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## Factors of work-family conflict in the hospitality industry in Ghana

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### ABSTRACT

Work-family conflict, a common problem faced by employees in all sectors of the economy, is more intense in the hospitality industry due to the nature of the job. Satisfying hotel guests at all times, maintaining the job, and attending to family are but a few of everyday thoughts of a hotel employee. The occurrence of work-family conflict has been linked to various factors both work-related and family-related. This study profiled hotel employees, identified factors influencing work-family conflict and examined their relative importance. Data gathered from 177 hotel employees were used. The results suggest that young workers, less than 35 years old who are fairly educated dominate the industry. It is also noted that employees work almost all days of the week and the jobs are mainly countercyclical. The exploratory factor analysis also suggests that five factors, including the type of job, time commitment, spousal support, and family demands influence the occurrence of work-family conflict. However, job type and spousal support best predict the occurrence of work-family conflict. Implications of the results are further deliberated and future research suggestions are presented in the study.

### KEYWORDS

Employees; factors; Ghana; hotel; work-family conflict

### Introduction

Work and family remain as two of the inevitable social interactions among humans. It is known as the two main domains within which individuals live. The interface of work and family generates a level of incompatibility and eventually conflict. Work-family conflict (WFC) is a form of conflict in which the role pressures of the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

The occurrence of WFC has been linked to various factors: work-related and family-related factors (Cleveland et al., 2007; Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer,

2007; Karatepe & Magaji, 2008), and individual-related factors (Ahmad, 2008; Burke, 2004). Noted work-related factors include job involvement, working hours, and type of job (Ahmad, 2008; Aslam, Shumiala, Azhar, & Sadaqat, 2011; Nicole, 2003). On the other hand, life cycle stage, spousal support, family commitment, and child care are some of the noted family-related factors that contribute to the occurrence of WFC (Ahmad, 2007, 2008). Also, individual-related factors include life role values, gender orientation, and perfectionism (Ahmad, 2008). This article, however, focuses on family-related and work-related WFC factors.

WFC is a common problem faced by employees in all sectors of the economy especially in the hospitality industry due to the nature of the job that needs to be performed in an attempt to satisfy hotel guests at all times (Gamor, Amissah, & Boakye, 2014; Suria, 2011). The hospitality industry is a labor intensive industry, which means that most services rendered in hospitality establishments are based on human efforts. In addition, the times that these employees work are mostly out of the usual working time (8 am to 5 pm). That is, the time when people from other industries are off duty, with weekends and holidays topping the list. The characteristics of hotel work coupled with the culture of Sub-Saharan Africans, especially Ghanaians, make it difficult to successfully combine and manage roles, responsibilities, and duties from both the work and the family domains. The traditional culture of Africans, and more specifically Ghanaians, suggests that women are caregivers while men are the bread winners. This puts pressure on men and women alike, particularly in dual income earning families, to balance work and family life regardless of the individual's status at the workplace (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005) and life-cycle stage. These traditional norms are similar throughout the Sub-Saharan region (Karatepe & Magaji, 2008; Okpara, 2006) and make hotel employees more susceptible to WFC and its effects.

Although studies have been conducted on WFC, it is evident that there has been little attempt to identify the determinants of WFC among workers of the service industry in the Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in the Ghanaian hospitality industry. For example, Gamor et al. (2014) focused on examining the differences in concerns of WFC among hotel employees based on socio-demographic characteristics but not identifying the determinants of WFC in the Ghanaian hospitality industry.

Factors of WFC among workers, regardless of the industry have come mostly from advanced countries: Canada (Duxbury & Higgins, 2003); United States of America (Frone, 2003; Mulvaney & Crouter, 2007); Korea (Choi & Kim, 2012); among others but little is known about the factors in the African perspective. It is, therefore, necessary to determine factors which contributes to the occurrence of WFC in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly among hotel employees in Ghana.

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors which predict WFC among hotel employees. In more specific terms, the research objectives of this study were to:

1. Profile hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis;
2. Identify the factors influencing WFC among employees;
3. Examine the relative importance of WFC factors.

This study reveals the major determinants that influence the occurrence of WFC among employees of hotels in Ghana. It, therefore, provides a general idea of the possible WFC determinants from an African perspective.

## Literature

### *Conflict theory*

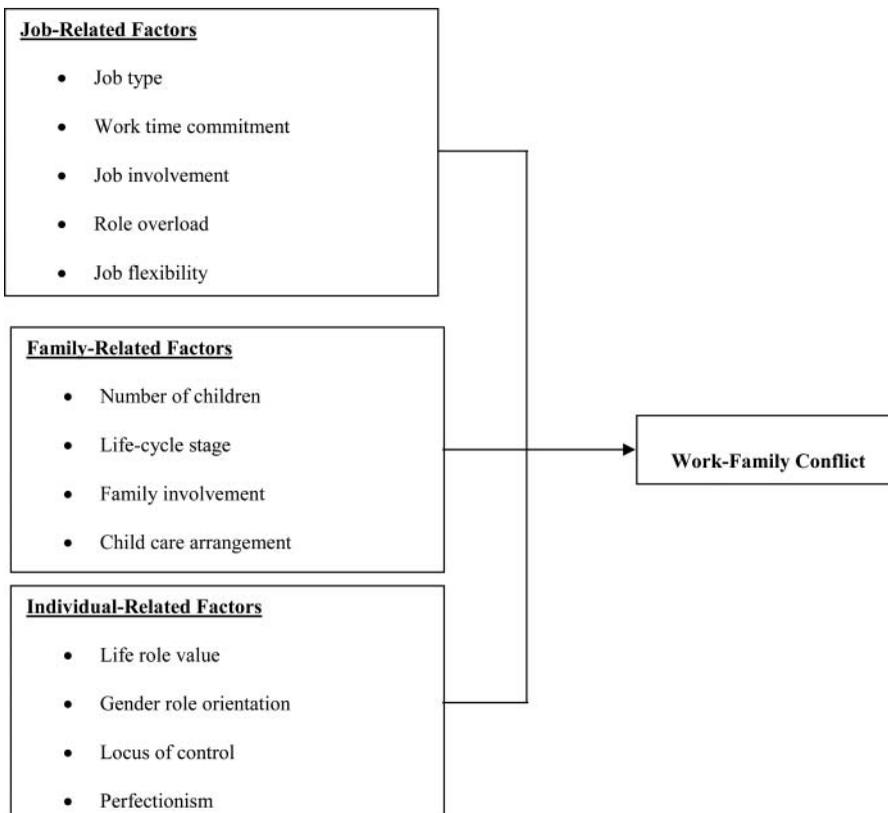
Conflict theory generally states that inequalities exist and they exist mainly because the elements in control actively defend their interest or advantages. Elements in a society, such as the element of work and family, are, however, not linked by shared values or equal earnings but by coercion by those in power. With respect to work life and family life domains, they both struggle over the same limited resources of an individual (time, attention, and energy). This implies that there is an inescapable conflict between work and family domains due to the fact that they are “generally incompatible, given their differing demands, responsibilities, expectations, and norms” (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001, p. 56) and perceptions attached to each domain.

This, then, shows that WFC factors that are work-related may wrestle with family-related factors for power over an individual’s time, and other resources in order to gain and defend its’ advantage. Whereas most other sociological theories focus on the positive aspects of society and other elements, conflict theory only focuses on the negative and opposed nature of elements of interest. Though conflict theorists encourage social change, they fail to acknowledge that coping strategies can be used to manage the incompatibility between work and family domains.

### *Predictive model of WFC*

This model was developed by Ahmad (2008) based on the stress-strain model by Dunham (1984) and the social identity theory (Lobel, 1991). The predictive model of WFC posits that constraints or predictors could be job-related, family-related, and individual-related, as well as predicting the extent to which an individual experiences WFC (Figure 1). A person could, therefore, see him or herself as a valued employee, a loving spouse, or a good parent (Ahmad, 2008). Each of these roles provides a different aspect of identity to an individual.

Some people will see themselves being valued employees of an organization as the most important aspect of their identity, while others may gain more pleasure from the role of spouse of a family man or woman and, therefore, value it more. Conflict can, therefore, occur when an individual who values a particular role is forced by situational constraints to spend less time than he or she would like in



**Figure 1.** Predictive model of work-family conflict (Ahmad, 2008).

that role but rather devote a lot more energy, time, and other resources to other roles and responsibilities.

### ***Factors that influence WFC***

WFC arises basically from work-related factors and family-related factors. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding the cross point of work roles and responsibilities and the family roles and responsibilities (Ahmad, 2008). In the life of an employee, individual predictors from both domains come together to compete for limited time, attention, and other resources of the employee irrespective of the industry in which the employee works. Ford et al. (2007) and Ahmad (2008) propose that there are two broad factors (work-related and family-related) that contribute to the occurrence of the phenomenon. Studies suggest that the conflict is brought about mainly as a result of interference of family responsibilities in the performance of work duties (Aslam et al., 2011; Ford et al., 2007; Nicole, 2003) creating tension (Gamor et al., 2014). Other empirical studies, such as that of Ahmad (2008) and Carlson and Kacmar (2000), added another set of predictors (individual-related factors) to the core factors that cause individuals to experience WFC.

### **Work-related factors**

Work-related factors (WRF) are those that emanates from work environment and characteristics. An individual's work environment will contribute to the tension and anxiety that he or she experiences. As well, it contributes to the incompatibility of roles and responsibilities from both the work domain and those from the home or family domain. Based on empirical studies by researchers, such as Yang, Chen, Choi, and Zou, 2000, Carlson and Kacmar (2000), Nicole (2003), and Ahmad (2008), it is noted that the principal WRF, in general, are the work-time involvement, role overload, work, and work involvement. These factors rank high in studies conducted in different industries.

In the hospitality industry, however, issues of time commitment including the counter cyclical nature of hotel job (Munck, 2001) where the busiest moment in the hotel is when workers from other industries are not at work (during holidays and weekends; Gamor et al., 2014), work overload, irregular work characteristics, long unpredicted working hours of hotels, and job flexibility are the top-ranked WRF of WFC among hotel employees (Choi & Kim, 2012; Cleveland, et al., 2007; Galinsky, Kim, & Bond, 2001; Presser, 2004). It has been established that the shift system in hotel work, work schedules including weekends and holidays, work speed, coupled with other pressures and demands of the hotel work also play a major role in the occurrence of WFC among hotel employees that negatively affect them (Carnicer, Sanches, Perez, & Jimenez, 2004; Poelmans & Chinchilla, 2003). These factors bring about a debate on the question of work-related WFC factors in the hospitality industry.

### **Family-related factors**

Family enviroment is another area where a lot of issues and factors contribute to the occurrence of WFC; thus, family-related factors cannot be overlooked. Studies have shown that elements of family composition, support and responsibilities also has a bearing on the occurrence of WFC (Ahmad, 2007, 2008; Boles, Howard, & Donofrio, 2001; Fu & Shaffer, 2001). Researchers, such as Netemeyer, McMurrian, and Boles (1996), Ahmad (2007), and Ahmad (2008), agree that the stage in which a family has reached can determine the occurrence and the level of WFC.

A family with children are noted to be more suceptible to WFC than a family without children (Netemeyer et al., 1996). In the same study, they found out that employed mothers with children having a child or children with age(s) 3 years old and below are found to be in greater work and family conflict than those with children above 3 years old and have found that there is a positive correlation ( $r = 0.45$ ) between number of children at home and family-work conflict.

*Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between individuals with children and the occurrence of WFC.*

Aside from the number of children an employee has at home, childcare responsibilities, as well as the presence elderly care responsibilities, have been found to also contribute to the likelihood of the occurrence of WFC (Frye & Breaugh, 2004) and as such the arrangements to have an employee's child or children taken care of have an influence on the parents' experiences of WFC (Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001).

*Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between individuals who take care of elder and the occurrence of WFC.*

In addition to that other researchers, including Erdwins et al. (2001), posited that it is not only the life cycle stage, which include age and marital status, number of dependents, and the volume of care responsibilities that contributes to an individual's experience of WFC but also the support that he or she gets from the spouse and family demands which may include hours spent to address family issues, and the performance of household chores also has a significant level of influence on the experience of WFC. Parental demands and domestic work according to Fu and Shaffer (2001) also has it role to play in the occurrence of WFC among employees.

*Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between age the occurrence of WFC.*

*Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between marital status and the occurrence of WFC.*

*Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between family size and the occurrence of WFC.*

These work-related and family-related WFC must be studied and necessary steps taken by both employers and employees especially in the service industry to optimise productivity and satisfaction. WFC has consequences on both individual employees and organizations in which they work and in this case hotels.

## Research Methods

### Design

This study was designed to elicit information on the factors that influence the occurrence of WFC among hotel employees. This study is based on a quantitative

**Table 1** . Summary of sampling procedures.

Hotel category	Total number of registered hotels	Number of hotels that took part in the study	Usable responses from hotel employees
3-Star	2	2	47
2-Star	10	7	78
1-Star	16	11	52
Total	28	20	177

approach and the descriptive research design was employed for the study and as such, the various variables in this study are not subject to manipulations.

### ***Participant and procedure***

The study targeted hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis of Ghana. A multi-stage sampling technique was used in the study. First, stratified sampling technique was used to group the hotels into their various categories. That is from one-star hotels to three-star hotels. In all, 28 hotels were found in the star rated categories. Twenty of the star rated hotels took part in the study. There were 2 three-star hotels, 10 two-star hotels, and 16 one-star hotels within the metropolis at the time of the study (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2011). Second, quota was allocated, to each category, to spread the respondents over the various categories of hotels. Since hotel work is characterized by irregular, unpredictable, as well as shift system (Aslam et al., 2011; Nicole, 2003), convenience sampling technique was used to gather responses from the respondents as probability sampling, such as random sampling technique which would be best for such study, could not be used due to unavailability of target respondents at all times due to shift system, and frequent turnover in the hotels made the convenience technique the best way to collect data for the study. Permission was sought from the general managers using introductory letters to conduct the study in their hotels and questionnaires were distributed in envelopes in person by the researchers to ensure confidentiality. Names, and other personal data that could be used to identify respondents were not collected so as to ensure anonymity. Sealed envelopes containing the filled questionnaires were collected by the researchers in person at the facilities during the data collection period.

Hotels were visited at different times during working hours and respondents anonymously responded and dropped off filled questionnaires, given to them, into collection boxes while on duty.

### ***Instrument***

Questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents for the study. The development of the questionnaire was based on the WFC scale by Boles et al. (2001) modified by Gamor et al. (2014) to fit into the Ghanaian context. Galinsky et al. (2001) predictors of WFC, Ahmad's (2007) and Ahmad's (2008) factors as predictors of WFC were also used.

The questionnaire used for the study consisted of three parts. These are background information, of hotel employees (18 questions) including marital status and family size; employee work characteristics (four questions) including number of days worked in a week and employee status; and factors of WFC (31 questioning items) in two main grouping (WRF and family-related factors) using a 4-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" as suggested by Cutrona and Russel (1987), Carbery and Garavan (2003), and Gamor et al. (2014).

Pre-testing of the instrument was conducted using 34 hotel employees to determine irrelevant questions and the construct validity of the scales used in measuring the relevance of factors. Items with Cronbach's alpha values 0.6 and above were, therefore, retained to test the construct reliability of the scale used to occurrence of WFC. Finally, 31 items that is work time (five items), job involvement (four items), job flexibility (five items), job type (four items), family demands (five items), life cycle stage (four items), and spousal support (four items) remained on the scale.

Data from the questionnaires were processed with PASW Statistics (Version 18.0) software. To identify the main contributing factors underlying WFC among hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, 31 variables were subjected to factor analysis (FA) to reveal major components or factors underlying WFC. It was used because the relatively large number of variables needed to be reduced into major components for further analysis. FA was used to determine which specific factors that together influenced WFC among hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

The 31 items that influenced WFC among employees were, therefore, subjected to the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and the output presented in [Table 3](#). In order to explain the factors in an easy way, the PCA adopted the varimax rotation to reduce the 31 items into four main underlying factors, which accounted for WFC among employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were examined to determine the factorability of the data. The KMO result was 0.711 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was 1,876.796 with a *P*-value of 0.000, which supports the factorability of the data.

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant at 0.05 for the FA to be considered appropriate while the KMO index ranges from 0–1, with 0.6 recommended as the minimum value for a good FA. The KMO value calculated exceeded the recommended minimum value of 0.6 (0.7) and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was also significant at 0.05 significant level (0.000). It, therefore, confirms the suitability of the data for FA.

The Cronbach's alpha was also used to test the internal reliability of the scale used. Pallant (2005) argues that a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 or more indicates a significant reliability of the scales used. Here, all the subscales for the analysis had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient approximately 0.7. It is, therefore, evident that all scales have internal reliability.

A standard multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive power of the four factors generated by the PCA FA to determine which of them significantly predict WFC among hotel employees in the metropolis. [Table 4](#) shows the predictive power of the factors that emerged from the FA.

## Results

### Profile of hotel employees

A total of 177 usable data were obtained from employees of one-, two-, and three-star hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. This number of useable data is appropriate as noted by Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1998) that reliable results estimates can be achieved from samples of 100 to 150 respondents.

This section explores the socio-demographic and work characteristics of hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. The socio-demographic characteristics covered sex, age, marital status, level of education, religious affiliation, and household arrangement (family size), whilst work-related characteristics include department, grade of employee, and number of days an employee works in a week.

### Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 2 indicates that just a little over half (50.3%) of the respondents were females while the other half (49.7%) of employees were males. The ages of the respondents ranged from 19 to 63 years with an average age of 31 years. It is evident from Table 2 that over half (55.4%) of respondents were less than 30 years old followed by employees within the ages of 30 to 39 years (31.1%). Employees in the older age bracket (50 years and above) were the least (5.6%). As regards the marital status of

**Table 2.** Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents ( $n = 177$ ).

Socio-demographic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	88	49.7
Female	89	50.3
<i>Age</i>		
Less than 30 years	98	55.4
30–39	55	31.1
40–49	14	7.9
50 and above	10	5.6
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married	62	30.3
Unmarried	115	69.7
<i>Level of education</i>		
Basic school	8	4.5
Secondary/high school	63	35.6
Diploma	59	33.3
Professional (ACCA and NVTI)	7	4.0
University degree	34	19.2
Postgraduate	6	3.4
<i>Family size (in persons)</i>		
1–4	97	54.8
5–8	65	36.7
9 and above	15	8.5
<i>Child dependent</i>		
With child	83	46.9
Without child	94	53.1
<i>Elderly dependent</i>		
With dependent	56	31.6
Without dependent	121	68.4

**Table 3.** Work characteristics of respondents ( $n = 177$ ).

Work characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Department</i>		
Front office	44	24.8
Restaurant/bar	24	13.6
Account/finance	19	10.7
Kitchen	18	10.2
Stores	18	10.2
House keeping	16	9.0
Other departments	38	21.5
<i>Employee status</i>		
Full time employee	131	74.0
Casual employee	46	26.0
<i>Grade of employee</i>		
Junior workers	125	70.6
Supervisors	36	20.3
Managers	16	9.1
<i>Years of experience (in years)</i>		
Less than 2 years	56	31.6
2–4 years	68	38.4
5 years and above	53	30.0
<i>Number of days worked in a week</i>		
5 days and below	70	39.5
6 days	87	49.2
7 days	20	11.3

the hotel employees, the majority (approximately 70%) of the employees stated that they were unmarried. However, 30% reported as being married.

With respect to the educational level of employees, about one third of respondents (35.6%) had attained secondary/high school qualification while only 3.4% of respondents had postgraduate qualification. There were also employees with other educational backgrounds, including professional ACCA and NVTI certificates (4.1%). Also, a clear majority (91.0%) of the hotel employees profess to Christian faith, followed by Islam (7.3%), and others (1.7%).

The study further suggests that a little over half (54.8%) of the hotel employees had relatively small family sizes (one to four persons in the family) followed by families with five to eight members (36.7%). On the other hand, only a small proportion of employees (8.5%) had relatively large families with nine or more members. Family size ranged from one to 11 persons, with an average of five persons in a family.

About 53% of the respondents did not have a child or child dependents, whereas approximately 47% had a child or children as dependents. Two thirds (68.4%) of respondents did not have any elderly dependents.

### **Work characteristics of hotel employees**

Table 3 shows the work characteristics of the respondents. Employees differ in terms of their departments, as well as their position. From Table 3, it can be seen that a quarter of respondents worked at the front office department. This was

**Table 4.** Experience of work-family conflict by socio-demographic characteristics.

Socio-demographic characteristics	N (177)	Experience of work-family conflict		$\chi^2$ statistic	p- Value
		Experienced WFC (%)	Not experienced WFC (%)		
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	88	84.1	15.9	0.312	0.576
Female	89	80.9	19.1		
<i>Age</i>					
Less than 30 years	98	84.7	15.3	6.996	0.072
30–39	55	83.6	16.4		
40–49	14	57.1	42.9		
50 and above	10	90.0	10.0		
<i>Marital status</i>					
Married	62	82.3	17.7	0.003	0.953
Unmarried	115	82.6	17.4		
<i>Child dependent</i>					
With child	83	86.7	13.3	1.011	0.315
Without child	94	81.1	18.9		
<i>Elderly dependent</i>					
With dependent	56	83.9	16.1	0.172	0.679
Without dependent	121	81.4	18.6		
<i>Family size</i>					
1–4 persons	97	82.5	17.5	1.074	0.585
5–8	65	84.6	15.4		
9 and above	15	73.3	26.7		

Note. Significance level  $\leq 0.05$ .

followed by the restaurant and bar department (13.6%), while the housekeeping department recorded only 9.0%.

Concerning employee status (Table 2), almost three quarters of the respondents were full-time employees (74.0%) and just about a quarter was made up of part-time workers (26.0%). The study also revealed that the majority (70.6%) of employees were made up of junior workers. Supervisory and managerial positions constituted about 20.3% and 9.1% of the total employees, respectively.

With regards to the number of days that the hotel employees work, Table 3 shows that almost half (49.2%) of the employees worked 6 days a week while 39.5% and 11.3% worked from 4 to 5 days and 7 days, respectively. The minimum number of working days was 4 days while the maximum number of working days for hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi was 7 days. On the average, hotel employees in the Metropolis worked for 6 days including weekends and holidays.

### Experience of WFC by socio-demographic characteristics

Experience of WFC was explored in relation to the background characteristics of hotel employees. Table 4 shows the distribution across social groupings.

As shown in Table 4, female employees who experienced WFC were 80.9% while 84.1% of male employees experienced WFC. The chi-square test, however, revealed that there was no significant relationship ( $p = 0.576$ ) between the experience of WFC the sex of an employee. This finding is in contrast with the observations made by Zhang (2011), Schieman, McBrier, and Gundy's (2003), and

DeMeis and Perkins (1996) that females tend to experience WFC or anxiety than their male counterparts.

*Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between individuals with children and the occurrence of WFC.*

The chi-square test revealed that there was no significant relationship between people with children and WFC ( $p = 0.315$ ). Though both employees with and without child dependent experienced high levels of WFC, employees without children experienced lower level WFC (81.1%) than their counterparts with children (86.7%). Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected and that the null hypothesis is accepted such that there is no relationship between those with children or without children and WFC.

*Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between those with an elder dependent and the occurrence of WFC.*

Employees with elderly dependent(s) experienced more WFC (83.9%) than those without elderly dependents (81.1%). However, there was no significant relationship found between employees with and employees without elderly dependents in relation to WFC. Therefore, the study rejects the proposed hypothesis and states that no significant relationship exist between elderly dependency and the occurrence of WFC among hotel employees.

*Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between age the occurrence of WFC.*

There was no significant relationship between WFC and age with a  $p$ -value of 0.072. Therefore, the study rejects the alternate hypothesis and accept that there is no relationship between age and WFC. The age distribution shows that majority (90%) of employees who are 50 years and above experienced WFC followed by employees less than 30 years (84.7%). However, only a little over half (57.1%) of employees within 40–49 years experienced WFC. The proportion of respondents in each age group generally decreases as the age increases with the exception of employees who were 50 years and above. This means that generally, the older the person, the less WFC experiences. This outcome can be attributed to the fact that older people have young ones who take care of their activities for them.

*Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between marital status and the occurrence of WFC.*

Table 4 shows that no significant relationship exist between WFC and marital status (0.953). However, the results indicated that unmarried employees (82.6%) experienced relatively the same level of WFC as their married counterparts (82.3%). This situation can be attributed to supportive partners that hotel employees may have. Also, married employees may have their family activities taken care of by member of their households. Married employees may therefore be able to

**Table 5.** Factors accounting for WFC among hotel employees.

Factor	Eigen values	% of variance explained	Cronbach's alpha
F1: Time commitment and flexibility	4.549	14.673	0.833
F2: Family demands	3.805	12.273	0.787
F3: Spousal support	3.311	10.682	0.839
F4: Job type	2.180	7.031	0.658
F5: Employee position	2.151	6.939	0.661
Total		51.598	

Note. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.711; Alpha value = 0.00; Bartlett's test of sphericity (approx. Chi-square) = 1,876.796.

work without worrying much about role conflicts. As such married employees do not experience WFC as much as unmarried employees.

*Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between family size and the occurrence of WFC.*

No significant relationship was found between family size and WFC (0.585). This result rejects Hypothesis 5 and, therefore, there is no significant relationship between the size of one's family and the occurrence of WFC. From Table 4 it can be shown that employees with relatively large family sizes (nine persons and above) experienced less (73.3%) WFC than those with relatively small family sizes. Approximately 85% of the employees having medium size family (5–8 persons) experienced WFC while about 83% of employees having relatively small families experienced WFC. The decrease in the experience of WFC as family size increases may be attributed to the reason that employees with large families may be more likely to have people to help them with their family related activities than employees with relatively small families.

### Factors accounting for WFC among hotel employees

From the output, five main factors, namely time commitment and flexibility, family demands, spousal support, job type, and employee position, with eigen values greater than one emerged to have accounted for WFC among the hotel employees and explained about 51.6% of the total variance as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5 indicates that five main factors explained approximately 52% of total variance. Different factors contributed differently to the total variance explained. Time commitment and flexibility, labeled as F1 consisted of six items which measured WFC experienced by hotel employees. With an eigen value of 4.549, it contributed approximately 15% towards the total variance explained. "Working on holidays which does not allow the employee to perform family roles and duties" recorded the highest factor loading (0.673) of this factor while "not having enough time to get everything done because of work" recorded the lowest factor loading (0.516).

Family demands (F2), however, had six items and contributed about 12% towards the total variance with eigenvalue of 3.805. The items have "position in

**Table 6.** Relative importance of factors of work-family conflict.

Predictor variable	Beta	t-Value	p-Value	Tolerance	VIF	Part	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower	Upper
Work involvement and flexibility (F1)	0.128	1.428	0.156	0.854	1.171	0.360	0.866	2.207
Family demands (F2)	-0.113	-1.226	0.222	0.809	1.237	-0.307	-0.051	0.315
Spousal support (F3)	0.231	2.574	0.011	0.852	1.174	0.463	-0.312	0.073
Job type (F4)	0.170	1.941	0.054	0.891	1.122	0.407	0.052	0.396
Employee position (F5)	-0.072	0.805	0.422	0.843	1.186	-0.213	-0.238	0.100
Occurrence of WFC		4.532	0.000					

Note.  $R^2 = 0.39$ ; Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.34$ ;  $F$ -value = 2.817; Sig = 0.019.

$p < 0.05$ ,  $*p < 0.01$ .

the family makes workers forgo work and attend to their families” as the leading item (0.777). On the other hand, “family life not allowing an employee to go to work on time” was the lowest contributor to factor 2 (family demands) with a factor loading of 0.453.

In the spousal support factor (F3), five items contributed approximately 11% towards the total variance with an eigen value of 3.311. The factor loadings of individual items in this factor are relatively high with “partner not supporting” being the highest ranked item with factor loading of 0.865, and “seeking better care for a child or children” recorded the lowest ranked item in the factor (0.572).

Job type as a factor was also made up of five items. Working in the evenings and on night shifts recorded the highest factor loading of 0.815 while working at irregular hours recorded the least (0.449). Together, the items contributed only about 7% to the total variance explained, with an eigen value of 2.180.

In addition, employee position was constituted by four items. In this factor, the position of the employee requiring long working hours that prevent him or her from doing family duties was the highest (0.759). On the other hand, working at odd hours of the day due to one’s position was the lowest (0.449). All four items contributed approximately 7% to the total variance explained by all five factors. Factor 5, therefore, generated an eigen value of 2.151.

### Relative importance of factors of WFC

Regression analysis was used in determining the relative importance of the four main WFC factors among hotel employees. Table 6 shows that, the model has an  $R^2$  of 0.39. The model, therefore, predicted a total of only about 39% of WFC among employees. Time commitment and flexibility factor predicted about 13%, family demands (11%), spousal support (23%), job type (17%), and employee position (7%).

Among the five factors, spousal support (Factor 3) made the highest contribution to explaining WFC (0.231) when all the variance explained by the other four factors in the predictive model are controlled for. Family demands,

on the other hand, contributed the least towards explaining the occurrence of WFC among hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis with a standardized beta value of  $-0.113$ .

A further look at the model indicates that two out of the five factors had a significant individual contribution towards the prediction of WFC among the hotel employees. Spousal support ( $t = 2.574$ ;  $p = 0.011$ ) and job type ( $t = 1.941$ ;  $p = 0.054$ ) were significant in prediction occurrence of WFC at 0.01 and 0.05 significant levels, respectively (Table 6).

Among the two factors, Spousal support made the highest unique significant contribution to the model (23%), while job type made the least unique significant contribution of 17% towards explaining WFC occurrence among hotel employees.

## Discussions

The findings controvert the observation made by Lucas (2004) and the International Labour Organisation (2001), which identified that females dominate the workforce of the hotel industry. The finding that more employees are young collaborate the International Labour Organisation (2001) report that the industry is characterized by young workers who are less than 35 years old. Conceivably, the dominance of Christians in the study could be ascribed to the fact that Ghana is dominated largely by Christians, followed by Muslims and then Traditionalists (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). It was, therefore, not surprising to find Christians as the largest group among hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

The predominantly small family sizes confirms the assertion by Choi and Kim (2012) and Han, Lee, and Chin (2009) that the structure of families has changed gradually from large to small family systems over the past three decades. This is not only found in Hong Kong as this study shows similar result. In addition, a greater number of employees without dependents means that more than half of the respondents were free from caring for others and that they are not likely to experience WFC due to demands made by dependents. The low number of employees with at least 5 years working experience might be as a result of the high labor turnover that exists in the hotel industry as indicated by Aksu (2004) and Suria (2011).

With regards to work-related characteristics, finding on employee status is in contrast with the global report by the International Labour Organization (2001), that the hotel industry has more casual workers than full-time workers or employees. This situation can be attributed to the fact that the hotel business is not as busy and seasonal in the metropolis as in other places, such as Madrid and Miami. The full-time workers are, therefore, able to cope with the activities without needing help from casual or temporary employees. The large number of junior staff

was expected as employees at the lower level or entry level are usually more than managers and supervisors.

The study confirms the assertion by Sim and Bujang (2012) and Munck (2001) that work days and time in the hotel industry is counter-cyclical and that the busiest time for hotel employees is when workers in other industries are off their work schedules, including weekends and holidays. This makes the hotel job a very involving one.

Employees with children were found to be involved in WFC more than employees without a child or children. This outcome support observations made by Ahmad (2007) and Ahmad (2008). This can be as a result of employees not having other family members, who are willing, to take care of their children for them as long as the employees are not around to do so themselves as noted by Ghana Statistical Service (2012) that households in Ghana are becoming more nuclear.

This suggests that there could be other factors that account for the other half shared variance that were not captured by this study, such as individual-related factors developed by Ahmad (2008). The factors identified, nonetheless, contributed to the explanation of the total variance differently as shown in Table 3.

The study, therefore, affirms Cleveland et al.'s (2007) and Carnicer et al.'s (2004) position that time commitment and job flexibility are major contributors of WFC especially in the service industry. Again, it support the assertion put forward by Ahmad (2008) that job involvement is one of the main factors that contribute to the WFC. It is also consistent with Ahmad's (2008) study of WFCs that demands from the family forms one of the major contributors to the occurrence of WFC. The study further suggests that the position of an employee is also a main contributor to WFC among hotel employees in the study area.

The PCA also confirms the assertion made by Presser (2004) and Duxbury and Higgens (2003) that being present at the workplace all the time and working in the evenings and overnight shifts is a major contributing factor to the occurrence of WFCs experienced by employees in the service industry. This output also affirms the assertion by Aslam et al. (2011), Ahmad (2008), Presser (2004), and Duxbury and Higgens (2003) that employee's position and the type of job, are main contributors of WFCs experienced by employees especially in the service industry.

From the predictive model, the finding suggests that spousal support and the type of job are the factors that significantly predict between work life and family family life among hotel employees in Sekondi-Takoradi. This is in line with the findings of Aslam et al. (2011), Ahmad (2008), Presser (2004), and Duxbury and Higgens (2003).

## **Conclusion and implication for management**

The work force of hotels within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis is made up of gender balanced employees, as the number of males and females are almost the same, and dominated by young workers, who are less than 35 years old.

The hotel employees are mostly not married and are fairly educated. The employees work almost all days of the week and the jobs are mainly counter-cyclical. Again, workers have very few years of experience in their current working places. Ghanaian families have mostly changed from the traditional extended family systems to having relatively small family sizes and without dependents. In relation to this finding, the study proposes that management should schedule the hotel shift system in a way that employees with dependents, especially, will have ample time to cater to their family responsibilities. By so doing, they may have very low occurrences of WFC.

Five factors of WFC, namely time commitment and flexibility, family demands, spousal support, job type, and employee position, were noted to influence the occurrence of WFC among hotel workers. Among these factors, two, specifically the social support systems (spousal support) and job type, best predict the occurrence of WFC among employees.

Therefore, workload should be reasonably distributed in order not to put too much pressure on employees. Managers should make sure that workload is evenly distributed and that shift schedule is comfortable for all employees so as to minimize the occurrence of work-family conflict.

Work positions that require the presence of an employee at all times, night shift and long irregular work hours especially for supervisors and managers should be made more flexible and family friendly like giving the employees the chance to choose their off days, and having programs that bring employees and their families together at least every 3 months. The study suggests the establishment of staff care programs, which include free family/psychological problems consultancy to help employees who may have problems to have access to medical and professional counseling in order to help them cope with problems.

### ***Suggestions for further research***

This study has a number of limitations. First, is the cross-sectional nature of the study. This type of study does not allow for further probing (Gamor et al., 2014) and definitive conclusions (Karatepe & Magaji, 2008) to understand why the factors discussed above influence the occurrence of WFC among hotel employees. Therefore, future studies can focus on the qualitative aspect of these factors, probing further to understand why these factors are the main contributors to WFC. Future study can also find out the effects that WFC has on employee satisfaction as this study did not take it into consideration such effects. Second, the sample for the study was relatively small and it is from the African perspective, readers should, therefore, be mindful of generalisation of the results. In addition, a confirmatory analysis can be conducted to confirm the contribution of factors or the determinants of WFC among hotel employees.

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