AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION OF WORK-FAMILY FACILITATION:
THE EFFECT OF WORK AND FAMILY EXPERIENCES ACROSS
DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL AND FAMILY STATUS CONDITIONS

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate work-family facilitation, that is work-to-family facilitation (WFF) and family-to-work facilitation (FWF). Qualitative method was used to gather data from 21 respondents, in which 11 respondents were of non-managerial level and the other ten respondents were of managerial level; twelve respondents have children and nine respondents do not have children; ten of them were from dual earner family and 11 of them came from single-earner family.

Content analysis of the data showed the reasons for WFF are job-related resources, work environment, organization policies, while the reasons for FWF are family support, skill and knowledge, and family size. The way the two kinds of facilitation operate was shown, Generally, WFF can be classified as emotion-based, behavior-based, personality-based and time-based. For FWF, it can be grouped into psychological-based, behavior-based and personality-based. Comparisons between different occupational status and family status conditions were made. Implications for the management of human resources were available in the study.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Nowadays, a growing number of people in Hong Kong are participating in more and more roles, such as employee, a partner and parents. Many researches have indicated that multiple roles generate work and family demands and lead to work-family conflict. But in fact, there exists many work and family resources and experiences that have been neglected. These work and family resources and experiences can successfully be transferred across domains and results in facilitating the participation in the work and family domains. By knowing how these resources facilitate, organization policies or practices that focus on work family facilitation can be carried out for supplementary use to enhance organizational effectiveness.

The concept of work family conflict has long been investigated and has been receiving comprehensive understanding towards this topic. However, the idea of work family facilitation is still a comparatively new concept. Some researches have started the examination of work family facilitation, for example, Grzywacz, (2002) and Voydanoff, (2004). Grzywacz, et. al., (2002), have established a fundamental framework for work-family facilitation, but the large majority of researches that examined work family facilitation have
just focused on the side of work-to-family facilitation, neglecting the side of family-to-work facilitation. This results in our incomprehensive understanding at this stage and therefore is urging for a better understanding as we generally accepted the fact that work domain is closely related to family domain. From previous research (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), we know that work family conflict and work family facilitation are two distinct ideas. Organizational policies that aim at alleviating work family conflict may not be best suitable for enhancing work family facilitation. Therefore, the purpose of this study will be to investigate work-family facilitation and to make comparison in terms of occupational status and family status in Hong Kong. After knowing better about work family facilitation, there may be some organizational policies which aim at enhancing this.

B. Objectives

Therefore, this study has several objectives. Firstly, it aims at having a better understanding about work-to-family facilitation by finding out how work experiences facilitate family performance among Hong Kong employees. Another research objective is set to have better understanding about how family experiences facilitate work performance. Comparisons will be made in accordance with different occupational status and family status on both work-to-family facilitation and family-to-work facilitation. Implications for organizational policies will be illustrated in order to enhance work family facilitation as a conclusion.
A. Work Family Facilitation

According to Wayne, Musisca and Fleeson (2004), work family facilitation is defined as occurring when, by virtue of participation in one role (e.g. work), one’s performance or functioning in the other role (e.g. family) is enhanced. Like work family conflict, work family facilitation can also be bidirectional representing the extent to which an individual’s active involvement in one domain (work) facilitates enhanced engagement or processes in another domain (family) (Frone, 2003), i.e. work-to-family facilitation and family-to-work facilitation. Work-to-family facilitation (WFF) refers to one’s involvement in work provides skills, behaviors, or positive mood, etc which positively influences the family while family-to-work facilitation (FWF) refers to one’s involvement in family results in positive mood, support, or a sense of accomplishment that help him or her cope better, work better, feel more confident, or reenergized for one’s role at work.

WFF and FWF involve psychological spillover, a transitory phenomenon which includes the ways in which family (work) life affects an individual's energy level, attention span, and mood, which in turn are brought into the work (family) setting by the worker (Crouter, 1984).
It includes mood spillover and value/attitude spillover (Evans, & Bartolome, 1980). Mood spillover occurs when mood in one domain affects mood in the other domain. According to Staw, Sutton, and Pelled, (1994), positive moods promote positive interactions with others, each of which facilitates role performance. Positive emotions may also increase helping behavior (Rothbard, 2001) and energy expansion (Marks, 1977).

Behavior spillover occurs when behavior developed in one domain may become habits or scripts that influence behavior across domains (Greenhaus, & Beutell, 1985). For example, interaction patterns with students are developed among teachers which directly shape their behavior as parents (Edward & Rothbard, 2000; Ispa, Gray, & Thornburg, 1984).

Previous research also has urged for the examination of different forms (mood, value, behavior, etc) of work family facilitation (Wayne, et. al., 2004).

B. Work Experiences and Work-to-Family Facilitation

Extensive research has examined relationship between various work demands and resources and work family conflict. However, the conceptualization of work family facilitation is less established than work family conflict, and empirical research of its correlates is just beginning (Voydanoff, 2004).
Understanding how work experiences influence work-family facilitation provides a necessary foundation for designing work policies and programs that increase work family facilitation. Grzywacz and Marks (2002) indicated that different physical, psychological and social resources are available, but it is clear that jobs are not created equally in terms of these resources. In the study of Voydanoff, et. al., (2004), it identified several work resources that are associated with work-to-family facilitation. It claimed that the most prominent work resource that contributes to work-family facilitation is job autonomy, that is the degree to which employees are able to decide how to do their jobs, and the learning opportunities results from the job, which enhance the development of skills and encourage creativity.

Supervisory support was found to positively relate to work-to-family facilitation (Aryee, Tan, & Debrah, 2002) in the sense that it promotes a family supportive work environment or culture (Eaton, 2003). It thereby increases psychological rewards and helps individual feel better in performing family issues (Voydanoff, et. al., 2004).

Organizational policies have been found to be effective in contributing to work-to-family facilitation. For example, Scandura and Lankau, (1997) suggested that flexible work hours allow individuals the opportunity to work during times more suited to their personal needs which enhances work-to-family facilitation. However, it is unknown whether these work experiences can be gained by Hong Kong employees and how they affect family
C. Occupational Status, Family Status Conditions and Work-to-Family Facilitation

Occupational status is a work domain factor. Previous research has not paid much attention to the impact of this (i.e. higher versus lower level), although this may affect an individual's family performance.

It is generally believed that the work-family interference at higher position is a negative process, i.e. work-family conflict since they have heavy workload and thus seriously affect their family lives. However, few researches have investigated the positive spillover of employees from different occupational status. In fact, a higher level of job control (or job autonomy) can be enjoyed by people of higher occupational status. This concept was supported by a research by Nelson and Burke, (2000) in the sense that this working population can enjoy higher decision-making authority (Burris, & Beverly, 1986).

It can be associated positively with self-esteem among adults (Gecas, & Seff, 1990). This relationship is generally explained via the main processes of self-concept formation: occupational achievements enable more favorable reflected appraisals from others, more positive social comparisons with others, and more positive self-attributions.
Employees with children develop interaction patterns with colleagues directly shape their behavior as parents. It directly affects their parenting skill and thereby the performance in the family (Grzywacz, & Marks, et. al., 2000).

The majority of the research on work family issue focuses on dual earner family but seldom on traditional (single earner) family or even compares them. In fact, a significant portion of employees are from traditional families. We are aware of no study that has included a comprehensive comparison of different family structures.

To understand how work experiences facilitate family performance of different types of employees, we have the following research questions (RQ):

Please refer to Appendix A for the research objectives, research questions and interview questions.

*RQ 1: What work experiences that lead to work-to-family facilitation exist among Hong Kong employees?*

*RQ 2: How does work-to-family facilitation operate?*

*RQ 3: Do occupational status and family status differences lead to different degree of work-to-family facilitation?*
D. Family Experiences and Family-to-Work Facilitation

Although participation in non-work domains, such as parenting, has been recognized for contributing favorably to work (Crourter, 1984; Kantas, 1977), the majority of studies continue to focus on the conflict from non-work to work domain. In fact, positive nonwork-to-work spillover involved nonwork supporting, facilitating, or enhancing work (Kirchmeyer, 1993).

Research reported that the amount of family resources is indicated by a) family cohesion – the degree to which family members are helpful and supportive to each other; and b) family expressiveness – the degree to which family members are encouraged to act openly and to express their feelings directly (Billings, & Moos, 1982). Factors affecting the amount of family resources are for example family support, spouse support, etc.

Family support has been found to be a very effective tool in enhancing the above two indicators and in coping work family conflict. It includes attitude support; emotional support, in which includes displaying the caring behavior and being sympathetic; and instrumental support that includes providing an actual help to accomplish the task for the spouse. Researches found that conversations with family members, like for example spouse and son or daughter, are helpful for resolving difficulties at work (Grzywacz, & Marks, 2000). As a result, family support is an important resource from family that contributes to family-to-work
facilitation.

However, at this stage, no known research has comprehensively investigated on how family experiences contribute to family-to-work facilitation which implies the need for investigation.

E. Occupational Status, Family Status Conditions and Family-to-Work Facilitation

It is believed that by playing different roles in the family, one will be able to gain and experience more from the family. Kirchmeyer, (1992) has reported that workers are more patient with their co-workers and clients because of their interactions with their young children at home as parents.

Scholars typically conclude that, in dual earner family, having the opportunities to talk through difficulties at work, or having a partner who is sensitive to job related pressures may help individual better handle the pressures associated with their jobs and solve work-related problems and consequently perform better (Grzywacz, & Marks, 2000). Through communication with family members, work can be facilitated in the sense that unique or innovative work arrangements can be negotiated with their working spouse (Hattery, 2001). But traditional family, which may affect family-work facilitation, is neglected in previous studies.
It seems that how family experiences owned by people of different occupational and family status affect job performance are not fully illustrated in studies.

In order to have a more comprehensive picture of FWF, we therefore have the following research questions in order to understand how family experiences facilitate work by different types of employees:

*RQ 4: What family experiences that lead to family-work facilitation exist among Hong Kong employees?*

*RQ 5: How does family-to-work facilitation operate?*

*RQ 6: Do differences in occupational status and family status lead to different degree of family-to-work facilitation?*
A. Participants

In this study, 21 employees were invited to be the participants. Convenience sampling method was used. They were contacted by telephone and face-to-face interaction, which introduced to the study and requested for the voluntary participation. Among the 21 respondents, 14 (67%) is male and the other seven (33%) are female. Respondents from public transport provider, property management, banking, cleaning service provider, insurance, toy manufacturing, stationary supplier, catering industry, advertising agent, hotel industry, decoration material supplier, construction participated in the current study.

To facilitate comparison, 11 respondents are of non-managerial level and the other ten respondents are of managerial level. Twelve respondents have children and nine respondents do not have children. Ten of them are from dual earner family and 11 of them come from single-earner family.

B. Data collection

The interviews were carried out in early February to mid March. The respondents were
requested to answer open ended questions designed. Face-to-face interviews, which lasted for 20 to 30 minutes, were conducted in Cantonese. All participants were informed their responses would be kept under strict confidentiality and the data they gave would just be used in this study. Responses were recorded in details notes.

C. Data Analysis

The process of data analysis of this study followed the method suggested by Kane, and Brun, (2001). There are three stages. Stage 1 involves scanning the materials. First, interviews and documents are analyzed as data collection proceeded; transcripts are read and gone through at least twice. In stage 2, we looked for patterns and themes. After scanning the data, similar themes were identified. Stage 3 is a process of data clustering. Data pertain to the same research questions were coded to key themes linking the research questions developed at the beginning of the research.
In this chapter, the qualitative data obtained from the interviews are reported and grouped under respective research questions. The representative comments and responses will be illustrated in table form in Appendix B.

**Research Objective 1: To understand how work experiences facilitate family performance**

Through interviews, participants are able to present comments and give a better understanding about how work experiences lead to work-to-family facilitation. Under this research objective, we are able to understand 1) the work experiences leading to work-to-family facilitation; 2) the way work-to-family facilitation operates; 3) and the extent to which different positions and family roles lead to different degree of work-to-family facilitation. Below is the summary of the respondents’ responses under research question (RQ) 1 to 3.

**RQ1: The reasons for work-to-family facilitation**

According to respondents, job-related resources, work environment and organization
launched activities or organization policies can affect their family performance positively.

a) Job-related resources

Interviewees reported that experiences related to the job itself could affect them positively in the family. Job autonomy, job-related skills and knowledge, financial resources and work schedule are under the umbrella of job-related resources.

Job autonomy - Eight respondents expressed in the interviews that they can enjoy great control over their own work since they are not under close supervision of their bosses or supervisors. One of the respondents said,

“I seldom see my boss. We seldom have interactions except sometimes on discussion about job. You know, you will uncomfortable if the boss often monitors your work. I found freedom in performing my job and feel less pressure because of this.”

Job-related skills and knowledge – Among the respondents, 18 said that they learnt communication, time management, parenting, and other skills or knowledge from training programs or through continuous practice and they were able to apply these when they were in the family.
Work schedule - Three of the respondents are able to enjoy fixed working schedule, although not the flexible one, which enables them to leave on time and do not need to stay any time longer in the office for work.

b) Work Environment

Supervisor support – A total of seven respondents reported that when they had problems at work or at family, they received support from their bosses or supervisors. When they got problems at work, their supervisors could sense that and would then communicate with the respondents in order to be clear about the situation and take actions accordingly. Referring the respondents for further counseling is an example.

Colleague support - Seventeen, a large majority of the respondents regarded colleague support to be very significant in the workplace that facilitates family performance. Colleagues might help to cause work-to-family facilitation of respondents as they have several functions. They offer help when the respondents were facing family problem, support the respondents emotionally, and create a non-threatening, relaxed work environment.

c) Organization Activities/ Policies

Functions – Twelve of the respondents said that the company which they are in designed
indoor and outdoor activities. Respondents can invite their family members to go along with them.

Financial support – One respondent reported that the organization gave financial support like low interest rate loan which can enable respondent to solve financial matter related to family.

Counseling – A respondent said that the organization offered counseling service when they feel psychological distress at work or at home. The respondent replied:

“I remember I have once felt very stressful because of my problem at family. I was referred to the HR department for counseling. I felt secured because the conversation was kept confidential and I felt less stressful after counseling.”

RQ 2: The way work-to-family facilitation operates

According to the interviewees’ responses, we can identify a number of ways of how work experiences affect family performance. We can group them into four main categories and they are emotion-based facilitation, behavior-based facilitation, personality-based facilitation and time-based facilitation respectively.
a) Emotion-based facilitation

Forty-eight percent of the respondents reported that they were still experiencing stress because of work as they had medium to heavy workload everyday. They thought that stress was somehow inevitable and must exist. Most of them therefore could not feel totally net positive mood, but a lower level of stress at home. All respondents reported that there may sometimes be better emotion, either from very stressful to a little bit stressful, or from a little bit stressful to happy because of work in the family. They regarded facilitation as a process of emotion better-off.

b) Behavioral-based facilitation

There were also positive behavioral changes like on parenting and communication at home because of work as skill and knowledge can be transferred and applied in the family.

Parenting – Two of them said that they used what they have learnt from work as parenting skill at home. One of the respondents replied:

“I receive training program and I learnt how the trainer teach us. It’s systematic and presented in a non-boring way. I then applied these skills in teaching my daughters......and teach her
Communication - Responses also revealed that their interpersonal skill enhanced because of their frequent communication at work. Five of them said that they knew how to communicate with family members in a different way in which funny, interesting manner is presented in the communication process. Communication with family members as a result increased.

Others – There is also one respondent reporting quicker reactions and one respondent having enjoyed physical wellness.

c) Personality-based facilitation

Extraversion - As revealed by six of the respondents, they became more talkative and energetic in the family due to work. They were more willing to take the initiative to talk in the family, making the atmosphere in the family more harmonic.

Patience – It is another personality enriched because of work. Two of them thought themselves to be more patient when teaching children and were less likely to be stimulated even when the children were not performing well.

Self-confidence - Findings showed that four respondents were more self-confident in
performing in the family. This can be illustrated by their self-perceived ability to overcome family problems.

d) Time-based facilitation

Time is a precious thing for employees and is especially important for those married people as they have responsibility to take at both work and family. They need time to work so as to earn money, and at the same time take time to be with the family. They need to strike a balance. As a result, eight respondents said that they could have good fit of time between work and family by developing a good schedule that they can work well enough on one hand and squeeze time for family activities on the other hand and by participating in organization launched activities, which allow respondents to have better relationship with organization members on one hand, and on the other hand, they are provided the time to be with their family.

RQ 3: The extent to which the difference in position, family structures and family roles lead to different degree of work-to-family facilitation

As we can conclude from the findings, difference in positions, family structures and family roles result in different experience of work-to-family facilitation.
The comparison only showed that dual earner family experiences significantly much time-based work-to-family facilitation than traditional family. This can be indicated by the difference of 70% between the two family structures.

Data revealed that managers received much job autonomy than non-managers. Eight managers enjoyed job autonomy while no non-managers experienced this. Meanwhile, the non-manager respondents (N=18) were found to experience comparatively better work environment in which much support could be gained from both their bosses and colleagues, when compared with managers (N=6). At the same time, there were significantly more non-managers (N=6) experiencing personality enrichment than managers (N=1). They experienced much extraversion and patience.

When compare respondents with no children, three times more respondents with children reported behavior-based facilitation than non-parent respondents, in which work affected them much on their parenting and communication manner in the family. As a result, two more respondents with children than those without experienced patience on personality aspect.

Data also showed nine parent respondents, which was twice of non-parent respondents, enjoyed time-based work-to-family facilitation.
Research Objective 2: To understand how family experiences facilitate job performance

RQ 4: The reasons for family-to-work facilitation

As revealed by the respondents, family support, skill and family size were the three most dominant factors causing family-to-work facilitation.

Family support - Family support mainly included active listening, consideration and counseling, which is emotional in nature; and also sharing of housework responsibility, which is behavioral in nature. The active discussion with family members created a non-threatening, relaxed and harmonic atmosphere which would in turn upgrade the performance at work. Fifteen of them experienced these.

Skills and knowledge - In the family, two respondents with children were able to learn parenting skill and other knowledge when they interact with their family members. Their job performances enhanced in the sense that they would apply these skills and knowledge when they guided their subordinates or colleagues in the workplace.

Family Size - The family size also plays a part. Two respondents revealed that the small family size implies fewer dependents on the respondents and thus placed less pressure.
RQ 5: The way family-to-work facilitation operates

Like work-to-family facilitation, there were psychological-based facilitation, behavior-based facilitation, and personality-based facilitation from the family side to the work side.

a) Psychological-based facilitation

**Emotion** – There were 13 respondents reporting that their emotion at work changed because of family. They experienced lower level of stress generally when they faced problems at work as a result of support from family. Some respondents also reported lower stress not only facing problem at work but also at common time. In addition, some of them even felt positive mood in the family because of the relaxed family environment. This good feeling retained and transferred, making respondents felt good during work.

**Motivation** - Psychological-based facilitation does not just include emotional impact. In hope of guaranteeing family good lives, eight respondents expressed that their families provided them with motivation to work. The following is the response from one of the respondents:

“I felt worthwhile to work hard. I really want them to have good education and life. I am therefore motivated to work in order to earn enough money.”
b) Behavior-based facilitation

Communication - There were also positive behavioral changes at work due to family. Communication manner changed among six respondents as they had learnt their own set in the family. They claimed that these increased interaction with their colleagues or clients. They can also acquire knowledge from their family members and therefore ends with more communication at work. A respondent expressed the following,

“If my children have questions on homework, they will ask me and somehow if I can’t help, I will bear in mind and ask colleague if possible. I can therefore have more communication with my colleagues.”

Others - Moreover, two respondents changed their way of reacting to problem at work as they accept the opinion of their family members. They can also enjoy physical well-being that they would not feel tired when they are at work because of family.

c) Personality-based facilitation

Two respondents also found that their self-confidence enhanced. They felt more competent to perform at work.
Also, six of respondents expressed that they found themselves to be more extravert in the workplace due to their performance in the family. Apart from being talkative, positive attitude is also an indicator of extraversion and a respondent demonstrated this because of family.

“Although working is always hard, I will just imagine them as challenges.”

**RQ 6: The extent to which different positions, family structures and family roles lead to different degree of family-to-work facilitation**

As reflected by the interview data, we can actually see that different types of family-to-work facilitation occurred among respondents with different backgrounds. Fifty percent more respondents from traditional families than those from the dual-earner ones were receiving behavioral support from the family as there would always be someone at home doing all the housework and therefore they could enjoy much physical well-being. They also feel more motivated to work.

More managers (N=9) are found to receive behavioral support from family than non-manager (N=6) and therefore experienced much physical wellness enhancement. However, the respondents who are non-managers were concluded to experience much motivation on the
psychological ground as indicated by the 50% difference.

Respondents with children can be concluded from the data that 10 of them received emotional support from the family domain, while only three non-parent respondents reporting this. Also, two more parent respondents than non-parent ones obtained and applied skills and knowledge learnt from family at work. About the way of operation, twice more parent respondents than respondents without children felt motivated by the family to work.
A. General Summary of Findings

As we can see from the result, work-family conflict although is still existing among Hong Kong employees, work-family facilitation does take place. Results have showed that work family conflict still affects the employees psychologically, causing them to experience a certain level of stress. But obviously, the work-family balance is existing. Employees are increasingly aware of the positive effect of work on family.

For the reason of work-to-family facilitation, social support in the workplace is the most significant factor causing work-to-family facilitation. However, not many companies have family-friendly policy. But one thing for sure is that organizations are becoming more aware of employees’ well-beings in order to enhance productivity. To achieve the result, there are more activities or programs organized by the company.

We received a better understanding about how work-to-family facilitation operates. Generally, we can identify four types of work-to-family facilitation that affect not just individuals’ emotion, behavior (Wayne, et. al., 2004), but also their personalities and time use.

In fact, individuals of different backgrounds did have different experiences of work-to-family
facilitation. Dual earner family, when compares with traditional family, can enjoyed more
time-based facilitation. This can be explained by the different perception of time. In dual
earner families, the demand on their time is great (Burden, 1986). Dual earner families tend
to more value time. Great feeling of facilitation can be resulted even because of minor
experience at work.

Non-managers are found to have significantly more psychological enhancement than
managers as they are receiving more social support in the workplace. This can be explained
by the findings of DeLong and DeLong, (1992) that managers are also difficult to change
themselves much in the family after work.

Parent employees also experience higher degree of behavior-based facilitation. Also they
were more patient at home than those without children since children enable the transfer of
skills and knowledge from work to family (Costigan, Cox, & Cauce, 2003).

Similar to work-to-family facilitation, Hong Kong employees can also experience
family-to-work facilitation. And they can be categorized into three categories, that is,
psychological-based facilitation, behavior-based facilitation and personality-based facilitation.
They feel psychologically better at work after leaving family. At the same time, the family
also provides motivational forces for the employee to work.
Taking responsibility at home changes employees behaviorally at work, such as communication and problem solving. Employees also become more enriched in personality and this facilitates their performance at work.

This study discovered that employees with different backgrounds do have different experiences of family-to-work facilitation. Comparing the family structures, the dual earner family has more facilitation on behavioral and personality aspects. They interact more at work and become more extravert as they received more skills and knowledge from their working spouses. In contrast, since they are the breadwinner of the family, traditional family experiences much motivation. They can also enjoy physical wellness as there is always someone at home to take care of family matters.

As seen from the findings, more non-managers reported motivation to work caused by family. To explain this, non-managers usually have less financial resources to satisfy family needs than managers and so, non-managers are more motivated to work because of family responsibilities.

Parents employees are psychologically less stressful, more motivated to work, and more outward in the social circle. All these can be explained by the existence of children at home.
that enables emotional support and the transfer of communication skills. Children also offer behavioral support that enhanced their physical well-being. Those with no children were found to have more net positive mood which can be explained by the absence of economic and behavioral demand from family.

**Unusual result**

The finding found that parent employees experience much time-based facilitation than those without children. This result contradicts with past research (Green, & Zenisek, 1983) that parent children are more conflict rather than facilitation. This may be explained by the increasing awareness of nowadays’ parents on the development of children and therefore they are willing to schedule more time from their work to be with their children. Moreover, as revealed by the result, there were more and more organizations launching activities that could involve employees’ family members. This was of great use to them as they could use this to be with their colleagues and family.

**B. Implications for the Management of Human Resources**

From the findings, we can see that employees generally welcomed the presence of job control. Although this currently only exist at managerial level, changes in job design can be applied in which certain degree of job control and autonomy is included in the job even at
non-managerial level. Apart from job redesign, psychological empowerment can also be suggested to grant employees certain degree of control over their job.

As respondents has revealed that organization counseling is effective in reducing stress and in turn facilitating family performance, counselor in the organizations should be well-trained in order to be well-prepared for counseling the employees. Also, as the supervisors will always be the one who notice any problem of the employee, they should be trained to be more sensitive and better in counseling skill. This can ensure the immediate support from the organization and minimize the negative impact of work to the family.

Organization launched activities which can involve family members can be a good practice of the organization to maximize work-family facilitation of employees. Examples like firm visits and short-journey tours can on one hand enhance the communication between the participants and colleagues; on the other hand, it can increase opportunities for communication with their family members. It also increases family members’ understanding of the work and the companies which the employees work in. For the managerial staff especially, it can enhance their interactions with their subordinates and in turn gain more social support. For the parent employees, it can give them time for gathering with children within the busy working schedule. To the organization, it is of low cost and achieves the greatest effect of work facilitating family, and therefore it is highly commented to try this
C. Limitations and Recommendations

There are several limitations existing in the present study. First, the sample size is small; it just consisted of 21 respondents, which is relatively small for a qualitative study. Also the use of convenience sampling also brings sample bias. The unequal proportion of male and female respondents may lead to the bias in responses since male and female often have different perceptions on work and family. Another limitation about the sample is that it lacks respondents from the groups of (1) dual earner family, manager, with no children, (2) dual earner family, non-manager, with no children, (3) traditional family, manager, with no children. This may hinder the accuracy of the comparison among respondents with different backgrounds.

This study made comparison of different people of different backgrounds. In order to have a better understanding of work-family facilitation, comparisons can be made among other groupings, like using gender, different work types (blue collar vs. white collar), and the type of employment (part-time vs. full time). All these issues can be examined in the future studies.
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Appendix A1

The Tree Diagrams between Research Purpose and Research Objectives

**Overall Research Objective:**
To understand work-family facilitation and to make comparison on the role played by different positions and family roles on work-family facilitation in Hong Kong workplace

**Research Objective 1**
To understand how work experiences facilitate family performance in Hong Kong

**Research Objective 2**
To understand how family experiences facilitate job performance in Hong Kong
Appendix A2

The Tree Diagram between Research Objective 1, Research Questions and Interview Questions

**Research Objectives 1:**
To understand how work experiences facilitate family performance

**Research Question 1**
What work experience that lead to work–family facilitation exist among Hong Kong employees?

**Research Question 2**
How does work-family facilitation operate?

**Research Question 3**
Do differences in positions and family roles lead to different degree of work-family facilitation?

**Interview Questions**
1) What are the characteristics/ nature/ title of your job? What is being provided by the job?
2) It is often difficult to turn off their feeling, thoughts and behavior when they leave work.
   a) Please recall a recent time that something you experience at work affect positively your family.
   b) How is the process? Please describe what happened and who (at work & at home) was involved.
   c) How do you feel when you experience this?
   d) What do you do when you experience this?
3) How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues? With your supervisor?
4) Think about the last time you had to leave work early/ miss work because of family. Describe your colleagues’ and supervisor’s reaction.
5) Are there any family friendly policies in your organization?
Appendix A3

The Tree Diagram between Research Objective 2 and Research Questions and Interview Questions

**Research Objectives 2:**
To understand how family experiences facilitate job performance

**Research Question 4**
What family experiences that lead to family-work facilitation exist among Hong Kong employees?

**Research Question 5**
How does family-work facilitation operate?

**Research Question 6**
Do differences in positions and family roles lead to different degree of family-work facilitation?

**Interview Questions**

1) What is the characteristics/structure of your family?
2) It is often difficult to turn off their feeling, thoughts and behavior when they leave family and then go back to work.
   a) Please recall a recent time that something you experience in family (e.g. the relationship with family members, family structure, etc) affect positively your work.
   b) How is the process? Please describe what happened and who (at work & at home) was involved.
   c) How do you feel when you experience this?
   d) What do you do when you experience this?
3) How would you describe your relationship with your family members?
4) Think about the last time you had to leave miss family activity because of work.
   Describe your family members’ reaction.
Appendix B

Invitation Letter and Interview Questions

Invitation Letter

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a final year student majoring in Human Resources Management at the Hong Kong Baptist University. For my honors project, I am trying to gain a better understanding of work-family facilitation among Hong Kong employees, that is, how work (family) experiences positively affect family (work) performance.

I would like to hear your thoughts about this important issue. If you have a few minutes sometime within the next few weeks, I would like to have an interview with you. The interview will only take about 30 minutes. All information we discuss will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used in my honors project.

I am looking forward to receiving your reply. If you have any question or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me anytime by phone at 93678123, or by email 02006332@hkbu.edu.hk

Yours faithfully,

___________________

Lui Siu Ha Angela
Final Year Student
Hong Kong Baptist University

Enclosed : Interview Questions
**Interview Questions**

1) What are the characteristics/ nature/ title of your job? What is being provided by the job?

2) It is often difficult to turn off their feeling, thoughts and behavior when they leave work.
   a) Please recall a recent time that something you experience at work affect positively your family.
   b) How is the process? Please describe what happened and who (at work & at home) was involved.
   c) How do you feel when you experience this?
   d) What do you do when you experience this?

3) How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues? With your supervisor?

4) Think about the last time you had to leave work early/ miss work because of family. Describe your colleagues’ and supervisor’s reaction.

5) Are there any family friendly policies in your organization?

6) What is the characteristics/structure of your family?

7) It is often difficult to turn off their feeling, thoughts and behavior when they leave family and then go back to work.
   a) Please recall a recent time that something you experience in family (e.g. the relationship with family members, family structure, etc) affect positively your work.
   b) How is the process? Please describe what happened and who (at work & at home) was involved.
   c) How do you feel when you experience this?
   d) What do you do when you experience this?

8) How would you describe your relationship with your family members?

9) Think about the last time you had to leave miss family activity because of work.
   Describe your family members’ reaction
### Appendix C

#### Table 1. The Reason for Work-To-Family Facilitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job-related resources</th>
<th>I found freedom in performing my job.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job control</td>
<td>I think it is good to leave me work on my own rather monitored closely by the manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am free to do whatever I want apart from my duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job-related skills and knowledge</td>
<td>I sometimes need to deal with some clients who may be difficult to deal with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skill</td>
<td>My customer service skill can be applied in talking my son……I also got knowledge about the field I am working in which I can share with my son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I learnt negotiation skill that I have to negotiate with suppliers for bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management skill</td>
<td>I always need to schedule for example meeting and therefore a time management skill is very important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting skill</td>
<td>I receive training program and I learnt how the trainer teach us. It is systematic and presented in a non-boring way. I then applied this skill in teaching my daughters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I need to train new colleagues recently and I have to train them in a systematic way so that he can understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others skills and knowledge</td>
<td>I did some of the furniture by myself. I can use some of my skill learnt at work in addition to the skill I originally have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I learnt crisis management skill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can also use some real world case happens in my company to share with my children as far as I know it is helpful for her study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>I recently got a bonus that not everyone can have except those performed good in the performance appraisal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Work schedule | I can leave at about six o’clock everyday and do housework as wife.  
I will say my working schedule is good enough that everyday I just need to check once whether the orders received that day are finished and then I can go home and have rest. |
| Work environment | Colleague support  
We always have exchange on about children affairs.  
We are very happy during working as we always chat with each other; we share with each other whatever happy or unhappy. The atmosphere is enjoyable.  
I talked with a colleague, who is a close friend of mine. I felt much more comfortable after her counseling. |
|                          | Supervisor support  
We are good friends and can speak freely about everything even about discontent to the company.  
We may sometimes have discussion abut family matters. He sometimes takes initiative to as about family recent situation.  
I remember once I have to leave work. He came to me, asked what happened and then told me not to worry and to take leave until I finish the family stuff. |
| Organization support | Counseling  
I remember I have once felt stressful because of my problem at family. I was referred to the HR department of counseling. I felt secured because the conversation was kept confidential and I felt less stressful after counseling. |
|                          | Organization activities  
There are gatherings on special occasion like festival and we can bring our family members to the gathering.  
There are outdoor activities that family members can |
enjoy discounts.

Financial support

The low interest rate loan with enabled me to purchase an apartment.

Table 2. The Way Work-To-Family Facilitation Operates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion-based facilitation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decreased stress</td>
<td>I think I feel less pressure at home……. They will make me less nervous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’s just a little stress when the workload is heavy especially at the beginning of each month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net positive mood</td>
<td>I feel really relaxed in this environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As a result, my family praised me for the good job and I feel sense of success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am happy when I am participating in it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior-based facilitation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in communication manner</td>
<td>Sometimes if I face same situation in which my daughter is not is good mood and is difficult to deal with, I can handle it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am funny when I talk with children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can therefore talk with them in soft and persuasive tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase interactions</td>
<td>I share more with the family may be at the dinner time, TV hours, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can share with my son to give him some information and broaden his mind. I got more topics to talk with him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>I can apply the training skill in teaching my child. I teach my child with interesting language and step-by-step.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quicker reaction</td>
<td>I can respond quicker and stay calm when I face problem at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enhanced physical well-being</strong></td>
<td>I feel relaxed when I arrive home physically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Personality-based facilitation** |  |
| **Extraversion** | I become talkative as I always chat and chat in the workplace. |
| | I will take initiative to talk with them. |
| | Although working is always hard, I will just imagine them as challenges |
| **Patience** | I felt I am more patient in teaching them. I will teach them step-by-step. I now seldom hit them or scold them if they learn what I taught slowly. |
| **Self-confidence** | My family thinks that I am a “superman” and can do whatever furniture they want, making my feeling more self-confident. |

| **Time-based facilitation** |  |
| **Better Time management/ Time use** | It’s good for me that we usually have no time to have outdoor activities with my family. You know it’s hard for me to find time for gathering with my family as my wife is working or my children need to do their own stuff. So this is a great opportunity. |
| | If I attend exhibition, I will bring my children along with me so that I can do my work and take care of my children at the same time. |
| | I can schedule certain length of time to be with my son every night to keep interaction between us. |
| | I need to have careful planning on family activities and I can squeeze some time from the busy schedule for family activities. |
| | I valued it as it can enable me to do many things at one time. I can achieve the objective of having more interactions with company members and also have more interaction with my family. |
### Table 3. The Reason of Family-To-Work Facilitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Family support</strong></th>
<th>Since my wife is also working, she knows well that everyone working will have work stress. She talks with me to see if there’s any problem in my work.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My parents love me and cook me some drinks or soup which is good for my health and resisted tired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My daughters seemed know that I am busy working and tired and may help to do housework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My children once see me very tired and gave me a massage. And I feel really warm. Although they are young, they can understand my hardship at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills &amp; knowledge</strong></td>
<td>My son understands my job nature and whenever there’s some news about my job-related field, he will discuss with me. It also broadens my horizon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My discussion with client sometimes relies on what I have chat at home. Sometimes, I can chat more with the client and we can become closer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small family size</strong></td>
<td>I think the family structure may affect. I don’t have children and it may impose less pressure on me both on time and financial resources. It’s more flexible to do what we want, so in case if there is any work intervening family, it is more flexible to handle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. The Way Family-To-Work Facilitation Operates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological-based facilitation</th>
<th>My daughter understands that job will always be the most important and she never blames me for unavailability. She is mature enough to understand this concept. This made me feel less guilty.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decreased stress</td>
<td>I feel good as I know someone knows I tired and cares me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Positive mood</td>
<td>I am the breadwinner of the family and I truly want to give my parents good life. It’s just like some sort of power to push me to work harder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>I felt worthwhile to work hard. I really want them to have good education and life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One of my daughters went to foreign country for study and it’s really a big burden on me. But since it’s my responsibility to guarantee her education, I felt I am motivated to work and work carefully.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Behavior-based facilitation      | I somehow talk with colleague in a funny, “idiot” way.                                                                                                                                              |
| Communication manner            | I always have discussion with my daughter if she feels unhappy. And I as mother have to talk with her, see what the root of problem and see how to tackle the problem. In the workplace, this skill to deal with this kind of colleagues as it’s our responsibility. |
| Increased communication         | This made me got more to discuss with my colleagues.                                                                                                                                               |
| Problem solving manner          | Sometimes, I can chat more with the client and we can become closer.                                                                                                                               |
|                                  | I eventually took the solution suggested by my wife to tackle the problem.                                                                                                                          |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced physical well-being</th>
<th>It makes me physically relaxed and I can retain energy to do my work at home and also at work.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personality-based facilitation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-confidence</strong></td>
<td>I feel competent to do my work because I got these realistic experiences in the family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It enhances my self-esteem in the social circle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extraversion</strong></td>
<td>Although working is always hard, I will just imagine them as challenges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>