

Abstract

The study was carried out to address the slow phase of female career development. This was done by identifying the impact of family-work conflict on the contribution of social capital and human capital towards career development. The current study discussed female career development based on Super's self concept theory of career development. Super's (1969) theory of career development does not specify a clear relationship between the identified factors. This lacking identified in the theory is addressed by the current study. The introduction of family-work conflict as a moderator based on the supporting from previous studies would be the main addition to the theory. A study to test the relationship had not been conducted in the Sri Lankan context which is also addressed.

Relevant theoretical models led to the development of hypotheses to identify the independent effect of social capital and human capital on career development and the moderating effect of family-work conflict on the above relationships that weakens them. A quantitative study was conducted on a sample group of 301 middle managerial level female employees from the banking and apparel sectors of Sri Lanka. The data was then analysed and tested based on Structural Equation Modeling and Analysis of Moment Structure. Testing of the hypotheses confirmed a positive relationship between social capital, human capital and perceived female career development and the moderation of family work conflict. This implied that the positive impact of the direct relationship is weakened by family-work conflict. The lacking identified in the self concept theory of career development (Super, 1969) was fulfilled by clearly conceptualizing the relationship amongst the above factors. The findings also confirmed a number of other related theories such as human capital theory, structural-hole theory and role theory.

Suggestions for the management to minimize the negative impact of family-work conflict by extending the support from the organization were provided as structural changes, family support practices and capacity building activities. In summary, the study fulfills a limitation in the current body of knowledge by contributing an addition to the self concept theory of Super (1969) and addresses a commonly noticed performance gap of lack of female career development in the local and international context.

Key words: Human capital, Social capital, Family-work conflict, Career development