Sri Lanka. The study findings can provide the Logistics sector managers with a better understanding of the required relationship between their supervisors' behaviors, to overcome the work-family-conflicts of the employees in the logistics sector.

Key Words: Logistics sector, Excessive working hours, High work-pressure, Work-Family-Conflicts, Family Supportive Supervisors' Behavior

1. Introduction

The transport and logistics Industry is the backbone of any economy and the driving force behind all sectors, be it agriculture, manufacturing, or services (Keshavdas, 2019). Logistics is the overall process of acquiring resources, storing, and transporting final goods to the point of consumption to meet customers' requirements; this notion of logistics evolved in the 1940s during the military practices, and later on, started functioning as a business practice the 1950s (Pennington, 2017). The logistics industry is considerably challenging and the employees across the world are employed at terminals, hubs and ports work. They work 24/7 round-the-clock to cater to vessels sailing with cargo to assure that all processes are smooth-sailing (BOON, 2017). As a result of the different time zones between countries, the industry's employees are more likely to work beyond the standard working hours to facilitate businesses continuity. These practices consequently trigger family-related problems due to such employees not having sufficient time on family matters. Overall, the work culture of supply chain and logistics management is not properly studied while a few researchers have discovered findings to enable organizational support for retaining employees (Hohenstien, 2014). The importance of a strong supply chain management culture relates to balancing work and family, and still can be considered as an understudied area (Goffnett, Cook, & Williams, 2012). Therefore, the present study mainly aims to identify the relationship between family-supportive supervisor behavior on the work-family conflicts of the employees in logistics sector Sri Lanka. The findings of this research assist logistics sector's managers a better understanding of the importance of their supervisors' behavior to overcome associated Work-Family-Conflicts of logistics employees and to overcome employee turnover intentions.

2. Problem statement

Generally, logistics related jobs are in round the clock nature and involves more of physical activities and concurrently requires more efforts when comparing to other jobs. Since, this industry is rapidly growing and by virtue of playing a crucial role in current atmosphere, the demand for the logistics sector has increased up in an incredible manner. As a result of the availability of higher work load nature, the employees in this field have to sacrifice more of their time at work place and simultaneously that's leading to family related problems in terms of lack of time to spend with family. Work-family conflict has been shown in numerous studies to have a negative impact on both physical and psychological health, as well as moodiness and incompetence, family and marriage satisfaction, and also career happiness, have all suffered as a result of these effects. Especially, due to the different time zones between countries, the industry's employees are more likely to work beyond the standard working hours to facilitate businesses continuity and these practices are unquestionably directing to family related problems by virtue of not having sufficient on family matters. Overall, the work culture of supply chain and logistics management is not properly realized and has given few researches discovering organizational support for holding employees (Hohenstien, 2014). At the same time, there are significant study gaps in our understanding of how family-supportive supervisor behavior affects the workforce. For example, there are minimal references to adequate work involvement in the literature on family-supportive supervisor conduct (Rofcanin, et al., 2017). When it comes to the Sri Lankan context, it

has identified that there is an impact on human life as a result of the changing business scenarios in the business market and the values and the believes have been ethically appreciated. However, today the business market demand for a worker and simultaneously family demands being a wife or mother has interrupted the balance between both work and family life. The results of work-family conflicts have led in deviating the prevailing psychological status of human life (Pathiranage, 2021). Thus, the present study attempts to investigate the relationship between the Family-supportive supervisor behavior and the work-family conflicts of employees in the logistics sector Sri Lanka.

3. Literature Review

The management of the movement of commodities from point of origin to point of consumption in order to meet specific demands, such as those of customers or organizations, is known as logistics (Li, 2014). Excessive working hours, mainly accounted for by overtime, is more prevalent among men, supervisors, professionals, and operative and assembly staff. However, excessive long working hours connected with lack of productivity can result in work performance below expectations, lack of motivation and even with health problems and family related conflicts (Kodz, et al., 2003). Workplace stress is defined as a person's psychology, including feelings and emotional experiences connected to their work environment (Yang & Carayon, 2007). Stress is a physical sensation. Stress is a behavioral, emotional, mental, and bodily reaction process and is triggered by fresh stress that lasts much longer or is more severe than the availability of coping mechanisms (Robbins, 2004). Stress may also be caused by unfavorable requirements, demands, and behaviors that employees experience that do not correspond to their knowledge level, posing difficulties and risks to their survival (Bashir & Ramay, 2010).

The supportive behaviors of the supervisor that assist workers' family responsibilities are referred to as Family Supportive Supervisor (Hammer et al., 2009). The family-supportive supervisor behavior has been discovered positive outcomes such as greater job satisfaction, better task performance, and less work-family conflict (Crain & Stevens, 2018). Supervisors who are respectful of workers' families have a positive impact on their work–life balance and supervisory assistance is amplified by supporting organizations and spouses (Greenhaus et al., 2003). The Family supportive supervisor behavior contains of four main dimensions: which are emotional support, instrumental support, role model behaviors and recognition of the strategic importance of work–family issues, also called as proactive creative work–family management, Emotional support emphasize on views that an individual is cared for, that their feelings are properly considered, and that they feel comfortable discussing work–family conflicts with their superiors when required. Instrumental support is reactive and related to work and family behavioral types in the form of arranging flexible work (Hammer et al., 2009). Role model behaviors refer to supervisors exhibiting how to balance work and family life on the workplace, as a result, employees are aware of what is and what is not an acceptable conduct in terms of work family conflicts. Creative work–family management requires proactive and innovative approaches and involves acting at an organizational level (Hammer et al., 2009). Based on the aforementioned metrics, it is possible to infer that a variety of supervisory supports would have an effect on how workers meet their job and family

obligations, resulting in increased work efficiency (Kong, 2013). Work-family conflict is described as a form of inter-role conflict in which one's role pressure clashes with the role pressures of another, resulting in an imbalance (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The incapability of meeting each of determinants of family matters and work matters lead to work-life imbalance and ultimately to work-family conflicts (Baltes et al., 2017). When an individual is in incongruity to perform each role, role conflicts occur. The work-family conflict is an intensifying challenge in today's business world and a vast majority of men and women report that work disrupts their family responsibilities (Glavin & Schieman, 2011).

4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction
In this chapter, the researchers focus on the explanation of the research approach with the aim of meeting set research objective. This study was carried out according to a well-structured approach and the authors clearly elaborate on the key parameters of the research work. The target population of this study and the chosen sample size information is clearly comprised in this chapter. Moreover, this chapter explains the research instrument that was practiced to gather quantitative and the variable measurement mechanisms and subsequently end with a summery.

4.2. Population
In order to experiment the relationship of Family-supportive supervisor behavior on the Work-family conflicts of employees in the logistics sector Sri Lanka, the target population of this study was identified as the logistics sector employees from various sectors in the logistics industry covering all the associated sections including transportation companies such as major couriers companies including FedEx, DHL, and UPS, warehouses such as Sri Lankan bonded warehouse in Seeduwa and Hayleys Advantis free trade zone, major logistics companies such as EFL logistics, DPL logistics, Sri Lanka port authority, Shipping companies such as Saluta international, FedEx trade networks, Shipping lines Sri Lanka, EFL Globals, and in addition to the direct populations from the logistic sector, we have chosen SMEs in Sri Lanka who possess shipping, warehousing, packaging, Materials handling, inventory management, order fulfillment, operations, manufacturing, procurement, customer service departments in their organizations

4.3. Sample design and sampling technique

In order to determine the impact of Family-supportive supervisor behavior on the entire employees in the logistics sector of Sri Lanka, a small sample size from the entire population was chosen to carry out the research work. There are around 40,000 to 50,000 employees in the logistics sector and since it is not possible to experiment the study with the entire population in terms of time limitations, the extent of scope assigned and practical limitation of cost, etc. only 250 employees in the logistics sector Sri Lanka was selected as the population of the present study to ensure that critical study was done and subsequently, the results would offer worth insights about the impact of Family-supportive supervisor behavior's impact on Work-family conflicts of employees in logistics sector Sri Lanka. In order to ensure an in-depth analysis and critical study was done the researchers practiced the convenience sampling approach to gather data from

the targeted sample size of the population. Since this research work was carried out amidst the Covid-19 pandemic situation, the researchers were abstained from physically reaching out to logistics plants to obtain the required data and as a result of that the researchers had to rely on convenience sampling method where the required data was properly collected at researcher's convenience by distributing the questionnaire survey with the logistics companies accordingly. As aforementioned, the questionnaire survey was distributed among the logistics companies such as FedEx, DHL, and UPS, warehouses such as Sri Lankan bonded warehouse in Seeduwa and Hayleys Advantis free trade zone, major logistics companies such as EFL logistics, DPL logistics, Sri Lanka port authority, Shipping companies such as Saluta international, FedEx trade networks, Shipping lines Sri Lanka, EFL Globals, etc. The attributes of the selected sample size may include almost any demographic variables including, Age, income level, sex, geographical existence, etc. The targeted sample size was existed in different geopolitical boundaries and reached to head offices, regional offices, and city branches to gather data appropriately. Amidst the data collection, the pilot study was carried out on a sample of randomly selected employees' responses that we have been received so far.

4.4. Research instrument

The authors employed a structured questionnaire to collect the data from the targeted sample size and it was purely developed based on the journal article of Development and Validation of a Multidimensional Measure of Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors by Leslie B. Hammer in 2009. The questionnaire comprises total of 45 questions including 09 demographic questions and 28 questions under independent variable and subsequently 08 questions under the dependent variable. The researchers main focus in designing the questionnaire was to keep the questions as simple as possible for respondents to easily understand.

Variable	Question
General Questions	Gender
	What is your age
	Marital status
	What is your highest level of education
	Overall working experience in the logistics industry (years)
	Current designation
	Working experience under the current workplace
	Department you work
	Number of daily working hours
	FSSB (Independent Variable)

Emotional support of supervisor	My supervisor understands my family demands
	My supervisor acknowledges that I have obligations as a family member
	My immediate supervisor is always available when I have to discuss any personal matters
	My supervisor is willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and family life
	Top management in my organization inspires supervisors to be sensitive to employees' family and personal concerns
	My supervisor takes the time to learn about my personal needs
	My supervisor makes me feel comfortable talking to him or her about my conflicts between work and non-work
	My supervisor and I can talk effectively to solve conflicts between work and non-work issues
Instrumental support of supervisor	Generally, all supervising staff in your organization are rather accepting to family-related requirements
	My supervisor takes the time to learn about my career goals and aspirations
	My supervisor works effectively with workers to creatively solve conflicts between work and non-work
	I can depend on my supervisor to help me support with scheduling conflicts if I need it
	My supervisor organizes staff in the department or unit to support your employees and the corporation
	When assigning tasks, my immediate supervisor usually discusses with me, seldom gives orders unilaterally
	Supervisors understand that employees must prioritize their families in the case of a dispute
Role model of supervisor	My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance
	My supervisor has the technical skills to help me do my job well
	My supervisor provides me with the coaching and guidance I need to improve performance
	My supervisor demonstrates effective behaviours in how to juggle work and non-work balance
	When assigning tasks, my immediate supervisor often emphasizes efficiency and asks subordinates to finish the tasks as soon as possible
	Usually, my immediate supervisor only proposes the goals or needs of tasks, and lets me decide the method of working
	My supervisor demonstrates a person can jointly be successful on and off the job

	My immediate supervisor often emphasizes the importance of tasks and ask me to do my best
Creative Work-family engagement of supervisor	My supervisor thinks about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit employees and the company
	My supervisor asks for suggestions to make it easier for employees to balance work and non-work demands
	My supervisor is creative in reallocating job duties to help my department work better as a team
	My supervisor is able to manage the department as a whole team to enable everyone's needs to be met
	When assigning tasks, my immediate supervisor often tells subordinates not to spoil the relationship with certain people
	WFC (Dependent Variable)
Time based Work-family conflicts	My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like to
	The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities
	I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities
	Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me
Strain based Work-family conflicts	When I get home from work, I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/ responsibilities
	I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family
	Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home, I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy
	My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfil family duties

The questions under independent and the dependent variable was measured using the Likert scale model from strongly disagree to strongly agree scale as below,

Ex: My Supervisor understands my family demands

1- Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Average, 4 – Agree, and 5 – Strongly agree

4.5. Method of data analysis
This study was used to identify the relationship between two variables of family-supportive supervisor behavior (Independent variable) and work-family conflicts (Dependent variable). The quantitative approach was used to analyze the data. Descriptive analysis is used to illustrate the characteristics of quantitative data. The collected data from different data gathering techniques were analyzed using different analytical techniques such as regression, correlation, descriptive analysis, and hypothesis

testing. The researchers used the software of Statistical Package of the Social Science (SPSS) for analyses and visualize the data using the different analytical techniques. Further, the descriptive analysis is used for two types of performance, fundamental information on the independent and dependent variables is provided, as well as the relationships between two variables. The frequency distribution, central tendency, and variability are the three primary statistics used in descriptive analysis. In a frequency distribution, bar charts and pie charts may be displayed, and the median, mode, and mean can be calculated in the central tendency. Regression is the statistical estimate of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables, this research uses simple regression to test the hypothesis of this research and identify the statistical relationship between each variable.

4.6. Data processing

In order for easy analysis, the gathered data proceeded through a data processing phase and the data processing task consists of two phases such as data cleanup process and the data alignment process. In the initial process of data cleanup, the gathered raw data was emphasized, and identified the omissions and errors in received responses. Furthermore, the data cleanup processes assisted in critical observation of the completed survey in terms of adherence with the assigned criterion and accuracy. The subsequent phase is data alignment and assigning numerical values to the questions based on set criteria and afterward, the coding phase focuses on giving scores for the received responses then subsequently it can be categorized into similar groups. Eventually, this assists in categorizing data into a limited number of classes.

4.7. Reliability test

Post to purifying and editing, the collated data were analyzed with the assistance of the Statistical Package for social science software. Statistical tools such as regression analysis, Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis, and descriptive analysis were used to conduct the analysis of this study.

Table 01. Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.890	250

In this study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was used to assess the questionnaire's reliability. Cronbach's alpha is a statistician's measure of test reliability, and reliability refers to the consistency with which a questionnaire examines. Cronbach's alpha can improve the strength of assessing the consistency of the research questionnaire. If a measure consistently gives comparable findings, it is considered to be highly dependable. The degree to which the results remain constant over time and provide an accurate picture of the entire survey population is called reliability. If the research results can be replicated using the same method, the research tool is considered reliable In quantitative research, there are three forms of reliability. (1) The degree to which the measurement remains the same even after repeated measurements. (2) Stability of measurements over time. (3) Similarity of measurements in a specific period. In this

research Pilot test, Cronbach's Alpha was .890 with a significance of $P<0.005$, thus the internal consistency was excellent and the research tool was reliable and given credible results.

5. Results/Analysis and Discussion

5.1. Descriptive statistics

The present study was conducted based on 250 participants as mentioned above (in Section 3), of which 52 (20%) were female and 198 (80%) were male. In terms of marital status, 118 employees (48%) were married while 132 employees (52%) were unmarried. Out of respondents, 54 (22%) were in the 18-25 years age category, 124 (49%) were 25-35 years old, 54 (22%) were 35-45 years old and 18 (7%) were 46 years and above.
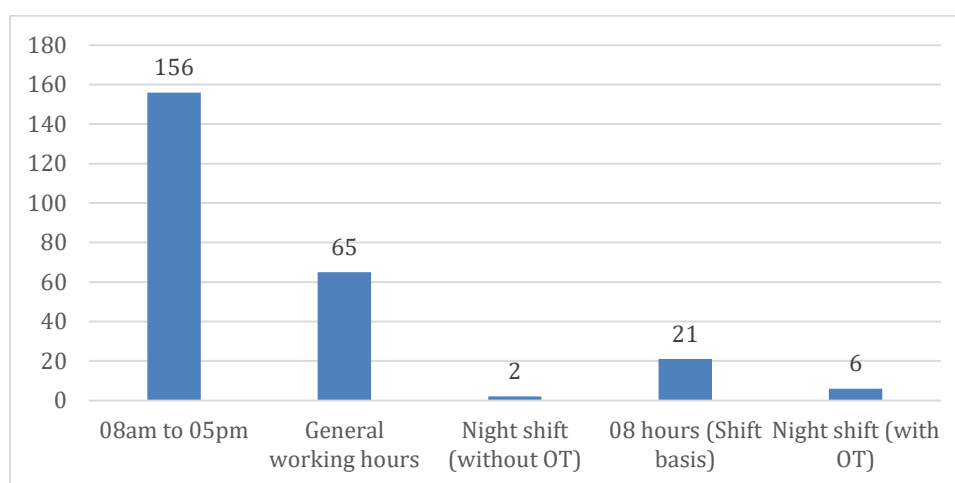

Figure 01. Number of daily working hours (Logistics sector employees in Sri Lanka)

Source: Authors' illustrations.

Figure 01 demonstrates that 156 (62%) employees were working for 08 hours (08:00AM to 05:00AM) while 21 employees (8%) were working for 08 hours on a shift basis, 65 employees (27%) were working for more than 08 hours including overtime payments, 02 employees (1%) were working for night shift with over time and 06 employees (2%) working for the night shift without overtime payments. The data were gathered during Jun, July & August 2021.
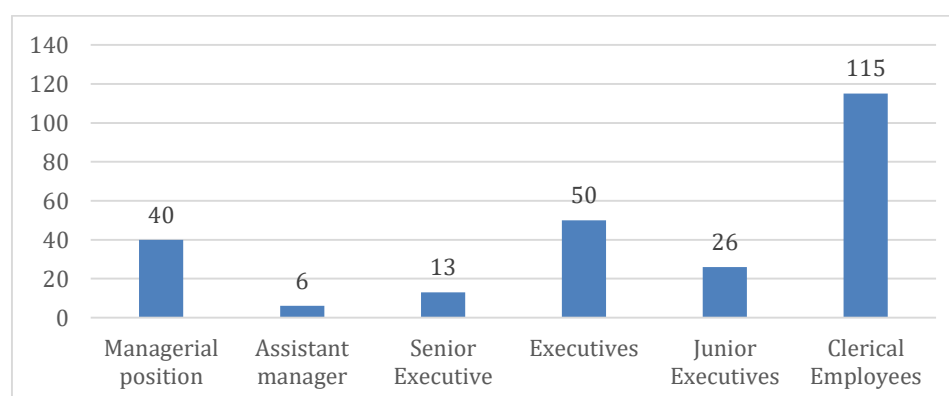

Figure 02. Employment categories (Logistics sector employees in Sri Lanka)

As above bar chart demonstrates the major portion of the employees belongs to clerical employment carder in terms of the positions such as Delivery officer, Dispatcher, UTL Agent, Operation assistant, supply officer and which is about 46% (115) from the total sample while 20% (50) of the employees were working under executive category in terms of the positions such as Supervisor, team leader, supply chain executive, logistics executive, import and export executive, wharf executive and etc. Simultaneously, 16% (40) of employees were working under managerial position in the designations of operations manager, logistics manager, import and export manager, supply chain manager and the territory manager while 10% (26) of the workers were employing under junior executive category and ultimately 05% (13) workers employing under senior executive category and the 6 (3%) of the employees were in the assistant managerial designation.

According to figure 03, it delineates that major potion from the total logistics employees were working in a centralized operations department including all the above departments and which is about 34% (85) from entire sample and 21% (52) of the employees were working in a logistics department while 14% (35) of the workers are employing in a shipping department and simultaneously, number of 31 employees were working in the customer service department which is about 12% of the total sample size. There were 27 employees working in the procurement department and which is about 10% and ultimately number of 13 employees were working in the manufacturing and 07 employees were working in the warehousing department and which is about 06% and 03% of the entire sample.
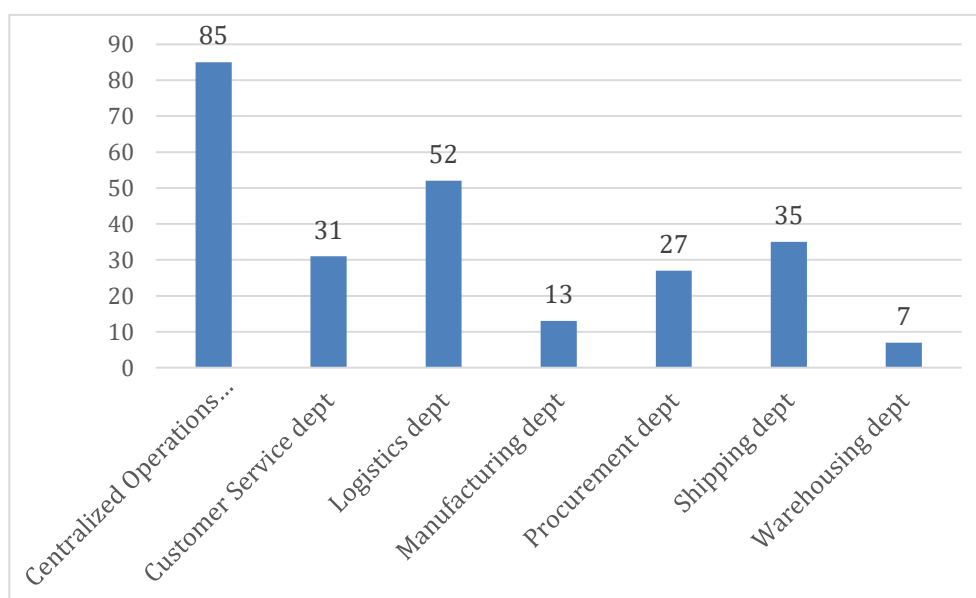

Figure 03. Logistics industry sector wise employees

5.2. Main findings

In order to emphasize the relationship between the Family-supportive behavior and the work-family conflicts from the data we gathered through the distribution of questionnaire survey, the Pearson's correlation coefficient test was conducted to measure both strength and direction of the linear relationship between the aforementioned independent and the dependent variable.

Table 02. Pearson's correlations table

Correlations		Work-Family Conflicts	Family Supportive Supervisor Behavior
Work-Family Conflicts	Pearson Correlation	1	-.232**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

As demonstrates in the above, the results of the Pearson's correlation on the relationship between the between family supportive supervisor behavior and work-family conflicts are represented as -.232 and it shows that the correlation coefficient for the relationship between family supportive supervisor behavior and work-family conflicts are linear, and has a negative weak relationship.

Table 03. Correlations of dimensions

Correlations		WFC	Emotional support	Instrumental support	Role model behavior	Creative work family engagement
WFC	Pearson Correlation	1	-.372**	-.351**	-.664**	-.454**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	250	250	250	250	250
Emotional support	Pearson Correlation	-.372**	1	-.820**	-.726**	-.737**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	250	250	250	250	250
Instrumental support	Pearson Correlation	-.351**	-.820**	1	-.783**	-.803**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	250	250	250	250	250
Role model behavior	Pearson Correlation	-.664**	-.726**	-.783**	1	-.803**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000

	N	250	250	250	250	250
Creative work family engagement	Pearson Correlation	-.454**	-.737**	-.803**	-.803**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	250	250	250	250	250
	**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The correlation between the emotional support and the work family conflict was statistically significance at the 0.01 level with a person correlation coefficient of -.372. It shows that there is a negative relationship between the emotional support and work family conflicts while the correlation between the instrumental support and the work family conflict was statistically significance at the 0.01 level with a person correlation coefficient of -.351. It shows that there is a negative relationship between the instrumental support and work family conflicts. Simultaneously, the correlation between the Role model behavior and the work family conflict was statistically significance at the 0.01 level with a person correlation coefficient of -.664. It shows that there is a negative relationship between the Role model behavior and work family conflicts. Ultimately, the correlation between the Creative work family engagement and the work family conflict was statistically significance at the 0.01 level with a person correlation coefficient of -.454. It shows that there is a negative relationship between the Creative work family engagement and work family conflicts. From the above results, it was evident the work family conflict was more moderately negatively related to the four dimensions of the independent variable.

5.3. Discussion

Family Supportive Supervisors Behavior – FSSB, Work-Family-Conflicts - WFC

According to the results from regression analysis, the correlation of Family Supportive Supervisor Behavior recorded as -0.232 with a 0.001 significance value. It indicates that Family Supportive Supervisor Behavior has a negative weak relationship with Work Family Conflicts of employees in the logistics sector in Sri Lanka. According to (Mishra & Ghosh, 2020) study also agreed that subordinates who reports to supervisors with an emotional support tend to assume that their supervisors are supportive in managing their work-family goals. This was also revealed by (Nasrin, 2010). The results of the present study further discover that creative work-family engagement behavior of the supervisor plays a vital role to overcome work-family conflicts. According to (Elise et al., 2020) the employees exhibit the highest intrinsic motivation when they have freedom on both professional and personal lives. Overall, the results discovered that employees in logistics sector Sri Lanka experiencing for a high level of Work-Family-Conflicts as a result of not having the required level of assistance and attention from their immediate supervisors and ultimately, this imbalance impacts negatively on employees' Work and family life.

6. Conclusion and Implications

Work-family conflicts is a prevalent issue of any industry and especially in logistics sector it drives as major issue due to excessive working hours with job pressure. In this study, the researchers encountered some differences in the extent of work-family conflicts on logistics employees in terms of differences in number of daily working hours. The findings of this study reveal that logistics sector employees are facing for work-family conflicts as a result of the incapability of their respective supervisor in understanding their work and family demands while employing for more hours with continuous working stress. These findings help the logistics sector stakeholders to gain a better understanding/awareness of the fundamental essentials of their supervisors' role to overcome work-family conflicts of the employees in logistics sector.

6.1. Future recommendations

Due to the prevailing Covid-19 situation of the country, the researches were constraint from collecting data mainly from logistics sector's operations employees who work more than standard working hours. This limitation hindered authors/us from picturing the bigger issue of the same sector. Hence, the present study findings can just reveal about the tip of the iceberg but can provide a framework that can be expanded and used in future research studies. Thus, the researchers further planning to conduct a qualitative study to have an in depth idea of the relationship that exists between the family-supportive supervisor behavior and work-family conflicts of the employees in the logistics sector's operations employees to discover the bigger issue/root causes of this sector. This way, the work-family conflict can be better addressed and appropriate strategies can be formulated and implemented.

Acknowledgement

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