

Relative Contributions of Childcare, Spousal Support, and Organizational Support in Reducing Work–Family Conflict for Men and Women: The Case of Turkey¹

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The overarching purpose of the study was to investigate the role of three types of social support (i.e., spousal, childcare, and organizational support) in relation to work–family conflict (WFC) in dual-earner families with children ages 0–6 years. The relationship of WFC to psychological well-being and well-being in the domain of family was explored. Finally, the relationship of spousal support to psychological well-being and marital satisfaction was examined. A total of 434 participants (237 mothers, 197 fathers) in dual-earner families in Turkey with at least one preschool child participated in the study. The relative impact of childcare, spousal support, and organizational support on WFC and outcome variables was tested simultaneously for both men and women through structural equation modeling. Spousal support was related to WFC for women, whereas both spousal and organizational support were related to WFC for men. WFC had a negative relationship with psychological well-being, marital satisfaction, and parental role performance for both men and women. Implications of the results in relation to changing gender roles in a cultural context that is characterized by high collectivism and low gender egalitarianism are discussed.

KEY WORDS: work–family conflict; social support; men and women; Turkey.

Women’s participation in the workforce is increasing all around the world (cf., Adler & Izraeli, 1994; Davidson & Burke, 2004). This trend is resulting in the transformation of traditional gender roles and raising concerns about the psychological well-being of women and men who are experiencing role overload and work–family conflict (Elloy & Smith, 2003; Staines, Pleck, Shepard, & O’Connor, 1978). During the last three decades, numerous studies have been conducted on the predictors and outcomes of the conflict between work and family

roles, which is generally referred to as “work–family conflict” (WFC). WFC is a type of inter-role conflict that occurs as a result of incompatible role pressures from the work and family domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). The direction of the conflict between work and family is inherently bidirectional (Guttek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). That is, work may interfere with the family domain (work-to-family conflict; W-to-FC) and family may interfere with the work domain (family-to-work conflict; F-to-WC). In the W-to-FC, the demands of work interfere with the performance of family responsibilities, whereas in F-to-WC, familial demands interfere with the performance of work-related responsibilities.

The purpose of the present study was to examine the role of social support in WFC for men and women in dual-earner families in Turkey with children ages 0–6 years. We had three specific aims to examine: (1) the role of three types of social support

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(spousal, childcare, and organizational support) in relation to WFC (W-to-FC and F-to-WC); (2) the relation of WFC (W-to-FC and F-to-WC) to psychological well-being as well as well-being in the domain of family; and (3) the relation of spousal support to psychological well-being and marital satisfaction.

The majority of research on WFC has been conducted in Western industrialized societies, but there is an increasing recognition of the role of culture in WFC (cf., Aryee, Luk, Leung, & Lo, 1999). Work and family issues are related to cultural beliefs, norms, and values, especially with respect to gender roles (Aryee, 1992; Lobel, 1991; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Skitmore & Ahmad, 2003; Treas & Widmer, 2000; Williams & Best, 1990). Turkey is a country that bridges east and west geographically, as well as culturally. The country is in a state of economic and cultural transition. Although 98% of the Turkish population is Muslim, Turkey has officially been a secular state since the early 1920s with the adoption of the Parliamentary Democratic Government System. After the end of the Islamic Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic started the era of modernization in Turkey with a strong emphasis on liberalization and the emancipation of women. Entry into the professions by women was very important in the modernization of the Republic.

According to recent data (Aycan, 2004), Turkish women make up 32% of professionals in scientific and technical jobs, 35% of managerial personnel, and 11% of entrepreneurs, directors, and top management positions. Turkish women also represent a substantial proportion of professions such as pharmacists (60%), physicians (19%), dentists (30%), lawyers (34%), and professors (23%) (Gürüz, 2001). With the increasing involvement of women in the workforce, cultural values and norms with respect to gender roles have been undergoing a rapid transition. Women and men in professional jobs are trying to adjust to the "modern" norms of gender roles while keeping the traditional values of familism and collectivism intact. This transition makes Turkey a unique cultural context in which to study WFC.

According to Lopata's (1966) model of family stages, demands on the time and energy of parents are the strongest in families with infants or children at the preschool age. There is strong evidence that mothers of children aged 0–6 years are at great risk of psychological distress (Barnett, 1993), and they experience more conflict than mothers of older children

do (e.g., Beutell & Greenhaus, 1980; Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980). Research in recent years points to the fact that WFC is not an issue that only concerns women (e.g., Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994; Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997; Loerch, Russell, & Rush, 1989). As women with children are increasingly employed, new roles and role changes emerge for both men and women in such a way that women are more involved in work outside the home and men are more involved in work within the home (Barnett & Baruch, 1987; Eagle et al., 1997; Frone & Rice, 1987). The role of social support in reducing WFC for men and women has been examined extensively in the literature with specific emphasis on spousal and organizational support (e.g., Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). However, the relative importance of different sources of support in relation to WFC for men and women has not been explored separately in a single study. The present study was designed to fill this void by examining the role of three sources of social support simultaneously: childcare support, spousal support, and organizational support.

Social Support and WFC: Theoretical Background

Social support refers to interpersonal relationships and social interactions that help to protect individuals from the effects of stress (Kessler, Price, & Wortman, 1985; Nielson, Carlson, & Lankau, 2001). Both the availability and the quality of social support are important social assets for individual adjustment and well-being. Social support has consistently been related to increased health and well-being (Cohen, 1988; House, Landis, & Umberson, 1988). Not only the actual availability of social support but also perceived likelihood of receiving social support have been found to be related to greater job satisfaction, lower job-related tension, and lower probability of terminating employment (Bedeian, Mossholder, & Touliatos, 1986).

The role of social support has been an issue of debate in the literature. Social support has been postulated both as a moderator between stressors and psychological well-being and as a main effect that influences psychological well-being (e.g., Cohen & Wills, 1985). Carlson and Perrewé (1999) studied family and work support as an independent variable and as a moderator in the role stressors and WFC, and they concluded that social support could be best conceptualized as a variable that directly influences perceived stressors. More recently, Grandey

and Cropanzano's (1999) conservation of resources model has been applied to WFC (e.g., Allen, 2001). The model suggests that individuals are motivated to acquire and maintain resources (i.e., social support networks) while coping with stress, which implies that social support has a direct effect on WFC. We took a similar approach in our research, as we proposed that three main sources of support (i.e., spousal, organizational, and childcare support) were directly related to WFC.

Spousal support is the help, advice, understanding, and the like that spouses provide for one another. Two forms of spousal support (emotional and instrumental) have been conceptualized and empirically tested (Adams, King, & King, 1996). Emotional support includes emphatic understanding and listening, affirmation of affection, advice, and genuine concern for the welfare of the partner. Instrumental support is tangible help from the partner in household chores and childcare. Increased spousal support is shown to be associated with lower levels of WFC (Aryee et al., 1999; Burke & Greenglass, 1999; Erdwins, Buffardi, & Casper, 2001; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999), higher levels of psychological well-being (e.g., Ganster, Fusilier, & Mayes, 1986), greater life satisfaction (LaRocco, House, & French, 1980), and better marital adjustment (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). Other researchers concurred that spousal support was particularly influential in reducing F-to-WC (Adams et al., 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

Instrumental spousal support eases the burden of family demands and enables individuals to devote more time to work, whereas emotional spousal support enhances feelings of self-efficacy both at home and at work (Parasuraman, Purohit, & Godshalk, 1996). In light of the literature, we expected spousal support to have a direct and positive relationship with psychological well-being and marital satisfaction.

H1: Spousal support would be positively associated with psychological well-being and marital satisfaction.

Organizational support has been recognized as playing a key role in employees' ability to balance work and family responsibilities (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2002). The literature discusses three components of organizational support, which we have

included in our study: supervisory support, organizational policies and practices to reduce WFC, and time demands and inflexibility in employees' jobs. Our conceptualization of organizational support resembles the construct of "work-family culture" (e.g., Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999, p. 392) that comprises managerial support for work-family balance, career consequences associated with utilizing work-family benefits, and organizational time expectations that may interfere with family responsibilities. First, there is the support provided by the supervisor (e.g., Eby et al., 2002; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). As in the case of spousal support, supervisory support can be conceptualized as having two components: instrumental and emotional support (Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997).

Instrumental supervisory support refers to the provision of direct assistance and advice with the intent of helping an employee to meet his or her family responsibilities (Frone et al., 1997). Supportive supervisors are instrumental in making and interpreting organizations' work-family policies (Eby et al., 2002). On the other hand, emotional supervisory support refers to emphatic understanding and listening, sensitivity toward the WFC issues, and genuine concern for the well-being of the employee and his or her family (Frone et al., 1997). The importance of supervisory support is emphasized to such an extent that some researchers asserted that the well-being of families lies largely in the hands of first-line supervisors (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989).

The second component of organizational support is family-supportive organizational policies that are defined as services and allowances such as flex-time, job sharing, and childcare facilities that are designed to help employees to make arrangements to balance their work and family responsibilities (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). The final component is the organizational time demands that refer to the duration and flexibility of work hours (Behson, 2002). Work overload that is coupled with inflexible and long work hours increases WFC (Aryee et al., 1999; Clark, 2001; Duxbury et al., 1994).

The final source of support included in the present study is childcare support. Although childcare support has not been extensively studied by WFC researchers, it is an important support for dual-earner families with young children. Failure to find satisfactory childcare arrangements is a primary reason why women leave jobs (Rosin & Korabik, 1990), and it is a source of strain-based conflict (Wallace,

1999). Both women and men are reported to spend almost one-half of their time at work unproductively due to childcare problems (Fernandez, 1986). Satisfaction with childcare support leads to lower levels of WFC (Ahmad, 2002; Bedeian, Burke, & Moffett, 1988), as well as better concentration at work and enhanced job performance and satisfaction (Aryee & Luk, 1996).

In light of the literature, we proposed that three main sources of support were associated with two types of WFC differentially as stated in the following hypotheses.

H2: Spousal support would be more instrumental in reducing F-to-WC than W-to-FC.

H3: Childcare support would be more instrumental in reducing F-to-WC than W-to-FC.

H4: Organizational support would be more instrumental in reducing W-to-FC than F-to-WC.

Psychological Well-Being and Quality of Family Life

The outcome variables in the present study are parents' psychological well-being (life satisfaction and depression) and the quality of family life (satisfaction with parental role performance and marital satisfaction). Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton (2000) conducted a comprehensive review of the outcomes associated with WFC. The findings of their meta-analysis revealed that several of the outcome variables in the present study had a strong relationship with WFC: the weighted mean correlation of WFC with life satisfaction was $-.28$, depression was $.32$, and marital satisfaction/functioning was $-.23$.

One of the most authoritative theoretical frameworks in the WFC literature was proposed by Frone and his colleagues (Frone et al., 1992, 1997). According to their theory, work stressors lead to higher interference of work-to-family, and, in turn, increase family distress or dissatisfaction. Similarly, family stressors lead to higher interference of family-to-work and cause work distress or dissatisfaction. Distress in both family and work domains is associated with depression.

In support of Frone et al.'s model, studies have consistently showed that WFC decreases life satisfaction (e.g., Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995) and increases mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, burnout, and substance abuse (e.g., Frone, 2000; Vinokur, Pierce, & Buck, 1999). Again, in sup-

port of Frone et al.'s model, well-being in the family domain (e.g., quality of family life) is associated negatively with WFC (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). In our study, quality of family life has two components: satisfaction with parental role performance and marital satisfaction. Satisfaction with parental role performance has three different indicators: satisfaction with parenthood, satisfaction with time spent with children, and employment-related guilt. Numerous studies show that the experience of WFC is related to lower marital satisfaction and adjustment (e.g., Burley, 1995; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Frone et al., 1992; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998).

WFC also decreases satisfaction with role performance both at work and at home (cf., Bedeian et al., 1988; Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Individuals who are experiencing WFC are less likely to be satisfied with their roles as parents. Parental guilt has not been studied extensively by WFC researchers, but it emerged as a significant theme in qualitative studies (e.g., Aycan & Eskin, 2000; Napholz, 2000; Simon, 1995). In the WFC context, guilt arouses anxiety that occurs as a result of perceived failure to fulfill prescribed gender roles (cf., Chapman, 1987; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991). According to Staines' (1980) fixed-sum-of-scarce-resources theory, women's involvement in the work role may result in guilt regarding their performance as parents.

In accordance with Frone et al.'s theory, we predicted that interference of work-to-family would be associated with lower quality of family life. In accordance of the theory, we also expected that both types of conflict would be associated with lower psychological well-being.

H5: Compared to F-to-WC, W-to-FC would be more strongly associated with lower quality of family life (i.e., satisfaction with parental role performance and marital satisfaction).

H6: Both types of WFC would be negatively associated with psychological well-being.

Gender Differences

Gender differences in WFC remain inconclusive. Several researchers (e.g., Duxbury et al., 1994; Frone et al., 1992; Gutek et al., 1991) found that women experience interference from work-to-family more than men do, whereas others (e.g., Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998) found no

gender differences. One of the most influential theories in explaining gender differences is Pleck's (1977) asymmetric boundary permeability theory. The theory first predicts that work and family boundaries are asymmetrically permeable; that is, W-to-FC is more prevalent than F-to-WC. Indeed, studies have shown that individuals typically report more W-to-FC than F-to-WC (e.g., Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Gutek et al., 1991). Pleck contends that men allow greater interference from work-to-family than do women. However, in today's competitive work environment women also allow work to interfere with family, which results in higher conflict for women than for men because gender role expectations in society do not allow it (Parasuraman et al., 1996). According to Karasek (1979), women have less control over their ability to satisfy work and family expectations, which, in turn, leads to higher WFC (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Duxbury et al., 1994). Working mothers are more strongly affected by parental demands than are working fathers because they have to fulfill multiple roles simultaneously (e.g., parent, self, worker, and spouse), rather than sequentially as men do (Hall, 1972). Not only do women have more family demands than men do, but they also experience more sanctions than men do for noncompliance with family demands (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) found that spousal support is extremely important for women in cultures where there is low gender egalitarianism. In such cultures, women, more than men, tend to internalize traditional gender roles and believe that marital and parental relationships suffer as a consequence of women's work outside the home (Emmons, Biernat, Tiedje, Lang, & Wortman, 1990). Turkey was found to be low in gender egalitarianism (Fikret-Paşa, Kabasakal, & Bodur, 2001). Professional women in Turkey more strongly endorse the viewpoint that "women's place is at home and near her husband" than do men (Aycan, 2004). It was, therefore, expected that spousal support would emerge as the most important source of support for the women in Turkey.

Research shows that men's well-being is also associated chiefly with spousal support (e.g., Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993). However, when spousal support was juxtaposed with organizational support, we expected the latter to play a more important role in men's WFC. This is in line with Etzioni's (1984) contention that stress is buffered by work sources of support for men but by family sources of support for women. People are in-

fluenced by the support they receive from the domain that they feel primarily responsible for: family for women and work for men (cf., Cinamon & Rich, 2002). Due to the transitional nature of Turkey's economic and social development, urban middle-class men and women in Turkey are experiencing a transition in gender roles. Now more than before, women are more involved in work, and men are more involved in family. This involvement is expected to produce stress because of the belief that work involvement threatens a woman's role as mother and wife and that family involvement threatens a man's role as a committed employee (cf., Gutek et al., 1991). Support from the primary domain therefore, is critical in reducing the perceived threat to prescribed gender roles and in increasing the sense of being "approved of" and "accepted" by those in the primary social domain.

H7: For women, spousal support would be a more important source of support in reducing F-to-WC than childcare and organizational support.

H8: For men, organizational support would be a more important source of support in reducing W-to-FC than childcare and spousal support.

The hypotheses are combined and presented in the conceptual model to be tested in the present study (see Fig. 1). According to the proposed mediated model, the three types of social support are related to lower F-to-WC and W-to-FC, which, in turn, are associated with better psychological well-being, higher satisfaction with parental role performance, and higher marital satisfaction. In addition to the mediated effect of spousal support, the model proposes that it is also directly related to psychological well-being and marital satisfaction.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

The sample comprised 434 participants: 237 mothers (54.6%) and 197 fathers (45.4%) in dual-earner families with at least one child between the ages of 0 and 6 years. The sample was drawn from four large banks. We purposefully chose the banking sector for this study because it is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors in Turkey, and because it has high rates of women employees at every level. We sent out letters to general managers of 18 banks, and 4 of them granted us permission to collect data from their employees. Human resource

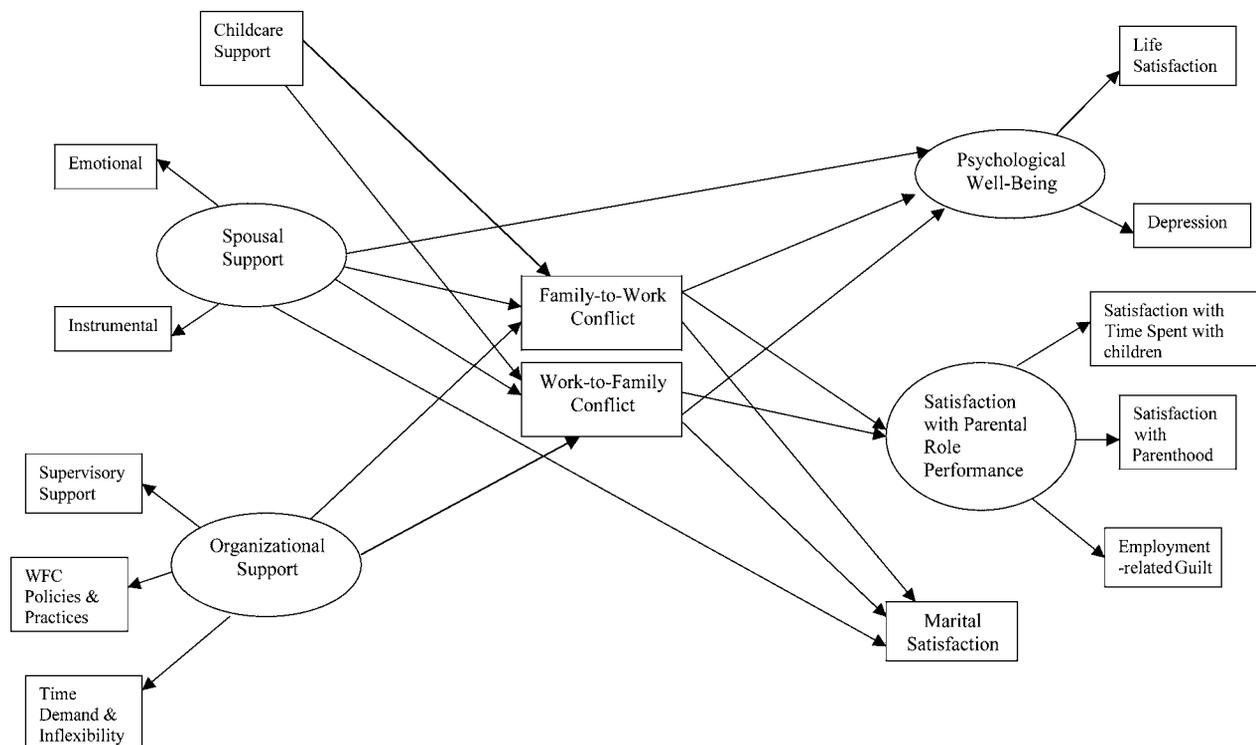


Fig. 1. Proposed conceptual model of the study.

management (HRM) departments of the banks provided us with a list of male and female employees who met our sampling criteria: being married, having a spouse who is also working, having at least one child between the ages of 0 and 6, working full-time on permanent basis, working in the organization for at least 1 year, and holding a white-collar job position. We received names of 2,300 employees (45% women; 55% men). We randomly drew the names of 400 male and 400 female employees, and then distributed our questionnaires to them with the assistance of the HRM departments. Each questionnaire also included a self-stamped envelope with the return address of the first author. At the end of the second week, a reminder note was sent out to everyone to increase the response rate. We received a total of 443 questionnaires, and discarded 9 of them due to excessive missing data. The response rate was 59.25% for women and 49.25% for men; this is above the typical response rate (i.e., around 30%) for questionnaire-based field studies (e.g., Rosenfeld, Edwards, & Thomas, 1993).

Table I presents the demographic characteristics of both women and men. The only gender

Table I. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

	Women N = 237	Men N = 197
Age		
M	31.8	35.4
SD	3.9	4.6
Education (%)		
Less than high school	4.9	3.1
High school	17.9	23.0
University	72.8	64.0
Master's	2.5	3.7
Doctorate	1.9	6.2
Job position (%)		
Manager	44	58
Nonmanager	56	42
Tenure (months)		
M	87	89
SD	51.05	61.81
Number of children (%)		
One	71.5	59.5
Two	27	35.4
Primary childcare support (%)		
Daycare	15.2	18.6
Nanny	23.4	19.4
Maternal grandmother	38.2	32.2
Paternal grandmother	22	29.8
Sister of one of the parents	1.2	—

differences in the demographic characteristics of the sample were age, job position, and number of children. As can be seen from the table, the mean age of the fathers was slightly higher than that of mothers, $t(459) = -9.59, p < .001$. The distribution of educational attainment of mothers and fathers was similar. Two-thirds of the sample held a university degree that is representative of the population of professionals or white-collar employees in corporate business life in Turkey. The percentage of men with a managerial position was slightly higher than that of women, $\chi^2(1) = 8.26, p < .05$. Compared to male respondents, a higher percentage of female respondents had one child between the ages of 0 and 6 years, $\chi^2(1) = 15.26, p < .01$. The mean age of children (including all children in the family) was 59.51 months (SD 35.5 months). The data came from branches of banks in 38 different cities in Turkey, including the three economically most developed cities: Istanbul (55%), Ankara (10%), and Izmir (10%). Although Turkey is a relatively homogenous country in terms of its ethnic, religious, and cultural makeup, there tends to be some regional differences in values (cf., Güvenç, 1994). Therefore, obtaining data from a variety of different cities increased the representativeness of the sample. To further ensure the representativeness of the sample, we compared the demographic characteristics of the respondents (e.g., age, educational attainment, number, and ages of children) with the rest of the employees who met the sampling criteria, and we detected no significant differences between groups.

Measurement

The research instrument was a questionnaire that comprised 14 parts selected to measure variables under three categories: social support, WFC, and outcome variables.

Childcare Support

Because our sample comprised working parents, all of them had daycare or a home-based childcare facility available for their children (see Table I). This part, therefore, was concerned with the satisfaction with (rather than availability of) childcare arrangements set up for children under age 7. It was assessed by one question asked about the extent to which the respondent was satisfied with the daycare

and/or home-based care (1 = *not satisfied at all*; 5 = *very satisfied*).

Spousal Support

The 44-item Family Support Inventory developed by King, Mattimore, King, and Adams (1995) was used to assess perceived support received from the spouse. This measure has two subscales: a 29-item emotional sustenance subscale and a 15-item instrumental assistance subscale. Emotional sustenance focuses on spousal behaviors or attitudes geared toward providing encouragement, understanding, attention, positive regard, and guidance with problem solving. Included in this scale are behaviors such as willingness to listen to, talk to, give advice, and show care and concern for the well-being of the spouse. Instrumental assistance, on the other hand, includes behaviors and attitudes aimed at facilitating day-to-day family/household operations by sharing household tasks, actively relieving the partner of undue responsibility for family obligations and duties, and structuring family life so as to accommodate the partner's work schedule or job requirements. The extent of agreement with each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). One-half of the items is reverse coded to minimize the response bias. Higher scores obtained from both subscales indicate higher social support received from the spouse. The internal consistency (Cronbach's α) of the emotional sustenance scale was .94 and of the instrumental assistance was .93 for the present sample.

Organizational Support

Organizational support was measured with three indicators: supervisory support, WFC policies and practices, and time demands and inflexibility.

Supervisory support was measured by 10 items that were developed on the basis of a study by Galinsky, Bond, and Friedman (1996). Items assessed the extent to which managers provided support to employees with young children. This support was in form of both showing sympathy and understanding (e.g., "My supervisor gives advice on how to handle my work and family responsibilities") and helping the employee to arrange work schedules to accommodate family demands (e.g., "My supervisor allows for flexibility in my working arrangements to enable me to handle my family responsibilities").

Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *almost never*; 5 = *almost always*), and high scores indicate high support. This was a reliable measure of the construct ($\alpha = .85$) in the present sample.

Organizational WFC practices were assessed by seven items developed to measure the existence of services that the organization provides to assist employees with childcare. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not their organization provided services such as daycare at work, daycare subcontracted by the organization, contribution to the expenses of daycare that the employee arranged himself or herself, help with finding a caregiver, or training on childcare and education. Each item was coded dichotomously (0 = *no*; 1 = *yes*). An index that ranged from 0 to 7 was created by adding up all the responses. The higher the score on this index, the higher the organizational support and services to assist employees' families.

Time demands and inflexibility was measured by an 11-item scale (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991) that was designed to measure the extent to which participants experience overload, flexibility, and control in their jobs (e.g., "I have a little say over when I start and stop work," "In my job, I have too much to do."). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate more demand and less flexibility. The internal consistency of this scale was $\alpha = .84$ in the present sample.

Work-Family Conflict

The 10-item scale developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996) was used to measure WFC. One-half of the items measures F-to-WC, and the other half measures W-to-FC. Sample items include "The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life" (W-to-FC) and "Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties" (F-to-WC). The response scale is a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 indicates *strong agreement* and 1 indicates *strong disagreement*. Higher scores indicate higher conflict. The internal consistency of both scales was high in the present study ($\alpha = .89$ for family-to-work, $\alpha = .90$ for work-to-family).

Psychological Well-being

There were two indicators of psychological well-being: life satisfaction and depression. The six-item Life Satisfaction scale developed by Diener,

Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) was used in this study as one of the indices of psychological well-being. Sample items include "In most ways my life is close to ideal" and "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing." A 5-point Likert scale was used to respond to each item (5 = *strongly agree*; 1 = *strongly disagree*). The scale was reliable for this sample ($\alpha = .86$). Higher scores obtained from this scale indicate higher life satisfaction.

To assess psychological well-being, the 21-item Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979) was used to measure the frequency and intensity of depressive symptoms. This measure was translated into Turkish and validated for Turkish populations by Hisli (1988). For each question, there are four options from which to choose. Participants are asked to respond to each question based on their feelings during the last week, including the present day. Responses to each question are coded from 0 (the first option) to 3 (the fourth option). The higher the score, the higher the depressive tendencies. Scores on the overall scale can range from 0 to 63; 17 is the cutoff score for clinical depression among Turkish samples. This measure was found to be reliable for the sample of the present study ($\alpha = .87$).

Satisfaction with Parental Role Performance

This construct was captured by three variables: satisfaction with time spent with children, satisfaction with parenthood, and employment-related guilt. One question was designed to measure the level of satisfaction with the time spend with children. The question read as follows: "To what extent are you satisfied with the time you spend with your children?" There were five options from which to choose. The responses ranged from 1 (*I spend much less time with my children than I wish*) to 5 (*I spend much more time with my children than I wish*).

Satisfaction with parenthood emerged as an important outcome of WFC in our previous qualitative studies in Turkey (e.g., Aycan, 2004). There are no instruments in the literature specifically designed to measure satisfaction with the role as a parent. Based on the general concept of "family role satisfaction" (Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983), we generated 14 items to measure the extent to which respondents were satisfied with their performance as parents. Sample items include "I believe that I am a very good mother/father," "I believe that I meet all the needs of my child(ren),"

and “Overall, I am very satisfied with my parenthood.” The response scale was a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate higher satisfaction with parenthood. The internal consistency of this scale was $\alpha = .87$.

A nine-item scale was developed to measure respondents’ experiences of guilt resulting from working and not being able to spend enough time with their family. We generated items for this scale on the basis of our focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with more than 50 working women in Turkey (see Ayca, 2004). Sample items include “I feel guilty for going to work and leaving my children everyday,” “I feel guilty for not being able to spend as much time as I wish with my children.” Responses were on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate higher guilt in this measure. This scale was found to be a reliable measure of the underlying construct ($\alpha = .89$).

Marital Satisfaction

To assess the quality of the marital relationship, the Family Assessment Device developed by Gülerce (1996) was utilized. Gülerce developed and validated this measure to capture the transformational nature of the family structure in Turkish families. The 23-item scale measures three main dimensions of marital harmony: communication, coherence, and emotional bonding between spouses. Examples of the items include the following: “In our family, we can talk about every issue freely and openly,” “There are other people (e.g., friends, relatives, parents) to whom I feel closer than my husband/wife” (reverse coded item). The extent of agreement with each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). One-third of the items is reverse coded to minimize the response bias. Higher scores obtained from this scale indicate greater satisfaction with marital relationships. The reliability of the measure for the present sample was $\alpha = .88$.

Although the questionnaires were completed anonymously, the literature cautions us against the tendency to respond in a socially desirable way in collectivistic cultures such as Turkey (cf., van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). To ensure that this bias would not put our findings at risk, we included the seven-item version of Marlowe–Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964)

in our questionnaire. The internal consistency was $\alpha = .83$ for the present study.

In the last part of the questionnaire, participants were asked to provide information about themselves in such categories as age, gender, education, city of residency, tenure in the current organization, current job position, number of children, and ages of children.

The scales in English were translated into Turkish by the researchers and were back-translated by another researcher who is bilingual and was blind to the goals of the present study. This procedure is recommended by Brislin (1980) to ensure both linguistic and conceptual equivalence. To test the clarity and relevance of the questions, we conducted a pilot study with 25 couples (i.e., 25 men and 25 women) whose characteristics met our sampling criteria. We discussed whichever questions appeared not to be clear and relevant to them and then modified a few questions on the basis of their suggestions.

RESULTS

Descriptive Findings

Prior to the test of the hypothesized model, we examined the descriptive findings and gender differences on all study variables. Table II presents descriptive statistics for all the study variables. A paired sample *t*-test revealed that both men and women experienced higher W-to-FC than F-to-WC, $t_{\text{women}}(236) = -14.04, p < .001$; $t_{\text{men}}(196) = -11.56, p < .001$. As can be seen in Table II, independent sample *t*-tests revealed a number of interesting gender differences. Women experienced greater W-to-FC than men did. Compared to women, men reported receiving more support from their spouse and supervisor at work. Men also experienced lower employment-related guilt and higher satisfaction with their parental role performance.

Table III presents Pearson’s correlation coefficients among all the study variables for both men and women. For both women and men, spousal support (both instrumental and emotional) was strongly and negatively correlated with F-to-WC, whereas the correlation between childcare support and F-to-WC was modest and only for women. Organizational support (especially the time demand component) was strongly correlated with W-to-FC for both men and women. Overall, both types of WFC as well as spousal support were correlated with indices of

Table II. Descriptive Statistics for all Study Variables

	Scale	Men		Women		Independent sample
	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> -test
Family-to-work conflict	5	1.86	.87	1.96	.89	1.19
Work-to-family conflict	5	2.59	.72	2.78	.70	2.81**
Childcare support	5	3.05	.90	3.41	.68	2.05*
Spousal support (received)-emotional	5	3.86	.53	3.73	.62	-2.23*
Spousal support (received)-instrumental	5	3.91	.48	3.35	.81	-8.70***
Supervision support	5	3.25	.81	3.01	.72	-3.13**
Organizational WFC practices	7	2.92	.70	2.44	.55	.42
Time demand and inflexibility	5	3.44	.68	3.39	.67	.79
Depression	63	7.88	6.77	9.00	7.17	1.71
Life satisfaction	5	3.26	.70	3.41	.70	2.33*
Satisfaction with parenthood	5	3.56	.52	3.45	.56	-2.18*
Satisfaction with time spent with children	5	2.71	.99	2.53	1.03	-1.86
Employment-related guilt	5	2.36	.77	2.69	.81	4.28***
Marital satisfaction	5	3.71	.50	3.79	.55	.71

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

psychological well-being and quality of family life. It should also be noted that the social desirability score did not correlate significantly with any of the key study variables.

Test of the Model

AMOS (Version 3.6; Arbuckle, 1997) was used as the structural equation-modeling program. The major strength of structural equation modeling is that through the use of latent variables, it permits estimation of relationships among theoretically interesting constructs that are free of the effects of measurement unreliability. Structural equation modeling allows simultaneous estimation of a measurement model that relates observed indicators to latent concepts by providing factor loadings and a structural model that relates latent concepts to one another by providing path coefficients (Hayduk, 1987). This procedure was chosen in this study, so that it would be possible to test both the validity of measures and the relationships among underlying concepts.

In the present study, spousal support, organizational support, psychological well-being, and satisfaction with parental role performance were designated as latent constructs. Each latent construct comprised several observed variables as seen in Fig. 1. Several criteria were used to evaluate the model fit. Ratio of chi-square to the degrees of freedom is an index of model fit and parsimony. For χ^2/df ratio, Jöreskog and Sörbom (1982) recommended a value approaching 2 as acceptable. Root mean

square residual (RMSR) is based on the average of the squared discrepancies between the observed and implied covariance matrices. A value less than or equal to .10 is acceptable. Goodness-of-fit index (GFI) is based on the sum of the squared discrepancies between the observed and the implied covariance matrices (Jöreskog, 1993). The adjusted GFI (AGFI) adjusts the GFI by the ratio of degrees of freedom in the model to the degrees of freedom in the null model. Normed fit index (NFI) provides information about how much better the model fits than a baseline model (i.e., the null model). The incremental fit index (IFI) aims at decreasing the dependency of NFI on sample size while simultaneously controlling for the degrees of freedom. The comparative fit index (CFI) uses uncorrelated variables based on noncentrality parameters. GFI, AGFI, NFI, IFI, and CFI values range from 0 to 1; values above .90 indicate good fit. The proposed model provided a good fit to data. The χ^2/df ratio was 1.62; RMSR was .08; GFI was .97; AGFI was .92; CFI was .96; IFI was .97; NFI was .91.

We used the standard procedure of multigroup modeling in order to test for gender differences in both the *measurement* and *structural* parameters. To test gender differences in the measurement model, factor loadings were set equal between genders, and their equality was tested by a nested likelihood ratio chi-square test. All the other parameters were freely estimated (separate parameters for men and women). In other words, the chi-square test was used to test whether the parameters were equal between genders. The testing of gender equality of

Table III. Pearson's Correlations among Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Childcare support	—	.07 (.94)	.04 (.93)	.15* (.85)	.05 (.85)	-.04 (.84)	.02 (.90)	-.10 (.89)	.06 (.86)	.03 (.87)	.02 (.89)	-.00 (.88)	.04 (.87)	.04 (.87)	.10
2. Spousal support—emotional	.22***	—	.71*** (.93)	.19**	-.15*	-.15*	-.09	-.29***	.36***	-.22**	.28***	-.04	.01	.48***	.04
3. Spousal support—instrumental	.32***	.52***	—	.13	-.02	-.07	-.08	-.38***	.30***	-.24***	.22**	-.06	.02	.49***	-.05
4. Supervisory support	.09	.17**	.09	—	-.09	-.24***	-.16*	-.01	.18**	-.19**	.18**	.21**	-.07	.14*	.07
5. Organizational WFC practices	.12	.02	.13*	.09	—	.14*	-.02	-.05	-.04	.07	-.08	.03	-.14*	-.15*	-.08
6. Time demand and inflexibility	-.05	-.03	-.09	-.21***	.10	(.84)	.51***	.28***	-.25***	.30***	-.32***	-.26***	.16*	-.19**	-.07
7. Work-to-family conflict	-.10	-.10	-.07	-.23***	-.16*	.49***	(.90)	.38***	-.12	.19**	-.35***	-.36***	.25***	-.17*	-.08
8. Family-to-work conflict	-.14*	-.31***	-.28***	-.11	-.04	.12*	.25***	(.89)	-.13	.24***	-.18**	.01	.03	-.36***	-.07
9. Life satisfaction	.28***	.37***	.38***	.10	.06	-.18*	-.20**	-.32***	(.86)	-.41***	.38***	.08	-.13	.33***	.05
10. Depression	-.14*	-.23***	-.26***	-.25***	-.17**	.20**	.36***	.36***	-.43***	(.87)	-.38***	-.06	.32***	-.37***	-.11
11. Satisfaction with parenthood	.16**	.22***	.18**	.11	.03	-.23***	-.33***	-.17**	.50***	-.37***	(.89)	.19***	-.34***	.27***	.10
12. Satisfaction with time spent with children	.02	.01	-.00	.17**	-.02	-.18*	-.41***	-.00	.21***	-.14*	.40***	(.88)	-.33***	.01	.02
13. Employment-related guilt	-.09	-.16*	-.12	-.21***	-.18**	.25***	.52***	.27***	-.15*	.42***	-.51***	-.47***	(.87)	-.07	.00
14. Marital satisfaction	.24***	.63***	.57***	.16*	.15*	-.10	-.26***	-.42***	.54***	-.42***	.36***	.06	-.27***	—	.07
15. Social desirability	.01	-.04	.01	-.08	-.10	-.09	-.07	-.10	.07	-.10	-.09	.01	-.06	.10	—

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Correlations above the diagonal are for men; below the diagonal are for women. Numbers in parentheses on the diagonal are reliability coefficients of the scales.

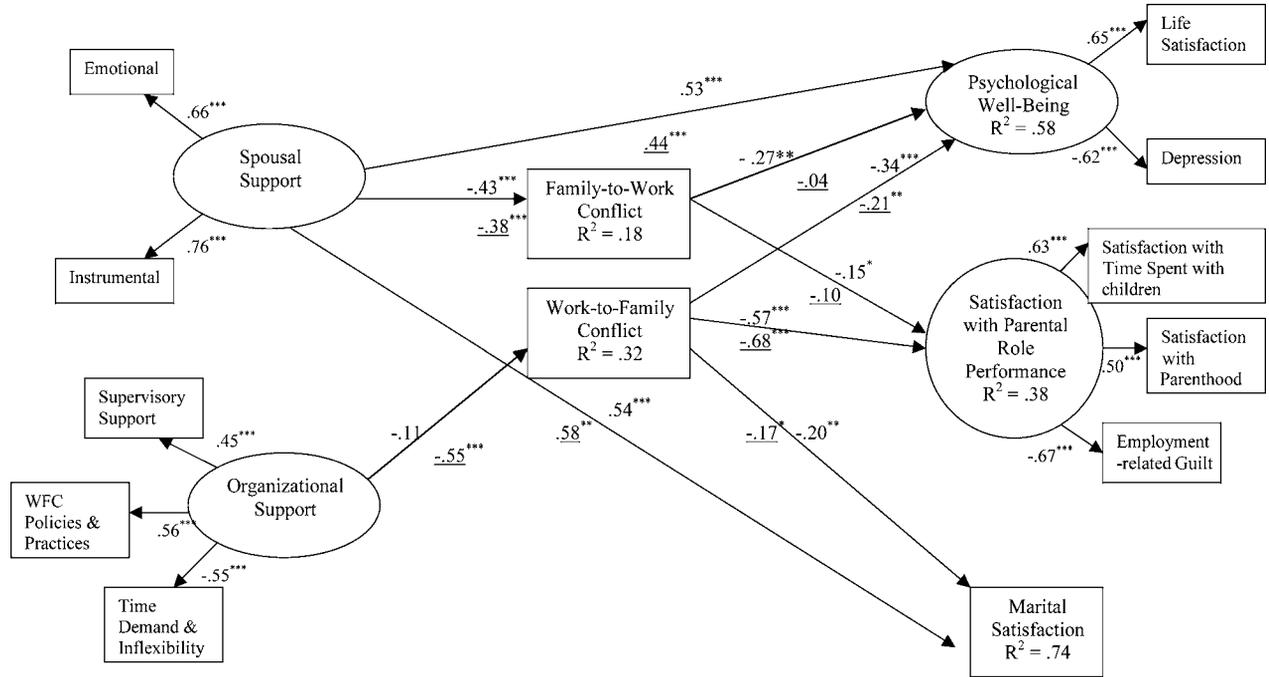


Fig. 2. The structural equation modeling (standardized path coefficients for men are underlined).

the parameters of the structural model is explained below for each relevant hypothesis.

Measurement Model

We tested gender differences for each path in the measurement model (see Fig. 1). The test of equality of the parameters in the measurement model across two genders was not significant, $\chi^2(6) = 7.68, p = .26$. Loadings of observed variables on their respective latent constructs that were equal for both genders are presented for the estimated model in Fig. 2.

Structural Model

After testing all the hypothesized relationships, we deleted the parameters that were not statistically significant for both genders. Model trimming resulted in a slight improvement in the model fit (The χ^2/df ratio = 1.60; RMSR = .08; GFI = .97; AGFI = .93; CFI = .96; IFI = .97; NFI = .92). The standardized beta coefficients in the structural model (see Fig. 2) also slightly improved compared to those in the original model (see Table IV). The explanation rates for each endogenous variable are also reported in Fig. 2.

Standardized path coefficients in the structural model are also presented in Fig. 2 and Table IV. H1 predicted that spousal support would be positively associated with psychological well-being and marital satisfaction for both genders. Results provided support for this hypothesis for both women and men, and this structural parameter did not significantly differ between genders for psychological well-being, as indicated by the nested likelihood ratio test, $\chi^2(1) = .28, p = .54$, or for marital satisfaction, $\chi^2(1) = .62, p = .84$.

H2 stated that spousal support would be negatively related to F-to-WC rather than W-to-FC. Results confirmed the hypothesis that spousal support was not significantly related to W-to-FC, whereas it was negatively associated with F-to-WC for both men and women. The structural parameter did not significantly differ between genders, $\chi^2(1) = 1.87, p = .17$.

H3 predicted that the childcare support would be significantly related to F-to-WC rather than W-to-FC. Results did not support the hypothesis. Childcare support was not significantly related to WFC either for men or for women.

H4 stated that organizational support would be negatively associated with W-to-FC rather than F-to-WC. Results partially confirmed the hypothesis.

Table IV. Path Coefficients of the Relationships among Key Variables: Gender Comparison

	Women			Men		
	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized coefficient	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized coefficient
Childcare support → F-to-WC	-.08	.03	-.04	-.08	.03	-.11
Childcare support → W-to-FC	-.07	.28	-.05	-.04	.05	-.05
Spousal support → F-to-WC	-.60	.12	-.41***	-.77	.15	-.36***
Spousal support → W-to-FC	-.13	.17	-.07	-.10	.18	-.04
Organizational support → F-to-WC	-.14	.20	-.08	-.19	.20	-.11
Organizational support → W-to-FC	-.12	.12	-.10	-.97	.46	-.55***
Spousal support → psychological well-being	4.09	.86	.52***	4.62	1.23	.44***
Spousal support → marital satisfaction	.75	.08	.54***	.60	.09	.57***
F-to-WC → psychological well-being	-1.39	.43	-.27**	-.29	.57	-.04
F-to-WC → satis. with parental role perfor.	-.10	.05	-.14*	-.04	.05	-.09
F-to-WC → marital satisfaction	-.06	.04	-.10	-.07	.04	-.12
W-to-FC → psychological well-being	-1.52	.35	-.34***	-.47	.40	-.20***
W-to-FC → satis. with parental role perfor.	-.38	.04	-.55***	-.21	.04	-.66***
W-to-FC → marital satisfaction	-.09	.03	-.15*	-.24	.03	-.18***

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

As hypothesized, organizational support was not related to F-to-WC. It was significantly and negatively related to W-to-FC for men but not for women. The structural parameter showed that the gender difference was significant, $\chi^2(1) = 7.22, p < .01$.

H5 predicted that W-to-FC would be more strongly related to satisfaction with parental role performance and marriage than would F-to-WC. As expected, for both men and women, W-to-FC was associated with lower satisfaction with parental role performance; the gender difference in the structural parameter was not significant, $\chi^2(1) = 2.08, p = .17$. Similarly, W-to-FC was associated with lower marital satisfaction (test of gender differences in the structural parameter was not significant, $\chi^2[1] = 2.25, p = .34$). In support of the hypothesis, F-to-WC was not associated with marital satisfaction either for men or for women, and it was only marginally related to parental role performance for women but not for men (the structural parameter showed that the gender difference was significant, $\chi^2[1] = 2.16, p = .52$).

H6 stated that both types of WFC would be related to lower psychological well-being to the same extent for both women and men. Indeed, for both men and women W-to-FC was associated with lower psychological well-being (a gender difference was not found in the structural parameter, $\chi^2[1] = 1.57, p = .21$). F-to-WC, on the other hand, was negatively related to psychological well-being of women but not of men. The gender difference in the structural parameter was significant, $\chi^2(1) = 5.32, p < .05$, which lends partial support to the hypothesis.

The next hypothesis predicted that for women spousal support would be more strongly related to lower F-to-WC than would childcare and organizational support. Indeed, results revealed that spousal support was the only variable associated with lower F-to-WC for women (see Fig. 2), which confirmed H7. It should also be noted that, although not hypothesized, spousal support was found to be the only source of support that was related to lower F-to-WC for men, as well (see Table IV). H8 predicted that for men organizational support would be more strongly associated with W-to-FC than would childcare and spousal support. The hypothesis was confirmed; organizational support was the only source of support that was related to lower W-to-FC for men.

DISCUSSION

The overarching purpose of the present study was to examine the role of social support in WFC for both men and women; we focused on psychological well-being and quality of family life as outcomes of WFC. We also investigated the direct effect of spousal support on psychological well-being and marital satisfaction. The sample of the study comprised Turkish mothers and fathers in dual-earner families with preschool children. As such, this study contributes to the literature by testing theories and research findings derived from economically developed Western countries in a country that is economically and culturally different.

The findings supported Pleck's (1977) theory of asymmetric boundary permeability for this sample: both men and women allowed greater interference from work-to-family than from family-to-work. The findings also showed that women experienced more W-to-FC than did men, which is in line with earlier research (e.g., Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Hall, 1972; Karasek, 1979).

The first set of hypotheses (H1–H4) dealt with the relative importance of three sources of support for W-to-FC and F-to-WC. As expected, we found that spousal support was associated with lower F-to-WC rather than W-to-FC. Spousal support was also strongly related to psychological well-being and marital satisfaction, which confirmed our hypothesis. Organizational support, on the other hand, had a stronger association with W-to-FC rather than F-to-WC but only for men. However, contrary to our expectations, childcare support was not related to F-to-WC.

There may be two explanations for why satisfaction with childcare support did not influence F-to-WC. First, participants in our sample were not dissatisfied with childcare facilities to the extent that they let this interfere with their work. The majority of parents relied on their family networks for childcare (see Table I), and they reported high satisfaction with it. Quality daycare centers are rare and expensive in Turkey. Whereas companies with more than 50 women employees are obliged by law to provide daycare, the majority does not offer this service and instead pay the fine; the companies claim high cost, and geographical dispersion among branches precludes their offering of services. Home-based childcare (i.e., nannies) is common and affordable, but the majority of parents prefer to use family networks for childcare because it is almost free and more reliable. Involvement of extended family in childcare is a unique characteristic of collectivistic countries such as Turkey. Childcare support may emerge as a key predictor of WFC in countries where such networks are not available.

Second, it is possible that, when tested simultaneously with spousal support, childcare support lost its predictive power. In fact, this is in line with our hypotheses that, compared to spousal and organizational support, childcare support is less influential on WFC. As expected, spousal support emerged as the most important source of support in reducing F-to-WC for women, whereas organizational support emerged as the most important source of support in reducing W-to-FC for men. Although not hypothe-

sized, we found that men also benefited significantly from spousal support to offset the effects of F-to-WC.

In summary, whereas for women a single source of support (i.e., spousal support) was critical in relation to WFC, for men, both spousal and organizational support were important: spousal support helped alleviate F-to-WC, whereas organizational support reduced W-to-FC. This is congruent with the findings of earlier research (e.g., Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993; Higgins & Duxbury, 1992), which suggest that men in dual-career families need more support from both work and family domains to cope with WFC than do their counterparts whose spouses do not work. It has been suggested that men require a substantial amount of support to cope with organizational and societal pressures (Higgins & Duxbury, 1992). On the one hand, changing gender roles prescribe men (especially fathers) to be more involved in their families (cf., Cinamon & Rich, 2002); on the other hand, this is not supported or tolerated by most organizations. Furthermore, men do not have role models in their immediate social milieu to guide them in their quest to balance work and family obligations (Higgins & Duxbury, 1992), and they do not exhibit help-seeking behavior as much as women do (cf., Addis & Mahalik, 2003).

It is also possible to offer a cultural perspective to interpret the above findings. Turkey has a paternalistic culture, which implies that people in authority are expected to nurture those under their subordination in a fatherly manner and to guide them in their personal and professional life (Aycan, in press). Paternalistic managers are concerned with and involved in personal and family lives of their subordinates. This is an expected and desired management approach in collectivistic and high-power distant cultures such as Turkey (Aycan, in press). It is likely that men expect protection, care, and guidance from their superiors at work in matters that concern their family life, whereas women expect the same from their husbands, who are perceived to be in a position of "authority." Hence, organizational support is a more important source of support for men than it is for women.

The findings supported our hypotheses regarding the outcomes of WFC. In line with Frone et al.'s theory (1992, 1997) and our fifth hypothesis, W-to-FC was associated with lower satisfaction with parental role performance and with lower marital satisfaction. Again, in support of the theory and our sixth hypothesis, both W-to-FC and F-to-WC were related to lower psychological well-being, but the

latter held true only for women. F-to-WC was related to lower psychological well-being and lower satisfaction with parental role performance for women only. Women feel distressed and dissatisfied with their mothering when their work performance is lower than what they desired. It is possible that when performance at work suffers due to family demands, women feel unaccomplished both at home and at work, which lowers their psychological well-being. F-to-WC predicted marital satisfaction for neither men nor women. Overall, W-to-FC predicted study outcomes better than did F-to-WC. Future studies should include *work outcomes* (e.g., organizational commitment, job satisfaction, withdrawal behavior) to better capitalize the predictive power of F-to-WC (cf., Hammer, Bauer, & Grandey, 2003).

Finally, as expected, spousal support was associated with better psychological well-being and higher marital satisfaction for both men and women. Parasuraman, Greenhaus, and Granrose (1992) contended that spousal support played an important role, especially in the family satisfaction of women. Because the provision of support for a partner's career is traditionally expected of wives, they tend to overvalue the support provided by their husbands (Parasuraman et al., 1992).

Cultural and Gender-Related Implications of the Study

This study was conducted in a non-Western cultural context, which is in a state of transition from traditional to modern gender role ideologies (Aycan, 2004). The transition started 80 years ago with the establishment of Turkish Republic that marked the era of modernization. Since then, Turkey's culture has become characterized by the confluence of traditional Islamic values with modern Western values. This is well-reflected in the findings of the present study. Although some of our findings are in line with those presented in the Western literature, there are culture-specific patterns that are worth mentioning. As a natural outcome of Turkey's modernization process, cultural changes with respect to gender roles are in the same direction as those in the Western part of the world. As proposed by the Expansionist Theory (Barnett & Hyde, 2001), gender roles are expanding, especially in the urban, middle-class, professional population of Turkey. Women are more active in professional work life, whereas men are more active in family life, in today's modern Turkey (Aycan, 2004). The universality of this trend leads to a con-

vergence of findings in WFC research conducted in different cultural contexts.

Although they endorse modern values, Turkish urban middle-class families also try to keep the traditional values of familialism and collectivism intact. These values prescribe that the family is of premium importance in the society. Our findings reflect this position. First of all, strong family ties in Turkey are a major source of support for childcare, which helps families to cope with WFC. However, the most important support from the family is that received from the spouse. Spousal support not only helps families to cope with F-to-WC, but also allows them to experience psychological well-being and marital satisfaction. Although this finding may be considered universal, it is particularly striking in Turkey's cultural context, which is low in gender egalitarianism (Fikret-Pasa, Kabasakal, & Bodur, 2001). In such cultural contexts, egalitarian relationships in the nuclear family (i.e., instrumental and emotional support from the spouse) play a crucial role for the well-being of individuals and families.

Finally, the importance of the family can be seen in the relationships of WFC with outcome variables. We found that interference of work role to family role was a much stronger predictor of psychological well-being, satisfaction with parental role performance, and marital satisfaction for both men and women. In other words, the possibility of harming the family because of work responsibilities was more disturbing to Turkish dual-earner families than was the possibility of harming work life due to family responsibilities. In conclusion, our findings point to both universal and cultural-specific patterns of WFC. What seems to be specific to the Turkish cultural context is the centrality of family both as a source of support and as a source of conflict and concern for working people.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study have the potential to make contributions to the extant literature. First, although social support has traditionally been treated as a moderator between life demands and stress, the results of the present study have demonstrated that it could also be conceptualized as a key factor that is directly related to WFC. Second, for the first time multiple sources of social support were tested simultaneously in a single study in relation to WFC. This way, it was possible to test the relative importance of childcare, spousal, and organizational support in

reducing WFC. Third, the role of social support for both women and men was compared. Finally, this is the first study in the published literature on WFC on Turkish men and women. This sample captured the cultural transition in gender roles and how it influenced the WFC process.

The most important policy implication of the present study is the finding that organizational support is a critical factor in reducing W-to-FC for men as well as for women. This points to the need to change the academic and organizational discourse from “organizational WFC policies and practices are for women” to “organizational WFC policies and practices are for all.” Prompted by this assertion, organizations are more likely to pay attention to such policies and practices and to show a willingness to invest in them. Another policy implication of our study derives from the finding that spousal support plays a key role in WFC. As stated by Loscocco (1997), despite the changes in the workplace, the family is the primary site where gender norms are reproduced, and therefore it is a site of potential change: “Changes in gender consciousness at home are the ‘final frontier’ in the quest for greater gender equality in work-family linkages” (p. 223). Organizations can take leadership in promoting gender equality in the family by offering training programs to both male and female employees on changing cultural values and gender roles, communication and job sharing at home, and childrearing practices. This is particularly important for countries with low gender egalitarianism such as Turkey (cf., Kulik & Rayyan, 2003).

The limitations of the study include sample characteristics, measurement, and the causal inferences in the proposed model. The sample comprised urban, middle-class employees in Turkey. Although this sample represents the white-collar professional working population in metropolitan cities, it does not represent the Turkish population in general. The majority of economically active women work in agriculture (56.8% of women, 25.2% of men); many fewer work in industry (14.4% women, 29.5% of men) and services (28.8% of women, 45.3% of men) (SIS, Labor Force Survey Results, 2000). The findings of the present study converged to a great extent with those reported in the Western literature. This is mainly because our sample comprised well-educated, urban, and professional men and women. The influence of culture on WFC could be observed better with samples from nonurban, less educated, and lower income families.

The second limitation of this study is related to its measurement. Data were collected from a single source that may increase the common-method bias. Spousal and organizational support could be collected from different sources. However, perception of social support may be more directly related to WFC than is the presence or absence of it as reported by the original sources of support (i.e., the spouse or the organization). Furthermore, the conceptual closeness of spousal support and marital satisfaction could have created spurious correlations between them. Future researchers should test alternative models where spousal support would be treated as an indication of marital satisfaction. Another recommendation for future research is to include work outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism, intention to turnover, and job performance.

Finally, the cross-sectional design of the present study does not allow us to make causal inferences. Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs in order to establish causal relationships. Due to the cross-sectional nature of our data, it would be possible to test alternative models that may fit the data equally well. In such models, social support could be treated as a moderator between WFC and its outcomes (e.g., psychological well-being and quality of family life). Future researchers should investigate the role of social support by testing it as a main effect and as a moderator in a single study.

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