

# **A Multi-level Approach to Cross Cultural Work-Family Research**

## **A Micro and Macro Perspective**

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**ABSTRACT** This article describes the theoretical framework and rationale that underlie a large-scale international study of the work-family interface. This research study utilizes a multi-level, theoretically based approach. It is being undertaken by a collaborative, multicultural team composed of indigenous researchers from countries that were selected based on theoretically important dimensions. It consists of three empirical components: (1) qualitative focus groups, (2) a social policy analysis, and (3) a quantitative two-wave survey. Thus the data are both qualitative and quantitative, both emic and etic, and both micro- and macro-level in nature.

**KEY WORDS** • cross cultural • international • multi-level • work-family

The purpose of this article is to describe the integrative, multi-level approach that underlies our large-scale international study of the work-family interface. As this research is currently in the planning stage, this article will focus on explaining the underlying theoretical framework and rationale, as well as the proposed research methodology. Our main goal at this time is to share our approach and the decisions we have made in planning this project as a way of stimulating thought among researchers about some of the issues that are important to consider when conducting cross cultural and comparative

research studies in this field. In particular, we will discuss several concerns that are inherent in doing large-scale cross cultural research. The first is the necessity of considering how research on work-family relationships can be undertaken in different countries in ways that both capture and respect the influence of different values and accepted roles within each culture. The second is the importance of accounting for how differences in social policies and programmes are likely to affect both the extent of work-family conflict individuals (especially women) experience, and the significance of workplace supports and negotia-

tions to reduce work–family conflict. The third is the value of testing and extending theories and hypothesized relationships in ways that are both rigorous and culturally sensitive.

Research over the last two decades has provided ample evidence of continuing and increasing rates of work–family conflict and workplace stress for men and women (e.g. Duxbury and Higgins, 2001). Such stress has been shown to result in distress and dissatisfaction at work and at home, as well as mental and physical health problems (Frone et al., 1997; Frone, 2002; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999). This has serious consequences, both for workers and for their families, and for organizations that fail to benefit from talented employees and incur additional costs in absenteeism, turnover, recruitment costs, and lost productivity. An understanding of the individual and organizational variables, workplace policies, and mechanisms of support that can ease work–family conflict can guide the formulation of public policies and organizational practices aimed at reducing these negative consequences.

The manner in which much research on the work–family interface has been carried out, however, has often made it difficult to attain this goal. In most of the previous work–family research that has been conducted globally, the focus has been either on the micro- or the macro-level, but not both. Much of the research conducted in Canada and the United States has focused on the micro-level, with elaborate models that predict work–life conflict for individual employees as a result of specific workplace and familial demands/stressors and supports (e.g. Frone et al., 1997). This research has been effective in identifying how workplaces and managers might adapt to accommodate workers and has supported a business case for organizational change and more effective management techniques.

Another set of studies, largely done in the European Union (EU), has adopted a more

macro-level strategy. This research has identified the critical importance of public policies that affect women’s labour force patterns, earnings, and opportunities for economic and social equality. Such factors include social expectations about men’s and women’s roles, overall approaches to state–market–family relationships; and family-, gender-, and employment-supportive policies (such as public provisions for maternity and parental leave and benefits, family leave, and tax policies and social programmes that include publicly funded childcare). Examples include Deven and Moss’s (2002) excellent review of maternity and family leave policies and Stier et al.’s (2001) analysis of how different policy contexts affect women’s employment and earnings over the life span, as well as work by den Dulk et al. (1999) and Poelmans et al. (2003).

In our view, it is critical that researchers and policy makers appreciate how different countries’ responses to a variety of imperatives shape the need for and likelihood of workplace modifications and employer–employee negotiations, recognizing that these will still play out differently depending on firm size and culture and for different groups of employees. Reports of such effects are just beginning to be published, as mentioned by Evans (2001) and exemplified by Australia’s background report for the OECD review of family-friendly policies (2002). We note, for example, Australia’s efforts to promote awards and formal agreements between employers and employees/collective bargaining groups to better meet the needs of employees for more flexibility (Bardoel et al., 2000). Similarly, Canada has recently expanded provisions for job-protected, paid parental leave (Lero, 2003). Likewise, initiatives have taken place within the EU to limit long working hours (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2002). All these programmes and efforts are presumed to have profound effects for workplace management practices and for individual employees and their families.

The existing micro-level research has often been done in a policy vacuum, although policy interest in issues related to work–family stress and its alleviation is growing. Recently, several studies have affirmed the value of analysing how economic factors and government policies support the integration of work and family life (Gornick et al., 1997; Gornick and Meyers, forthcoming; Moss and Deven, 1999). Haas et al.'s (2000) compilation provides important insights into how both public policies and workplace practices play out for different groups of employees, depending on workplace culture and political context. Multi-level (see Klein and Kozlowski, 2000) cross cultural comparisons provide the opportunity to study how public policies and cultural expectations frame employer practices and employees' experiences of managing work and family roles.

Another problem with much research on work–family conflict is that researchers in this area generally have not adopted comprehensive, theoretically based strategies. Many studies are limited in scope, rarely including variables pertaining to both the antecedents and outcomes of work–family conflict (Frone, 2002; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999). Frone contends that

our knowledge will continue to develop only though the use of integrative, multivariate models of balance between work and family roles. Studies that rely on zero order correlations and measures that do not assess all relevant dimensions of balance (e.g. both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict) will likely lead to inaccurate conclusions and less useful policy recommendations. (2002: 160)

Similarly, Voydanoff (2002) has discussed the importance of including mediators (cognitive assessments) and moderators (social categories and coping resources) in accounting for how the extent of strain or ease experienced affects individual and family coping strategies, and ultimately work, family and individual outcomes.

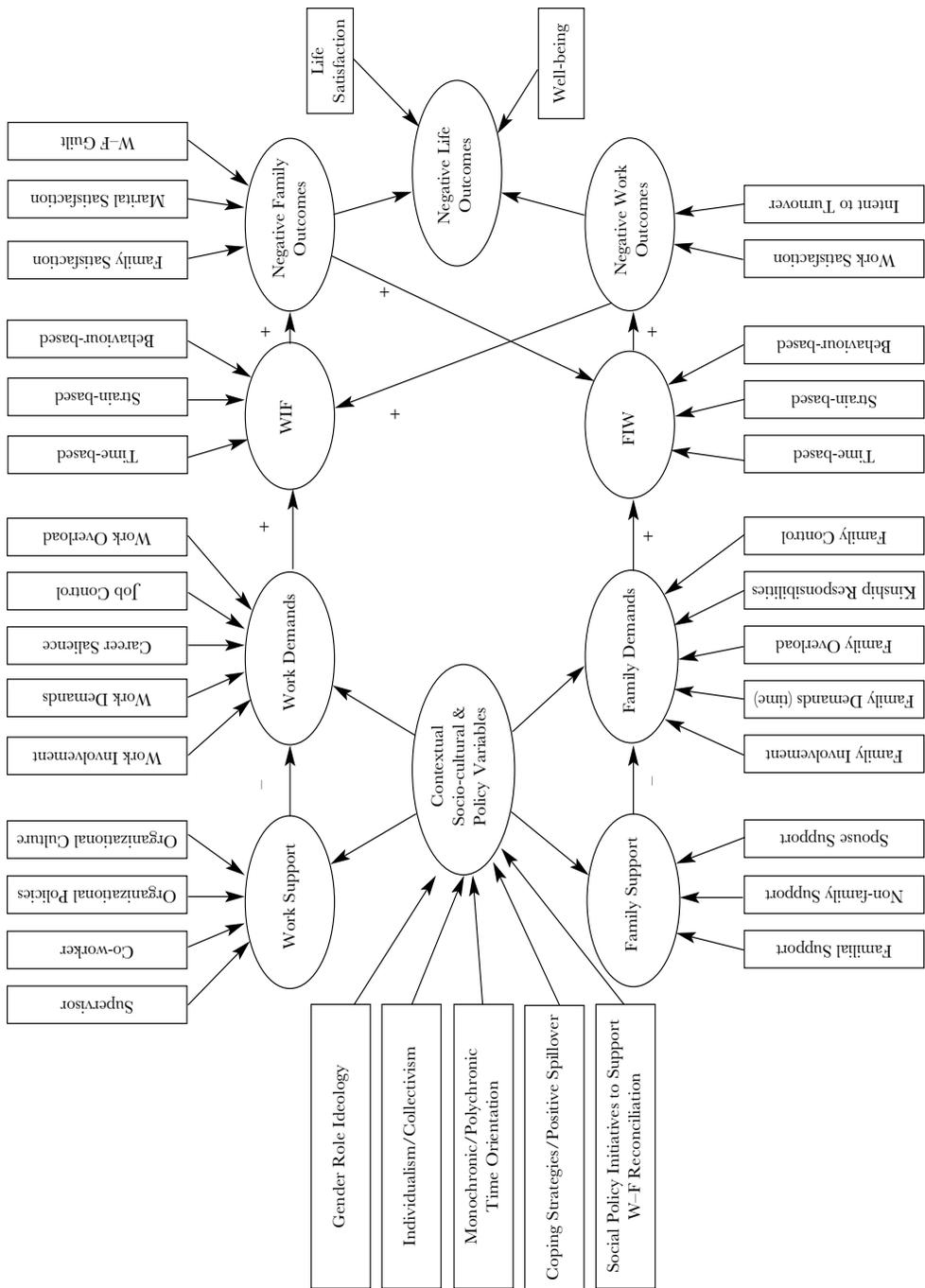
Although the interface between work and

family is an issue of concern in most cultures, the work–family research that has been carried out around the world suffers from similar limitations. To date, most studies have employed only English-speaking samples (i.e. in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and Hong Kong) or have been done in industrialized, western countries (e.g. Europe) (Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999). Many others consist of data collected in only one country, for example, Israel (Moore and Gobi, 1995), Japan (Matsui et al., 1995), Malaysia (Ahmad, 1996; Noor, 1999), or Turkey (Aycan and Eskin, 2002; Cariksi, 2002). Few published international comparisons exist (e.g. Etzion and Pines, 1986; Lieblich, 1987; Misra et al., 1990; Yang et al., 2000), where mostly only two countries are considered. Because cultures can differ from one another in many different ways, in two-country comparisons it is often difficult to isolate effects or to rule out alternative explanations for the findings (Gelfand et al., 2002).

Recently there has been more cross cultural research on the work–family interface that has been based on theory or that has been carried out in multinational settings (e.g. Aryee et al., 1999; Spector et al., 2003; Yang et al., 2000). However, to date, there has been no previous global study that has examined both the antecedents and outcomes of work–family conflict using a multi-level approach (i.e. incorporating both micro- and macro-level variables). The goal of the present research, therefore, is to conduct a large-scale international study that demonstrates the added value of taking an integrative, theoretically based, multi-level approach when doing cross cultural research on the issue of work–family balance.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis for the present research is provided by an adaptation of the model of the work–family interface that was developed by Frone and his colleagues (e.g. Frone et al.,



**Figure 1** Integrative model of work-family conflict

1997) (see Figure 1). According to this model, work–family conflict comprises both work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW). WIF is a function of work supports and work demands; similarly, FIW is a function of family support mechanisms and family demands. Our adaptation of the Frone et al. (1997) model contains an extensive list of antecedent and outcome variables, which were selected based on a review of the latest literature on work–family conflict. Moreover, our model was formulated to incorporate two assumptions that have recently received support in the literature (see for example Aryee et al., 1999; Carlson and Perrewé, 1999): (1) that supports act as antecedents to demands, and (2) that indirect reciprocal relationships exist between WIF and FIW (see Figure 1).

Applying a theory in a cross cultural context requires increased complexity. We have, therefore, also added some socio-cultural, contextual and policy variables to the model in an attempt to address emic concerns. In particular, these variables include: gender-role ideology, vertical and horizontal individualism/collectivism, monochronic/polychronic time orientation, positive spillover and strategies for coping with work–family conflict, and the degree of public policy support and service provision available to assist individuals to reconcile work and family responsibilities.

It would be beyond the scope of this article to outline all the hypotheses and relationships that could be examined in this research. Besides, our model and our hypotheses are still evolving through a discussion among the collaborators and have not yet been finalized. That being said, many of our predictions can easily be derived from a perusal of the proposed model. For example, we expect that:

*H1a:* Lower work support (e.g. less support from supervisor and co-workers and fewer family-friendly organizational policies) and higher work demands (e.g. longer hours,

higher work overload and work involvement) will result in higher WIF. Similarly,

*H1b:* Lower family support (e.g. from spouse and relatives) and higher family demands (e.g. higher family responsibilities, overload, and involvement) will result in higher FIW. Consequently,

*H2a:* Higher WIF will result in negative outcomes in the family domain (e.g. lower family and marital satisfaction, higher parental guilt).

*H2b:* Higher FIW will result in negative outcomes in the work domain (e.g. lower job satisfaction, higher intention to turnover).

*H2c:* Both higher WIF and higher FIW should be related to more negative general life outcomes (e.g. lower life satisfaction and well-being).

Although we expect that the relationships in this general model will apply in all cultures, we also anticipate that there will be differences depending on the socio-cultural and contextual variables operating in each country. For example, in regard to the contextual variables we would expect that:

*H3:* Work–family conflict will be alleviated by positive spillover and the use of adaptive coping strategies because these will decrease the work and family demands experienced and increase perceptions of support in the work and family domains.

Moreover, we contend that variations in culture due to gender-role ideology, individualism/collectivism, and nature of societal support systems (extended family vs. institutional) will play a significant role in determining the type and prevalence of family demands, family support, work demands, and work support individuals will experience. Based on this we hypothesize that:

*H4:* In countries with a more traditional gender-role ideology (e.g. India), working women will face greater family demands than in countries where gender roles are more egalitarian (e.g. the USA).

*H5:* Family-related support systems will be more available in countries that are high on collectivism and where gender roles are more

traditional (e.g. Turkey), whereas institutional (i.e. organizational and governmental) support systems will be more available in countries that are higher on individualism and where gender roles are more egalitarian (e.g. Canada).

*H6:* Levels of work–family conflict will be the highest in countries where there are few labour market and social policies to support work–family balance coupled with few non-institutional support systems (e.g. extended family). Conversely, the more institutional or non-institutional supports available, the lower work–family conflict will be.

Indeed, our initial qualitative data (i.e. focus group discussions that will be elaborated later) confirmed such culturally based patterns. We also found in our focus group discussions that women from some countries (e.g. India, Turkey, Israel) reported that they fulfil many work and family duties without much support, and yet felt satisfaction with such ‘multitasking’. On the basis of this initial qualitative data, we decided that the cultural dimension of polychronic vs. monochronic time orientation (Bluedorn et al., 1999) was important to examine. In polychronic cultures, multitasking is the norm, whereas in monochronic cultures, people do one thing at a time. We expect that:

*H7:* Working people in polychronic cultures will report more work and family demands, but not necessarily experience more work–family conflict compared with their counterparts in monochronic cultures.

As one can see from these examples, the socio-cultural context variables in our research are theoretically conceptualized both as having main effects that directly influence demands and supports, as well as being moderators that influence the magnitude of relationships between demands, supports, and work–family conflict.

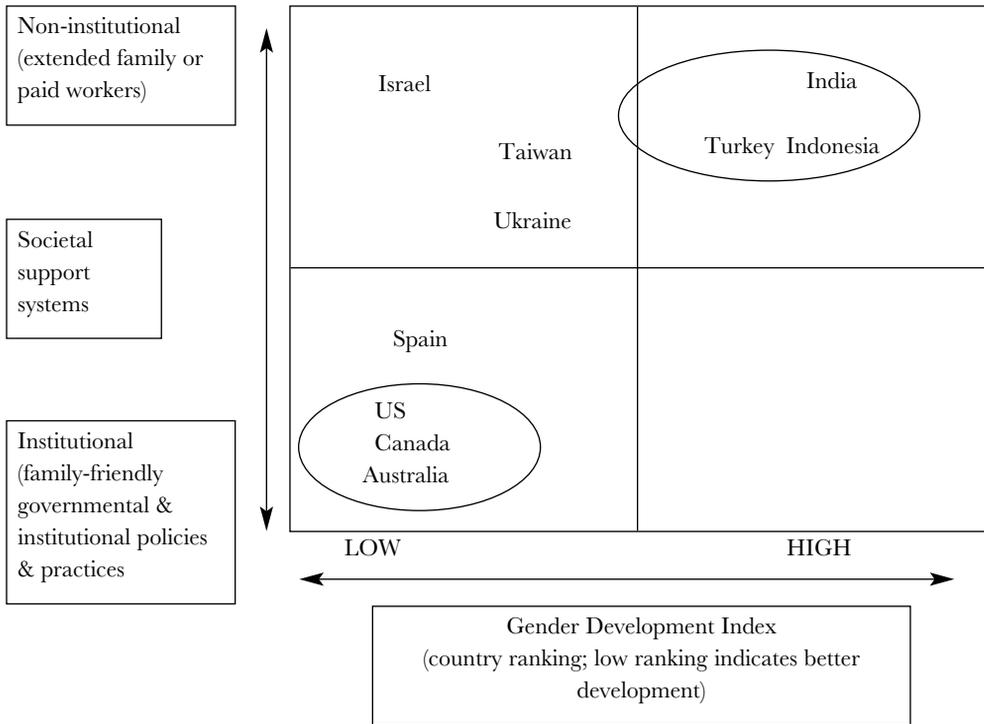
## **Methodology**

When carrying out cross cultural research on a global scale, there are a number of general methodological issues that first need to be

addressed. These will be discussed next, followed by an explication of the specific methodology to be used in this study.

In the past, much cross cultural research has been carried out by exogenous researchers (Ayman, 1994; Enriquez, 1988). Sometimes an international team of indigenous researchers has been developed, but the choice of variables and methods of research used is often defined by one culture. Recently, cross cultural psychology researchers have encouraged a collaborative effort employing multicultural research teams (e.g. Brett et al., 1997). This approach was employed in our project to ensure the proper balance of emic and etic orientation and to allow ideas to be contributed by both exogenous and indigenous researchers (Ayman, 1994). By involving indigenous researchers when designing the study, we have tried to ensure a depth of understanding of each cultural context and that the most effective methodology will be implemented in a given culture.

We have followed the suggestion of Gelfand et al. (2002) that, when forming international research teams, the members of the team represent countries or cultures that make unique contributions to the research question. Therefore, we have developed an a priori classification of countries on two key dimensions that are critical for work–family conflict research. In determining these dimensions, we paid close attention to two design requirements. First, the dimensions had to be discrete from one another as much as possible. Second, the classification of countries had to yield at least two contrasting groups that are different from another and yet homogeneous within themselves. The first dimension was ‘gender egalitarianism’. For this, we used the Gender Development Index of UNDP as a general measure (Human Development Report, 2003; [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)). The second dimension is based on the support mechanisms available to reconcile paid and unpaid work. These range from institutional supports (e.g. government, labour, and



**Figure 2**

social policies; family-friendly organizational policies and practices; and community supports) to non-institutional ones (e.g. extended family support, paid helpers). We determined the placement of countries on the basis of the expert assessment of members of the research team.

Figure 2 presents a graphic representation of where we believe the countries involved in this project fall on these dimensions. We are expanding our research team on the basis of this country classification; thus we have recently added researchers from Australia and Taiwan. We are currently seeking to augment the team with researchers from other countries that represent areas that have not already been covered. For example, we would be very interested in being able to collect data from countries that are high in traditional gender-role ideology and yet also have a high degree of societal and organizational support

for work–family issues. We realize, however, that such cultures may be very difficult to locate.

One thing that distinguishes our project from most cross-national research studies on this topic is that almost all international research teams get their funding from one country and that country’s researchers have the ultimate say regarding the study’s design and measures. In such circumstances, there are often concerns about the domination of one country with resources over others, and an egalitarian and collaborative atmosphere may be jeopardized by the power of finance. We have tried our best to avoid this situation and to make our team a consultative and consensus driven entity. The coordinator is very attentive to maintaining both quality and representation in our consultations. All members have access to e-mail and we have set up a website to facilitate communication

between team members. At this point there is no umbrella funding for our project, and hence the danger of such dominance has not been present. Instead, the individual researchers have had to find their own funding (although when a funding source has been identified for multi-country research on this topic, researchers from several countries have collaborated to submit a grant proposal). This approach has not been without problems of its own, however, as research of this nature is very difficult to carry out without a stable funding base.

With regard to specific methodology, this study has three components: focus group discussions, policy analyses, and quantitative surveys. The first stage of the research involves the collection of focus group data. In each country, two focus group discussions of five women each (total of 10 women – preferably a diverse sample with respect to both work and family demands) are carried out initially to identify the culturally specific emic issues pertaining to WIF and FIW as they relate to women from dual-earner families.

The guiding questions are: how do you handle work and family responsibilities? (How often) Do you experience that your work interferes with your family responsibilities? What are the key reasons for that? What are the key outcomes of it? How do you cope with it (e.g. personal adaptations and support mechanisms)? (How often) Do you experience that your family interferes with your work responsibilities? What are the key reasons for that? What are the key outcomes of it? How do you cope with it (e.g. the support mechanisms)?

Focus groups conducted in each country help to identify the key issues pertaining to the work–family interface that are important in that culture. These kinds of qualitative, emic data are informative in their own right. However, the focus group data have also been very useful in the development of the quantitative survey to be discussed later. Specifically, the focus group data collected

thus far has allowed the incorporation of some new variables (e.g. coping strategies, monochronic vs. polychronic time orientation) into the survey that illustrate the cultural diversity between participating countries. Moreover, based on focus group data, measures of variables such as guilt and coping strategies are being created for the survey. The focus group data have also been used to adjust some of our pre-existing measures by adding new items or modifying some aspects, making them more derived-etic (Berry, 1997) in nature. An example of this is our social support measure, which was modified to distinguish between nuclear and extended family support. This, even in the early stages of the design of the study, has helped to make the variables more culturally relevant and the measures more culturally sensitive (see Berry et al., 1992).

The second component of our study will be a policy analysis directed at obtaining information about macro-level variables. More specifically, this analysis will focus on the range of policies and programmes that affect gender roles, family income, and supports and opportunities for flexibility in integrating work and family responsibilities. Each national team will compile information about demographic and labour force trends, relevant labour market and social policies, and provisions for services such as childcare and elder care. We anticipate developing or using typologies based on theory and research that affect gendered labour force and caregiving patterns and the potential for more flexibly reconciling work and family responsibilities. In this regard, we have been influenced by Esping-Andersen's (1999) modified typology of welfare state regimes and more recent work by a number of policy analysts who are developing new typologies that more directly take account of gender issues and supports for work–family integration (see for example Meulders and O'Dorchai, 2003 and Pfau-Effinger, 2000). In all cases, we are striving to strike a balance between emic and etic con-

cerns. For example, information regarding the social policies in each country will be collected on a country-by-country basis. This information will be used both to help us to understand the specific situation that exists in that culture and for purposes of cross-country comparison.

The third component will be a quantitative survey focusing on micro- and meso-level variables. Ideally, the participants will be at least 200 women and 200 men from dual-career couples, with children, from each of the participating countries. These employees must be full-time workers in white-collar occupations, who are not self-employed. We have decided to limit our sample to this group so as not to introduce too much heterogeneity with regard to the degree of work and family demands experienced. In this type of sample the work roles of the men and women are more equivalent to one another than would be the case if we focused on the wider range of those in dual-earner couples. Because much of the previous research in the work–family area has been conducted on those in white-collar occupations, this type of sample will also facilitate our ability to compare our results with previous findings. We realize, however, that these sampling restrictions will limit the generalizability of our results.

The survey will employ measures of variables from the proposed model (see Figure 1). A summary of the constructs that will be measured can be found in Table 1. We are not providing a detailed account of the particular scales that will be used to assess these constructs at this time as they are being chosen by consensus between the team members and many are still under development. In general, many of the measures included in this study can be categorized as imposed-etic (Berry, 1997), as they are standardized scales that were designed and validated in one of the participating countries, such as the United States, Israel, or Spain, and will be administered in other countries. For exam-

ple, we will be employing a well-validated, multi-faceted measure of WIF and FIW (Carlson et al., 2000) because the literature indicates that time-based, strain-based and behaviour-based conflict may result in different outcomes. We have, however, also included a variety of emic (Berry, 1997) items and scales where deemed necessary.

At times we may have to collect certain data from one country and exclude data from another country for lack of relevance. For instance, in some countries no formal family-related company policies exist, therefore this variable may be modified or not included in the survey conducted in that specific country. In the case that the measure is modified to represent cultures in the study it can be considered a derived-etic (Berry, 1997).

Once finalized, a standardized English version of the survey will be subjected to a back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1980) to ensure that the translation is accurate. This method requires that one bilingual person translates the measure into another language. Subsequently, another bilingual person back-translates the measure into the original language (i.e. English). The two English versions of the measure are then compared for accuracy.

Wherever possible, the survey will be administered in two waves with the two questionnaires being sent out approximately three months apart. Specifically, the wave 1 questionnaire will contain the variables pertaining to: (1) socio-cultural context, (2) work supports, (3) family supports, (4) work demands, and (5) family demands, as well as WIF and FIW and the demographic variables. WIF and FIW as well as outcomes in the work, family and life domains will be assessed in wave 2. See Table 1 for more information regarding which specific measures will be included in which wave.

This design is preferable to a one-shot survey for several reasons. First, it helps to eliminate common method bias as an explanation for some of the relationships.

**Table 1** Proposed quantitative constructs

Construct	Subscales	Survey wave
Monochronic/polychronic time orientation		1
Individualism and collectivism	Horizontal individualism	1
	Horizontal collectivism	
	Vertical individualism	
	Vertical collectivism	
Gender-role ideology		1
Coping strategies	Functionality, separation, focus and effectiveness	1
Positive spillover	Work to home	1
	Home to work	
Social support	Work: supervisor and co-workers	1
	Family: spouse/partner, relatives, non-familial	
Involvement	Work	1
	Family	
Overload	Work	1
	Family	
Control	Work	1
	Family	
Family-friendly organizational policies	Availability and usage; general satisfaction	1
WIF (1 and 2)	Time-based	1 and 2
	Strain-based	
	Behaviour-based	
FIW (1 and 2)	Time-based	1 and 2
	Strain-based	
	Behaviour-based	
Family satisfaction		2
Marital satisfaction		2
Parental guilt	WIF	2
	FIW	
Job satisfaction		2
Turnover intentions		2
Life satisfaction		2
Well-being		2

Second, the design is prospective in nature (i.e. directed at the issue of predictive rather than concurrent validity). The ability to make causal inferences based solely on correlational data is enhanced because the

antecedents of work–family conflict are assessed at a time prior to the assessment of outcomes. The data collected should be amenable to using structural equation modelling procedures to test the proposed model.

## Discussion

Much previous cross cultural research on work–family issues has consisted of atheoretical, micro-level studies that have been done in a policy vacuum. Too often it has been the kind of research that ‘proceeds by simply finding a data collection site in another culture (Culture B), administering a Western measure from Culture A, and then automatically attributing any differences between the two as being due to “culture”’ (Gelfand et al., 2002: 218).

In designing our study, we have made a number of choices that we feel will enhance the quality of our research. We are using a multicultural and interdisciplinary team composed of indigenous researchers so as to assure a deep understanding of the cultures being studied (Ayman, 1994; Gelfand et al., 2002). We have included a wide number of cultures and have selected participating countries based on theoretically important dimensions (Gelfand et al., 2002). We have based our research on theory (Frone, 2002) and will be using multiple methodologies, both qualitative and quantitative (Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999), both emic and etic, and at both the micro- and macro-level (Gelfand et al., 2002). We have tried to respond to Greenhaus and Parasuraman’s (1999) call for more studies of work–family balance that use short-term longitudinal approaches and that examine gender differences and to Frone’s (2002) desire that more emphasis be placed on the role of positive spillover, personal coping initiatives, and organizational work–family policies.

Some limitations are inherent in adopting such an approach, however. A multicultural team working together by consensus over a distance can result in slower progress and less efficiency, although hopefully in a better quality result. As mentioned previously, the lack of overall funding for the project is another limiting factor. A third concern is the complexity of the research and the number

of variables that have been selected for study. We have tried to start by being more inclusive and exhaustive in the selection of our variables, realizing that some may later be eliminated after pilot testing or because it may not be feasible to collect data on them in some cultures. Moreover, although our model appears complex, much of this is due to the need for built-in redundancy, as model testing through structural equation modeling requires that there are several variables for each of the latent constructs. Finally, we believe that if one is to do a study of this type, it is better to try to collect as much data as possible while you have the opportunity to do so. The fact that we will be using a two-wave survey will cut down on the number of measures administered at any one time, making the study more feasible.

We did, however, have to make some decisions about the type of population that we would be able to sample. Future research should address whether the results of our study would be able to be replicated with individuals in blue-collar occupations, those in non-standard work arrangements (e.g. self-employed, part-time) and in those with other family types (e.g. single parent). Also, the impact of industry and organization factors could be investigated more fully.

Despite the shortcomings of our research, we anticipate that the application of our model to a cross cultural context will serve to advance theory about the work–family interface by illuminating how cultural, social and public policy contexts affect the way workplaces respond to working parents, and how work and family demands and supports are experienced by individual workers. The data that we collect will allow us to examine the universality of and to identify boundary conditions for Frone et al.’s (1997) theory. This is something that has previously been addressed only by Aryee et al. (1999) using an English-speaking sample from Hong Kong.

An important aspect of our research is that it adopts a multi-level approach, incorporating both micro-level and macro-level components. At the macro-level, our project will include the development of a protocol for profiling work–family related policies and service provision. Labour market and welfare policies (e.g. parental leave and benefit policies, the provision of child and elder care services, and policies that constrain or expand women’s and men’s involvement in paid employment and in unpaid family work) can be theorized as providing the critical political-economic and social contexts that frame both employment conditions and the experience of the work–family interface. The multi-level design of our research will allow us not only to examine effects at both the micro- and macro-levels, but also to look at cross-level effects (i.e. whether aspects of culture moderate the relationship between micro- and macro-level variables). This is something that few, if any, other studies have been able to do.

Because of this, we expect that our research will have practical and policy implications for the alleviation of the harmful effects of work–family conflict. In addition to the opportunity to learn about the effects of alternative approaches, the research highlights the importance of understanding the cultural context that affects business decisions and employees’ expectations and experiences. Moreover, a cross cultural examination of workplace and government policies can provide critical learning points for policy makers who must increasingly be aware of the need to find culturally appropriate ways to alleviate the harmful effects of high levels of work–family conflict. We anticipate that the results of our research will contribute to establishing equitable and sustainable approaches for promoting work–life harmonization and achieving more egalitarian structures and practices within organizations for men and women.

## Notes

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## Résumé

### **Une approche multi-niveaux de la recherche comparative sur l'interface travail-famille: une perspective micro et macro (Karen Korabik, Donna S. Lero et Roya Ayman)**

Cet article décrit le cadre théorique et les fondements sous-jacents à une étude internationale de grande échelle sur l'interface travail-famille. Cette recherche se fonde sur une approche théorique multi-niveaux. Elle est réalisée par une équipe multiculturelle composée de chercheurs originaires de différents pays retenus sur la base de dimensions théoriques importantes. L'étude empirique se compose de trois volets : 1) des focus groupes qualitatifs, 2) une analyse de la politique sociale et 3) une enquête quantitative en 2 vagues. Les données recueillies sont donc de nature à la fois qualitative et quantitative, émic et étic, micro et macro.

## 摘要

### **跨文化家庭/工作矛盾研究的多層次分析：微觀及宏觀理論**

Karen Korabik, Donna S. Lero and Roya Ayman

本文闡述了進行大規模工作與家庭矛盾國際調查的理論框架和基本原理。此項研究採用了多層次，以理論為基礎的研究方式。研究人員來自不同的文化背景。他們在自己的本國同國際的同行們進行跨國際的研究合作。研究由三部份組成：第一，對既定人群的特有屬性調查；第二，社會政策的分析；第三，以數據為依據的量子雙波調查。所以本項研究的數據即有質性，又有量性的特點。並且研究也兼有廣泛與獨特，微觀與宏觀的屬性。