

## Spousal Support and Subjective Career Success: The Role of Work-Family Balance and Career Commitment as Mediator

(Sokongan Pasangan dan Kejayaan Kerjaya Subjektif: Peranan Keseimbangan Kerja-Keluarga dan Komitmen Kerjaya sebagai Pengantara)

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate the antecedent of career success from work-family perspective. Specifically, it examines both direct relationship between spousal support and subjective career success, and indirect relationship via work-family balance and career commitment. Data were collected using survey method from four hundred and seventeen nurses working in hospitals in Jambi, Indonesia. To test the hypotheses, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) statistical technique was employed. The results of the study indicate that spousal support is positively related to career success. Work-family balance was found to mediate the relationship between spousal support and subjective career success, while career commitment was found to mediate the relationship between work-family balance and subjective career success. The study bridges the work-family research and career success research area, and brings together the literature on role theory, spillover theory, conservation of resources theory in one model.

**Keywords:** Spousal support; work-family balance; career commitment; subjective career success; role theory; conservation of resource theory

### ABSTRAK

Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menyasat antededen kejayaan kerjaya dari perspektif kerja-keluarga. Secara khususnya, kajian ini meneliti hubungan langsung antara sokongan pasangan dan kejayaan kerjaya subjektif, dan juga hubungan tidak langsung menerusi pembolehubah keseimbangan kerja-keluarga, dan komitmen kerjaya. Dengan menggunakan kaedah soalselidik, data untuk kajian ini dikumpulkan daripada empat ratus tujuh belas jururawat yang bekerja di hospital di Jambi, Indonesia. Teknik statistik Permodelan Persamaan Berstruktur (SEM) digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis. Hasil kajian menunjukkan terdapat hubungan positif antara sokongan pasangan dan kejayaan subjektif kerjaya. Keseimbangan kerja-keluarga pula didapati bertindak sebagai pengantara dalam hubungan antara sokongan pasangan dan kejayaan kerjaya subjektif, manakala komitmen kerjaya pula didapati menjadi pengantara dalam hubungan antara keseimbangan kerja-keluarga dan kejayaan kerjaya subjektif. Kajian ini menghubungkan bidang kajian kerja-keluarga dan kejayaan kerjaya, disamping menggabungkan literatur berkaitan teori peranan, teori limpahan serta teori pemuliharaan sumber dalam satu model.

**Kata kunci:** Sokongan pasangan; keseimbangan kerja-keluarga; komitmen kerjaya; kejayaan kerjaya subjektif; teori peranan; teori pemuliharaan sumber

### INTRODUCTION

Career success was the result of personal experience and could be seen as personal experience and the accumulation of real or perceived accomplishments. It reflects the symbol of prestige, and is often viewed as a source of power, happiness, satisfaction and acquisition of materialistic advancement at the individual's perspective (Yu 2012). Career success is important because it reflects an overall evaluation of the individual's career. Research interest in career success has been high for many years; it has caught the attention of both researchers (e.g., Heslin 2005; Rasdia, Ismaila & Garavan 2011) and practioners (eg., Robbins 2003; Ziglar 1997). The literature on implications of career

success on individual behaviors and workplace outcomes has been quite well established (Ballout 2009) compared to its antecedents. The knowledge about the antecedents is important as it can be used to help organizations and individual employees in designing more effective career system, and strategy that would increase organizational members' career success (Ellis & Heneman 1990). Thus, to contribute to the literature, the present study will examine the antecedents of career success.

In general, three categories of antecedents of career success have been indentified in the literature-individual, structural and behavioral antecedents (Aryee, Chay & Tan 1994). However, while previous career literature has been useful in identifying antecedents of

career success, little research has focus on family related factors such as work family conflict (Martins, Eddlerston & Veiga 2002; Ballout 2009), spousal support, satisfaction with childcare arrangements, family identity (Aryee & Luk 1996), and work-life balance as predictors of career success. Social trends today indicate that the increasing female workforce participation and dual-career couples have further underscored the linkages of work and family domains as important issues in influencing career success. To achieve balance of work and family roles, support from both work and family domains are needed (Ferguson, Carlson, Zivnuska & Whitten 2012). The scarcity of resources such as time, energy and knowledge, makes the role of spousal support pertinent to the balance of work and family roles. Employees will have positive work experience and a psychological bond to their career if they perceived their jobs support the ability to balance their work and family roles. This positive experience will create a commitment towards their career. As indicated by some previous studies, career commitment relates to career success (Rashid & Zao 2010; Poon 2004). These relationships imply that, together, spousal support, work family balance and career commitment might play role in predicting career success of an individual. However, to date, such relationship has not been adequately addressed in the literature.

Thus, to add to the career literature, and given the fact that work and family cannot be separated from human life, the present study aims to investigate the antecedent of career success from family perspective. Specifically, it examines both the direct relationship between family support and subjective career success, and the indirect relationship via work-family balance and career commitment.

#### SPOUSAL SUPPORT AND CAREER SUCCESS

Career success is defined as a positive psychological or work related outcomes or achievements that an individual accumulates as a result of work experiences (Converse, Pathak et al. 2012; Judge et al. 1995). It has two dimensions- objective career success which refers to tangible, observable, and quantifiable criteria such as salary or income, the number of promotions, and occupational status (Judge et al. 1995; Heslin 2005), and subjective career success which relates to individual judgments about career attainments such as assessments on the value of the human capital (Stumpf 2010), appraisals of self-worth and capabilities (Chang et al. 2012), and experience of satisfaction in the career (Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Wormley 1990). The present study focuses on subjective career success as emerging career today is characterized by a high degree of mobility and unpredictability which has resulted in more emphasis given to subjective criteria in measuring career success (Srikanth & Israel 2012). The effect of economic trends such as organizational delayering, downsizing, and outsourcing, for example, has

diminishing effect on opportunity for promotion. Hence, financial success and status success as the indication of objective career success have shifted from objective to subjective, making it more relevant for us to give more focus on subjective career success.

In general, literature has reported three well-known determinants of career success, namely individual, organizational and behavioral factors (Ballout 2009). Past studies in career success has given more focus on individual and organizational factor as predictors of career success, compared to behavioral factors (Ng, Eby & Sorensen 2005). More recently, however, evidences show that another important predictor of career success also relates to family factors (e.g., Aryee & Luk 1996; Ballout 2009; Lyness & Judiesch 2008). This is not surprising given the fact that work and family cannot be separated from human life.

According to role theory, employees have the scarcity of resources such as time, energy and knowledge to meet the demand of multiple roles. Therefore, the multiplicity of roles tends to produce role conflict and role overload as the consequences of imbalance of roles (Kahn et al. 1964). Spousal support in terms of the help, advice, understanding and the like is needed to reduce the imbalance of work and family roles (Aycan & Eskin 2005). This view is in line with spillover theory which suggests that people carry their emotions, attitudes, skills, and behaviors which they establish at work into their family and vice versa (Crouter 1984). Likewise, this positive experience at family domain, in terms of balancing family and work role, will be carried over to work domain and may influence their perception toward career success. Without spousal support, and under the scarcity of resources condition, it is hard to balance the multiple roles. As a consequence, success in career is hard to materialize.

A spouse can contribute to the successes of his or her partner through direct and indirect assistance (Grossbard-Schetman & Izraeli 1994). Direct assistance can happen through sharing skill or knowledge to help with his or her work, whereas indirect assistance can materialize through moral support to face obstacles at work. Those physical and moral support, empathy, caring and love from a spouse can make individual feel more motivated and more satisfied with his or her achievement, happy, able to effectively perform work and family activities, and eventually may improve individual level work outcome such as career satisfaction (Lu, Siu, Spector & Shi 2009). Empirically, a study investigating twelve main predictors of career success conducted by Yu (2012) shows that family support is the most important predictor of career success after work experience, education and personality. Thus, based on the above theoretical and empirical supports, we propose that:

H<sub>1</sub> Spousal support is positively related to subjective career success

## SPOUSAL SUPPORT, WORK-FAMILY BALANCE, CAREER COMMITMENT AND CAREER SUCCESS

Work-family balance is defined as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict (Clark 2001). An imbalance between these two domains can be a source of conflict that can cause psychological and physical outcomes (Frone, Russel & Cooper 1992). Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) describe work-family balance as the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in, and equally satisfied with his or her work role and family role. They propose three components of work-family balance: time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. Each of the work and family activity requires equation of time, involvement, and satisfaction to achieve work-family balance. In general, many individuals have difficulties in meeting the demands of work and family domains simultaneously because of the scarcity of their resources. In this situation, spousal support plays an important role in helping individuals fulfill the demanding work and family roles.

The ability to fulfill the demands of work and family roles can be achieved by negotiating and sharing with their role-related partners (Grzywacz & Carlson 2007). Empirically, high level of spousal support was found to be related to lower level of work-family conflict (Seiger & Wiese 2009). Although work-family balance and work family conflict have different meaning, minimizing work family conflict, in essence implies the existence of work-family balance (Slan-Jerusalem & Chen 2009; Pichler 2009). Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>2</sub> Spousal support is positively related to work-family balance

Having multiple roles should consequently increase the demands on an individual's resource. However, multiple roles also provide the opportunity to obtain resources that could compensate for the additional demands that can lead to desirable outcomes for the individual (Prottas & Hyland 2011). Multiple role involvement leads to an accumulation of resources such as social support, psychological strengthening and tangible resources that increase an individual's performance in another role (Sieber 1974). Achieving a balance between work and family role means the multiple roles are well-managed. As argued by the enrichment perspective, the positive effect in one role may increase the quality of life in the other role (Greenhaus & Powell 2006). Likewise, positive effects in achieving a balance of work and family roles will carry over to influence perceptions of achievement in the work domain. Some empirical studies support the link between work-family balance and career success. For instance, a study by Lu et al. (2009) concludes that work-family balance is strongly and positively linked to career satisfaction. It has also been found that work-life balance has a positive relationship with career advancement (Lyness & Judiesch 2008).

As the meaning of success depends on who assesses it, it is also implied that career success depends on how individuals perceived their success. It may vary from one individual to another and from time to time. Work-family balance is perceived as the ability to manage work role and family role harmoniously. This positive experience will influence the perception of their achievement, including career success. Therefore, the next hypothesis is:

H<sub>3</sub> Work-family balance is positively related to subjective career success

Work-family balance exists when the duties and responsibilities on the job and in the home create mutually compatible situations (Sweet 2014). Work-family balance is also an employee's work expectation (Dries, Pepermans & Carlier 2008). However, since work and family domains are interrelated, the ability to integrate work and family harmoniously also depends on the work and the characteristics of the profession itself. Professions that are supportive to individuals to balance their work and family roles can lead to individuals having positive work experience and a psychological bond to their careers. As has been noted in the literature, as people's perceived expectations for their present job is fulfilled, they will have higher career commitment (Chang 1999; Arnold 1990).

Although there is limited empirical evidence to explain the relationship between work-family balance and career commitment, several studies have indicated the relationship between work-family balance and the other types of commitment which are also related to positive attitude. For instance, in Aryee, Srinivas and Tan's (2005) study, work-family balance was found to have a positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. A study by Lourel et al. (2009) also reported that employee commitment is especially high in organizations that have work-family balance policies. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H<sub>4</sub> Work-family balance is positively related to career success

Career success is a cumulative outcome; it implies taking time to achieve career success (Converse et al. 2012). Success is a product of behaviors aggregated over a relatively long period of time. Thus, to attain career success, consistent attitude toward one's vocation known as career commitment is needed (Blau 1985). Carson and Bedeian (1994) define career commitment as one's motivation to work in a chosen vocation. They divide career commitment into three components- career identity which refers to establishing a close emotional association with one's career; career resilience which refers to resisting career disruption in the face of adversity; and career planning which refers to determining one's developmental needs and setting career goals.

Meyer, Becker and Vandenberghe (2004) claim that commitment is a source of motivation to persist in a course of action although there are barriers and difficulties, while Colarelli and Bishop (1990) believe that career

commitment are the foremost contributing factor for career progression. Commitment supports career success in several ways- individuals committed to their careers may invest in their careers significantly in terms of putting forth more effort and acquiring new knowledge and skills (Aryee et al. 1994), develop attitudes consistent with their commitment (Poon 2004), committed to the efforts required to attain career goals, and always loyal although facing obstacles and setbacks (Kim & Rowley 2005).

Empirically, research found that the higher the level of career commitment, the more positive the attitude towards the job, which in turn influences career success (Rashid & Zao 2010). Another finding shows a positive relationship between career commitment, current salary and subjective career success (Day & Allen 2004), and a positive link between career commitment and career success in terms of salary and career satisfaction (Ballout 2009; Poon 2004). Therefore we hypothesize that:

H<sub>5</sub> Career commitment is positively related to subjective career success

As argued earlier, giving spousal support via negotiating and sharing between an individual and his or her role-related partner may help create work-family balance (Carlson, Grzywacz & Zivnuska 2009). A spouse can provide emotional support such as listening and empathizing with each other concerning work-family struggles. This can reduce work-family conflict and achieve work-family balance (Muse & Pichler 2011). Spousal support also means actively sharing family responsibility, i.e., reducing the workload of the household by sharing tasks and offering suggestions on how to better manage the multiple roles to achieve balance in work and family roles (Carlson et al. 2009; Muse & Pichler 2011). Talking and sharing experiences with one's spouse may significantly reduce the psychological stress caused by imbalanced roles and help recharge one's resources to enable an employee to better focus on the work domain and share household tasks. Through the accumulation of resources, spousal support may help employees to achieve the required balance (Ferguson et al. 2012).

According to spillover theory, employees will carry this positive experience at the family domain into the work domain (Crouter 1984). As a result, this positive spillover will influence their positive perception about their career achievement and satisfaction toward their careers. This is in line with Grzywacz and Carlson's (2007) work-family balance definition. Their definition indicates an interaction between work and family life through negotiation and sharing of roles with the role-related partners may influence work-family balance. Implicitly, it also supports the spillover effect of work and family roles which influence work outcomes.

Empirically, research investigating the role of work-family balance as a mediator in the relationship between spousal support and career success is still limited. Nonetheless, work-family conflict literature has shown that spousal support acts as an antecedent of

work-family conflict (Muse & Pichler 2011). The studies by Martins et al. (2002), and Slan-Jerusalim and Chen (2009), for example, show that work family conflict is a crucial antecedent of career satisfaction-the higher the work family conflict, the lower career satisfaction will be. Although those constructs are theoretically and empirically distinct (Carlson et al. 2009), extensive research on work-family balance has largely used work family conflict as a proxy for understanding work-family balance (Ferguson et al. 2012).

The relationship between work-family conflict and career success reported by previous researchers is essentially similar to the relationship between work-family balance and career success, even though the first one is from a negative perspective and the latter is from a positive perspective. The integration of work and family roles can significantly enhance the efforts and contributions towards greater career success (Ballout 2009). In line with the above arguments, we propose that:

H<sub>6</sub> Work-family balance mediates the relationship between spousal support and subjective career success.

Career commitment is characterized by a strong sense of identification, persuasion, development and active involvement in an individual's career goals (Colarelli & Bishop 1990). According to psychological approach, there are three sources of antecedent career commitments-behavior, expectation and exchange (Arnold 1990). Individuals bring a set of expectations to their jobs and if they perceived their job expectations are fulfilled, they will commit to their careers (Chang 1999). In addition to that, they will also commit to their careers as an exchange process between their positive experience and feelings of being bounded to an entity (Arnold 1990). The level of an individual's commitment is influenced by the level of congruence of individuals' perceived roles and their expected roles (Kim & Rowley 2005).

Investigation on employee expectations from the work domain indicates that work-family balance is one of them (Dries et al. 2008). It means when employee are able to balance their work and family responsibilities, their work expectation is fulfilled. Consistent with Arnold's (1990) three sources of career commitment, meeting job expectations is one of them. Thus, it implies that work-family balance relates to career commitment. Another study shows that an inter-role conflict has a negative correlation with career commitment (Colarelli & Bishop 1990). This is because the inter-role conflict causes the role demands of the other domain to be incompatible, such as conflicts between family and work roles, thereby, affecting the diffusion of energy from career goals which in turn impacts on decreasing career commitment (Colarelli & Bishop 1990). This finding is seen as supportive to the idea that work-family balance is related to career commitment and career commitment may influence career success. In the other words, career commitment is

the mediator variable between work-family balance and career success.

To the best of our knowledge, there is no empirical evidence yet to clarify the link between work-family balance and career success by using career commitment as the mediator variable. Previous studies have indicated the link between work-family balance and career commitment, and career commitment and career success separately. For instance, the results of Lourel et al.'s (2009) study propose that employee commitment is especially high in organization with work-family balance policies. Individuals who are highly committed to their careers spend more time in developing skills, and display less intention to withdraw from their careers and jobs (Aryee & Tan 1992). Individuals who are committed to their careers should have more positive feeling, and should experience more subjective career success than those who are less committed (Ballout 2009; Poon 2004). Based on these arguments, our next hypothesis is:

- H<sub>7</sub> Career commitment mediates the relationship between work-family balance and subjective career success

## METHOD

### SAMPLE AND PROCEDURES

A quantitative research design was employed in this study as the objective is to test the predictive model developed on the basis of the existing theory. The main data which consist of spousal support, work-family balance, career commitment and career success were collected at one time simultaneously.

The respondents for this study were nurses from public and private hospitals. They were selected based on three reasons. First, the impact on how to balance between work and family role in attaining career success may be a big challenge for the type of work which directly relates to human life, such as the nursing profession. They must be highly dedicated for humanity and disciplined with their tight working hours including changing shifts and weekend work. Second, career commitment reflects someone's attitude towards one's profession or vocation. In general, professional workers such as nurses are more committed to their career rather than the non-professional (Blau 1985). Third, although the studies on career success among nurses had been conducted before (Mrayyan & Al-faouri 2008; Yildirim & Aycan 2008), to the best of our knowledge, studies on the linkage between spousal support, work-family balance, career commitment and career success with nurses as respondents are still limited.

The study was conducted in Jambi because it is a rapidly growing city located in a strategic area in the middle of Sumatera Island, Indonesia. It is located near to Singapore and Johor, Malaysia. With population 3,458,926 people at 2016 (BPS Province Jambi 2017), Jambi can be categorized as a medium-size populated city. Statistics

show that Jambi has a high economic growth over the past nine years (BPS Province Jambi 2017). One of the indicators is for that research is the increasing number of health facilities including hospitals. Jambi Province Health Department Office (2017), for example, reported that in 2016 there were 34 hospitals in the Province compared to only 18 hospitals in 2007. The nurse ratio per 100,000 people's Jambi Province is 158 nurses per 10,000 people. However, Jambi Province still has 108.58 nurse per 10,000 people. This condition indicates that Jambi province should achieve the target nurse ratio and the number of the nurse in Jambi tends to increase steadily in line with the increasing the number of the hospitals in Jambi.

## MEASUREMENT

Spousal support is measured using van Daalen et al's (2006) measurement with four items of questionnaires. It reflects the four types of support as conceptualized by House (1981). They are emotional, instrumental, informational and appraisal support provided by one's spouse to assist enhancing performance at work and in house. The sample item is "your spouse is willing to listen to your problems." A 5-point Likert scales ranging from "never" (1) to "very often" (5), were used in the study.

Work-family balance is measured using six items to represent the overall degree of balance the respondents experience between their work and family lives. These items are adapted from Carlson et al's. (2009) and were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1) to "strongly agree (5). The sample item includes "I am able to negotiate and accomplish what is expected from me at work and in my family."

Career commitment is measured by adapting Blau's (1985) seven-items scale. The respondents were asked to indicate their attitude towards their profession as nurses. These items are rated on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The sample items are "I will quit the job as a nurse if there is another job opportunity with equal pay offered" and "I definitely want a career for myself in the nursing profession."

Subjective career success reflects three types of career success criteria, namely financial success, hierarchical success and career satisfaction as conceptualized by Gattiker and Larwood (1986) and Aryee et al. (1994). The questionnaires consist of three items for financial success and three items for hierarchical success. For financial success, the sample item is "I meet the expected income at this stage in my career." For hierarchical success, the sample item is "I am pleased with the promotions that I have got so far." Career satisfaction was measured using five-item scale developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990). The sample item is "How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the progress you have made towards meeting your goals for income." A 5-point Likert scales ranging from "very dissatisfied" (1) to "very satisfied" (5) were used in the study.

## SAMPLE AND PROCEDURE

This study uses individual employees as the unit of analysis. To ensure the study managed to achieve its targeted number of respondents, 456 survey questionnaires were distributed to the nurses from two public and thirteen private hospitals located in Jambi Municipality. With the help of research assistants from National Population and Family Planning Agency, we distributed and collected the questionnaires manually by hand.

As shown in previous studies, hierarchical success can only be measured accurately for someone who has experienced career promotion (Aryee et al. 1994; Gattiker & Larwood 1986). Thus, the respondents for this study were selected among nurses who have been promoted at least once in their career. To show the ability to integrate between work and family roles, previous studies also suggested to study someone who has been married and has at least one child below middle school living with them (Aryee et al. 2005; Lu et al. 2009). For this reason, we used purposive sampling to select respondents based on the above mentioned criteria.

## RESULTS/ FINDINGS

Demographically, majority of the respondents are female (88%), and hold a nursing diploma (81.3%). The average age is 38 years (s.d. = 7.64) and the average tenure in the current organization is 14 years (s.d. = 7.24). A total of 42.5% of respondents' spouses work in government sector, 38.9% in private sector, while the rest are in other sectors.

Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS 19.0 program (Arbuckle & Worthke 1999) was used to test the model. An examination of the data indicates support for normal distribution of the data. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), reliabilities and zero order correlations between the variables examined in the study. The correlations among spousal support, work-family balance, career commitment and subjective career success are positive and statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ) with correlation coefficients ranging from .047 to .724. The significant and positive inter-correlations provide an initial indication of the relationships between independent and dependent variables, and are in accordance with the proposed directions.

TABLE 1. Descriptive statistics and correlations for the study variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviaton	1	2	3	4
1. Spousal Support	3.526	.566	1			
2. Work-family balance	3.386	.696	.476**	1		
3. Career Commitment	3.728	.579	.047	.350**	1	
4. Subjective Career Success	3.745	.592	.611**	.724**	.328**	1

Note. N = 417. \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## MEASUREMENT MODEL ASSESSMENT

A series of confirmatory Factor Analysis were conducted as the first step to assess the measurement model. The initial result shows the poorly fit model, however, after correlating certain measurement errors (based on the evaluation of standardized residual covariance and modification indices), the re-estimated measurement model indicates a good fit model with the chi-square value  $\chi^2(448) = 960.42$ , at  $p = .00$ , CFI = .91, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05. Although the value of  $\chi^2$  is significant, other fit criteria met the recommended value. All factors significantly loaded to their intended factors. The reliability (CR) for each variable ranges from .80 to .92 (spousal support = .85; work-family balance = .86; career commitment = .80; subjective career success = .92). In addition to that, the AVE values for all the variables meet the recommended value to achieve discriminant validity.

## STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT

The findings from SEM suggest that the hypothesized model was a satisfactory fit to the sample data with  $\chi^2(449) =$

965.05 at  $p < .001$ , CFI = .91, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05. As shown in Figure 1, spousal support was positively related to subjective career success (*standardized coefficient* = .34), and work-family balance (*standardized coefficient* = .47). Work-family balance was positively related to subjective career success (*standardized coefficient* = .52), and career commitment (*standardized coefficient* = .34). Finally, career commitment was positively related to subjective career success (*standardized coefficient* = .12). It means that the higher the spousal support perceived by individuals, the higher the level of work-family balance, the higher the level of career commitment and the higher the level of subjective career.

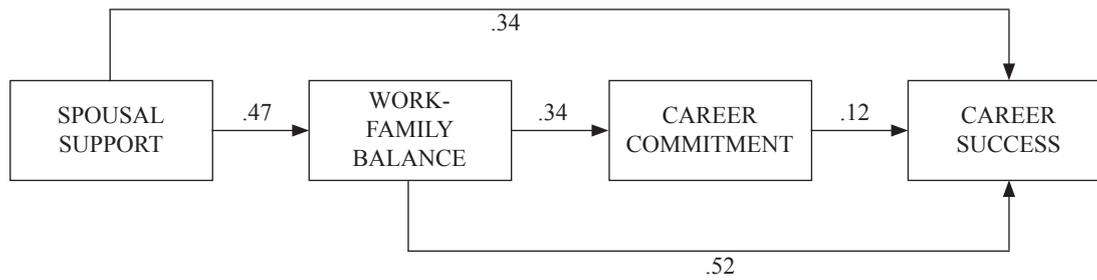


FIGURE 1. Path coefficients of career success model

For the proposed mediating relationships, using 10,000 bootstrap samples to calculate indirect effects, we estimate both mediations at 95 percent level of confidence interval using Preacher and Hayes’s method. As shown in Table 2, there is no zero value between the confidence interval’s lower and upper value at 95 confidence of

interval. This indicates that work-family balance is a significant mediator in the relationship between spousal support and subjective career success. Similarly, the result suggests that career commitment is a significant mediator in the relationship between work-family balance and subjective career success.

TABLE 2. The output of Preacher and Hayes’s method for mediating role

Hypothesis	CI for 95	
	Lower Value	Upper Value
Work-family balance mediates the relationship between spousal support and subjective career success	.1399	.2894
Career commitment mediates the relationship between work-family balance and subjective career success	.0058	.0599

DISCUSSION

In general, the findings of the present study were consistent with what have been suggested by role theory (Kahn et al. 1964), conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll 2001) and spillover theory (Crouter 1984) in explaining the proposed relationships. First, the results from the study found significant positive relationship between spousal support and subjective career success. Specifically, it suggests that both direct and indirect spousal supports in the form of helping partners reducing work and family loads, motivating them in facing obstacles at work, and enhancing feelings of self-efficacy, empathy, care, love, and trust would affect attitudinal and behavioral reactions in work and family domains (Aryee & Luk 1996) and consequently would contribute to the successes of their spouse’s career (Izraeli 1994). Spousal support may make people happier and more productive and enhance the physical and mental health (House 1983). Therefore, this may influence how they feel about their career achievement.

Second, spousal support was found to predict work-family balance. Having to deal with both work and family roles at the same time is the reality experienced by many working people. Reduction in time and energy for family activities can lead to imbalance in the work and family roles. However, support from one’s spouse, i.e., assistance to do domestic works at home, would help reduce the loads of household tasks. The finding of this study concurs with

the role theory which suggests that demand of multiple roles simultaneously will affect people’s successes in meeting their multiple role responsibilities (Kahn et al. 1964). Conflicting demands on time, lack of energy and incompatible behaviors among roles are the cause of difficulties to perform each role successfully (Greenhaus & Beutell 1986). Through spousal support, individuals can arrange their time and energy to fulfil work and family responsibilities. Therefore, the presence of spousal support has the important role to balance the multiple roles harmoniously. As one of the underlying assumptions of role theory is the scarcity of resources (Kahn et al. 1964), the positive relationship between spousal support and work-family balance is also in line with the conservation of resources (COR) theory in this study. Work-family balance is essentially the intersection of demands and resources (Voydanoff 2005). COR theory states that multiple roles influence the available resources. Support obtained from the spouse can be used as additional resources to enhance the ability to manage multiple roles harmoniously.

Finally, the findings indicate the mediating role of career commitment in the relationship between work-family balance and subjective career success. According to Arnold (1990), people will commit to their career if their career meet their expectations – i.e., to have balance in both work and family domain. Thus, the present study provide support that the ability to balance work and family role will increase career commitment, and this in turn, influence how individuals perceive their career success.

The present study contributes to theory by bridging the work-family research and career success research area. It integrates the existing research by examining spousal support, work-family balance, and career commitment as antecedents and as mediators of career success in one model. More importantly, it brings the literature on role theory, spillover theory, and conservation of resources theory together in understanding career success.

The lesson learnt for manager is the importance of spousal support, work-family balance and career commitment in predicting career success. Individual career success will stimulate the organizational success (Ng et al. 2005). Thus, to increase organizational success, managers should increase individual career success by focusing on the significant predictors identified in the present study- spousal support, work-family balance and career commitment- in their human resource activities and policies.

#### LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings and the implications of this study must be considered in light of its limitations. First, the data collected cross-sectionally. The weakness of using cross sectional data is its inability to detect the possibility of causal relationship among the predictor and outcome variables. For example, although arguments suggesting spousal support to precede work-family balance are more consistent with previous studies (Marcinkus et al. 2006; Yu 2012) counter arguments suggesting career success to precede spousal support cannot be disregarded completely. Thus, future research using the longitudinal design should be considered as an alternative way to overcome the weakness of cross sectional data.

Secondly, all variables in this study are perceptual measures. As the nurses have a tight working schedule, there is a possibility that they had completed the questionnaire in a bad mood situation or in rush situation if the questionnaires were collected in the workplace. In the future, the researcher may combine the perceptual from sources other than the same respondent. For instance, career commitment can be measured from the co-worker of the nurses. This is important in order to provide a more objective picture of respondent's level of career commitment than the self-report data based on self-perception.

Lastly, this study uses work-family balance and career commitment as two mediator variables in one model. Future research can be extended by using work-family balance as mediator and career commitment as moderator variable in predicting subjective career success. Another model can also be extended by using work-family balance and career commitment as mediator and adding another moderator such as marital age or family responsibility. As noted in many literatures, family characteristic and family responsibility affect employee's ability to balance work and family roles (Lu et al. 2009).

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