Journal of Nusantara Studies 2023, Vol 8(1) 46-67
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin
ISSN 0127-9386 (Online)
http://dx.doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol8iss1pp46-67

WORKPLACE SUPPORT AND WELL-BEING AMONG WORKING PARENTS

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Received: 06.10.2022 Accepted: 16.01.2023

ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: Workplace support is vital in ensuring the positive psychological well-being of working parents. The balancing act between work and family may affect the well-being of working parents due to strenuous responsibilities. Hence, this study intends to examine the relationship between workplace support and the well-being of working parents.

Methodology: The study employs a cross-sectional survey where 146 working parents were recruited. A multiple regression analysis was employed.

Findings: Current study found workplace support was a significant predictor of working parents' well-being ($F(1, 134) = 2.70.$, $p < .01$), while all the predictors variables (organisational [$r = .18$, $p < .05$], supervisory [$r = .17$, $p < .05$] and co-worker support [$r = .17$, $p < .05$]) showed positive significant positive relationship with working parents' well-being.

Contributions: This research provides insights into the development of career counselling and an understanding of the implication of workplace support for healthier working parents. It also contributes to the literature on human development and Super's Life-Span Theory based on the current human development cycle.

Keywords: Workplace support, supervisory support, co-worker support, working parents and psychological well-being.

Cite as: Ying, C. Z., & Mohamad Nor, A. (2023). Workplace support and well-being among working parents. *Journal of Nusantara Studies, 8*(1), 46-67. http://dx.doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol8iss1pp46-67

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Raising a child is a prodigious responsibility shouldered by the parents. Most parents sacrifice everything for their children, even if having a child means they will lose their "me" time. Parents are the greatest influencers of their children (Haskins & Jacobsen, 2017). Parents in this digital era are even more aware of their roles in their children's lives. However, time and energy spent on their children are somewhat limited due to the increased work responsibility. The increased living expenses force parents to work harder to bring provision. This changes the traditional family system of the father as the main breadwinner and the mother as the main caretaker to a dual-earner family system. The energy needed to care for the children after working hours is similar to having a second shift. It worsened when these responsibilities meant having a daily rest deficit (Minnotte, 2014). In the long run, this might affect the parents' physical and psychological health.

Regrettably, parental well-being is often a subject that is ignored as the child is always the priority of everything, whereas the objective of most past research focused on children's development and well-being (Lv et al., 2018). Inevitably, dual responsibilities are the norm for society to battle the increased cost of living. The heavily weighted time spent in the workplace is believed to improve parental well-being with adequate workplace support (Zakaria & Ismail, 2017). Workplace support could help working parents manage the negative spillover from either family-to-work or work-to-family (Clark et al., 2015). Despite that, the definition of worksite support is ambiguous. Many of the research consist only of organizational policies and superior support in their study of understanding the worksite support without including co-worker support (Bansal & Agarwal, 2017; Lee & Duxbury, 1998; Minnotte, 2014). This made the study inadequate in understanding workplace support from a holistic perspective. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between workplace support and the well-being of working parents.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section looks into the past literature focusing on the study's fundamental concepts.

2.1 Life-Span Theory and Working Parent's Stressor

Career development is a lifelong process that starts even at the early stage of life. Sharf (2006) believed that the priority of life changed according to age. Furthermore, most individuals carry more than one role in their developmental stage. The age between 25 and 40 years is when many people have reached the stage of consolidating their field of career (Sharf, 2006). Most individuals at this stage have greater certainty of what they want and like to do for their careers. They also look for career advancement, even if this means greater responsibilities.

Middle adulthood is the most active stage of life, where the activities in both work and family domains peak (Sharf, 2006). It is a stage where people start to form a new family through marriage or raising the next generation. Parenting is one of the most strenuous tasks (Huffman et al., 2013). The needs of caring for a child, from feeding, protecting, and raising, incur indescribable stress. It becomes even more overwhelming when work responsibilities are added into the context. Hence, despite being the most active and healthiest, the prolonged high responsibilities as a worker and parent drained all their available resources as a middle adult. These unmanaged experiences might lead to possible burnout or even physical health destruction. Therefore, current research focuses on working parents with at least one child aged 18 years old and below, as these are the times when their parenting role is greatly needed.

2.2 Job Demands Resources Model

Working parents have to deal with dual strenuous responsibilities, as explained in the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model. JDR was used to understand the effect of job demands and resources on various aspects of individual life, such as work motivation and individual well-being (e.g., Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008; Demerouti et al., 2001). Job demands come in different forms, such as time pressure, work tasks and emotional demands. Coupled with a certain degree of psychological and physical fatigue, job demands require an individual to stay engaged to achieve targets and corporate goals (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job resources also come in different forms, such as social or physical support (Abdullah et al., 2020; Demerouti et al., 2001). Job resources help alleviate physiological and psychological stresses by acting as a cushion to absorb negative costs from job demand. The balance of job demands and resources helps produce a more functional working environment for employees as they feel supported without being overly drained.

Most job demand descriptions surround workplace responsibilities; nevertheless, work-family conflict should also be considered part of job demand. Work-family conflicts negatively affect corporate behaviours, such as high company turnover rate, job dissatisfaction and low

employee commitment (Hoonakker, Carayon, & Korunka, 2013). Work-family conflicts refer to the inter-role struggles from both work and family domains that are incompatible. It happens in a bidirectional way, from family to work or work to family (Hoonakker et al., 2013). Family-to-work conflicts refer to family requests interfering with the work domains (Hoonakker et al., 2013). For example, worrying about a sick child at home causes working parents difficulty focusing on their work. These consequently affect their working performance (Bansal & Agarwal, 2017).

On the other hand, work demands will spill over to the family domain. The advancement of technology allows a company to stay connected with its employees wherever they go. One major downside of such development is the increased organisation intrusion into employees' off-hours via smartphone applications (such as WhatsApp and WeChat) or email (Haar, 2017). This exacerbates the spillover effect from work to home and challenges employees to balance their work and personal lives. These prolonged experiences might affect not only the parents but also their family and work life. Such experience is shattered not only on individuals' physical and psychological well-being. As such, parents might no longer be capable of managing both domains.

While many studies on job-demand resources focus on workplace demand, there is a need to investigate job-demand resources within the family domain. It was found that the balance of demands and resources predicted higher perceived parenting success as it helps parents to better manage both domains (Minnotte, 2014). As such, having a supportive family is an example of resources that assist parents in managing work-family issues. Even so, the long hours spent in the workplace suggest workplace support should never be taken lightly. Among all of these, workplace social support is one of the most important resources. This is because the workplace is made up of a group of people. The main internal workplace stakeholders can be simplified into three levels: the organisation, supervisor and co-worker, and they are the main workplace social support (Minnotte, 2014).

The hypothesis of the research is:

H_1: Workplace support is a significant predictor of working parents' well-being.

2.2.1 Organizational Support

Organisational support refers to the larger aspect of the company's social support, such as company policies or the work culture (Abidin, Ismail, & Nor, 2019; Minnotte, 2014). It

provides a basic structure that guides its employees based on the policies created. Some policies include flexible time arrangements, childcare support, or career breaks (Ahmad, 2007; Hartung & Hahlweg, 2010). These policies cultivate a family-friendly culture where the workers will be more open to sharing their family matters and being appreciative of one another's family. A worker who works in this encouraging environment will be more comfortable attending to family needs, such as receiving calls from home during work hours. Subsequently, it decreases the dispute of work-family conflict as family life could integrate into working life (Bansal & Agarwal, 2017). They will also be more likely to enjoy working in that company, as they felt they are taken care.

On the contrary, an organisation with less family-friendly policies will produce managers who are more passive toward their co-workers' familial needs. Such organisational culture would emphasise prioritising work over family (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2015). Their concept of a good worker is to put one hundred and ten per cent effort into work, and anything aside from the company's work is considered secondary. Working parents in unsupportive environments tend to experience greater work-family conflict (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2015). The long working hours may result in low energy and fatigue, leaving the workers with insufficient support and resources to cope with family demands. The inability to attend to the needs of their family, even if it is an emergency, may result in feeling powerless.

The hypothesis of the research is:

H_2: There is a correlation between organisational support and working parents' well-being.

2.2.2 Supervisory Support

Supervisory support is vital for workers (Abdullah et al., 2020; Mohamad, Ismail, & Mohamad Nor, 2020a). Supervisors are the gatekeepers in cultivating a work culture among their team members (Minnotte, 2014). They provide immediate working experience to their subordinates. Ladge et al. (2015) suggested that supervisory support comes in two arrangements. Formal arrangement refers to those policies implemented by the company, such as parental leave (Kelly & Kalev, 2006). An informal arrangement is based on the supervisor's flexibility to allow workers to manage their family issues (Ladge et al., 2015). Workers working under these supervisors will be more open to sharing their family issues. This consequently lowers job

strain and produces a better work-family life (Bansal & Agarwal, 2017; Minnotte, 2014). Under such circumstances, parental well-being will be handled through better job task management.

On the contrary, supervisors who are less family-friendly inclined will create greater stress for working parents (Mohamad, Ismail, & Mohamad Nor, 2020b). They will be more rigid in giving ways for their employee to deal with family matters. Workers under such management would fear dealing with family matters during working hours (Hochschild, 1997; Lee & Duxbury, 1998). This intensifies during family emergencies as parents are in a difficult position to deal with greater work-family conflicts. They will also influence their subordinate's behaviour. Hence, workers under such leadership will be antagonistic toward the family-friendly concept. They will be discriminated against for presenting themselves as a family person. In the long run, it deteriorates parental well-being as they must spend more resources to deal with such two distinctive roles (Bansal & Agarwal, 2017).

The hypothesis of this study is:

H_3: There is a correlation between supervisory support and working parents' well-being.

2.2.3 Co-worker Support

Co-worker support is the third workplace support that has often been taken lightly. Working parent interacts the most with their co-worker (Ladge et al., 2015). Supportive co-workers enhance job satisfaction and reduce work-family conflicts (Minnotte, 2012). They provide instrumental support by sharing workloads during emergency time off and providing emotional support through personal relationships (Minnotte, 2012). Workers who share their personal experiences with their co-workers tend to have better working experiences (Sloan, 2017). The friendship fostered provides a reliable source for parents and subsequently augments an individual's positive experience as a worker and a parent (Allard, Haas, & Hwang, 2011).

Conversely, a co-worker who is non-supportive toward the family-friendly concept may create a negative impact on the parent (Allard et al., 2011). Working parents who work in such an environment usually suffer higher psychological distress (Allard et al., 2011). This working environment delivers greater discrimination toward working parents. Co-workers in this environment are unsupportive toward job sharing as they view it as additional responsibilities (Allard et al., 2011). This enhances work-family conflict, creating an imbalance between work tasks and family responsibilities.

The research hypothesis is:

H_4: There is a correlation between co-worker support and working parent's well-being.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the relationship of different types of workplace support (organizational support, supervisory support and co-worker support) and parental well-being. It also shows the role of workplace support in predicting parental well-being.

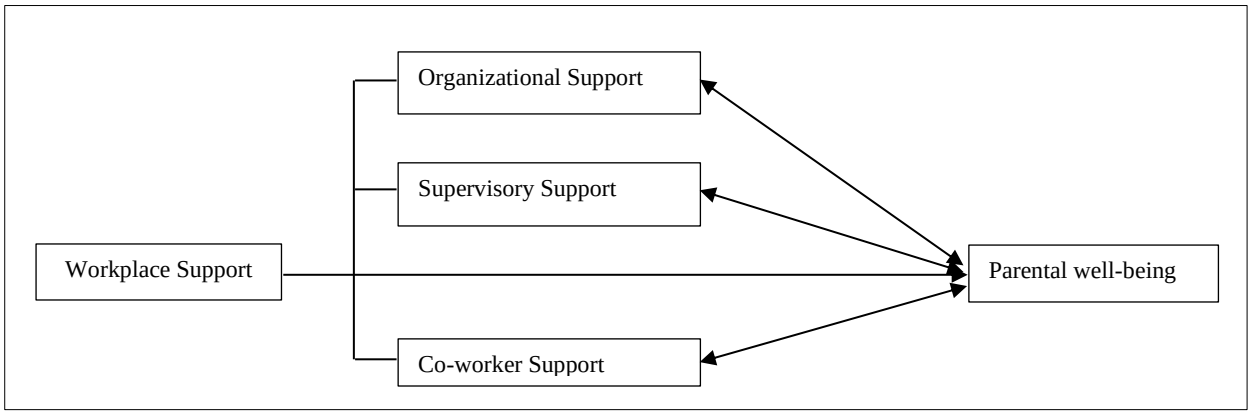

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional correlation research design as it allows the researchers to develop a clearer picture of the characteristics and outcomes associated with the target group at a specific time. This allows researchers to draw interpretations from the existing differences between the phenomena that were less likely to be manipulated. With this, the current study will explore the relationship of workplace support in alleviating working parents' psychological well-being.

3.1 Sample of Study

This study took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. As calculated by a statistical calculator, G*Power, 89 served as the minimum number for multiple regression. Working parents with a child who is aged 18 years old and below tended to experience greater stress (Sharf, 2006). The need to nurture and earn money for the young who are fully dependent on them is placed in an extremely high work-family conflict (Sharf, 2006). Cluster sampling was adopted to recruit the participants, 95 females and 51 males. Four of the 11 parliamentary constituencies were chosen using random selection, where each district will have an equal chance of being selected. An

invitation email was sent to participants who worked or stayed in these areas. 95 females and 51 males were filtered based on the requirements to increase the precision of the analysis. These requirements include (1) a Malaysian who is at least 18 years old, (2) having at least one child who is 18 years old or below, and (3) currently employed under an organisation with a superior.

3.2 Instruments of Study

This study employs demographic questionnaires, a workplace support questionnaire and a Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF). A demographic questionnaire was developed to collect the participants' demographic information. The questions included gender, ethnicity, age, occupation, positional ranking in a company, participant's income relative to spouse, number and age of child. Meanwhile, the workplace support questionnaire was adopted from the workplace support questionnaire developed by Skinner (2005) to investigate workplace-related support in the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) field. It used a holistic perspective in evaluating workplace support by checking support resources from both horizontal and vertical aspects. The researchers used four of the six sub-scales from the questionnaire and replaced the wording of "AOD" with "family-family policies" to better fit the questionnaire into the targeted sample. It was tested in the local community and gained the reliability test result of $\alpha = .91$.

The questionnaire is rearranged into three sections. The first section was the organisation support scale, consisting of five items combined from workplace support and workplace condition. It showed a good reliability of $\alpha = .80$ when tested in the local community. The second section was supervisory support, which consisted of four items and showed a good reliability result of $\alpha = .87$ in the local community. The third section was a six-item co-worker support scale with a good reliability of $\alpha = .89$ when tested in the local community.

To analyse individual sub-sectionals, the section's total would be summed up. The higher score indicated higher perceived support received, which the rating will be inclined toward "strongly agree". On the other hand, the lower score indicated lower perceived support received, and the rating would incline toward "strongly disagree". All scores from the subsections were totalled to find the general workplace support scores. The formula for general workplace support is shown below:

Organisation Support + Supervisory Support + Co-worker Support = Workplace Support

The mental health continuum's short form (MHC-SF; Keyes, 2009) consisted of a 14-item scale was used to measure working parents' psychological well-being. It was developed to study psychological well-being from various perspectives. MHC-SF were tested repeatedly on the subjects aged 18 and above and produced a fairly good reliability result of α = .65. In the current community, the reliability score was excellent, α = .95. The scale was a 6-Likert scale test, which represented never and six represented every day. The participants were advised to respond according to their feelings in the past month. Individuals with high total scores (those who rated mostly on "every day" or "almost every day") indicated that they have flourishing mental health (Keyes, 2018). On the contrary, individuals will be considered to be experiencing languishing mental health if their rating is inclined toward "never" or "once or twice" during the past month, where their total score can be relatively low (Keyes, 2018).

3.3 Validity of Workplace Support Questionnaire

The author sourced an expert to validate the adapted questionnaire. This expert was a senior lecturer at the University of Malaya who specialised in career, family, and women counselling and psychology. Her area of research is also heavily inclined toward organisational support for working mothers. Expert validation and pilot tests were also conducted to test the validity. Exploration Factor Analysis (EFA) was run to check the inter-correlated variables and found five items in the organisational support subscale, four items in the supervisory support subscale and six items in the co-worker subscale were selected.

30 working parents who fulfilled the requirements were selected, and consent forms, demographic questionnaire, workplace support questionnaire and MHC-SF questionnaire were distributed. Feedback forms for each questionnaire and general feedback forms were used to capture suggestions. The responses collected were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 25). Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of the workplace support scale and MHC-SF scale (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The acceptable range was from .70 to .95 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The organisational support scale (α = .82), supervisory support scale (α = .89) and co-worker support (α = .88) scale were analysed individually to check the reliability of each scale before grouping them under the workplace support scale. MHC-SF scale was also analysed with Cronbach Alpha, α = .97. Factorial Analyses were conducted on the workplace support questionnaire to analyse and cluster items under similar factor enhancing the scale validity.

3.4 Study Procedures

This research was reviewed and approved by the Research Operational Reviewing Board of Educational Psychology and Counselling Department, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, with the reference number UM.P/PP(IT)/ 644/2. This research was conducted with two different methods: a paper-and-pencil questionnaire and an online questionnaire created with Google Forms. Both types of questionnaires consist of consent letters, demographic questionnaires, workplace support questionnaires, and MHC-SF questionnaires. The participants had to read the consent letter explaining the research detail and their rights. The contact information of the Research Operational board and the research individuals was also provided so that participants could exercise their rights. Both methods took approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

3.5 Data Analysis

All data were computed and analysed using SPSS 25. The total of each scale was calculated by summing up all the items. Four items were used for the organisational support and supervisory support analysis. The total maximum sum for this 5-point Likert scale was 20, and the minimum sum was four. The maximum sum for the six items 5-point Likert co-worker support subscale was 30, and the minimum was six. MHC-SF, on the other hand, would have a total sum ranging from 0-70. The score of workplace support was computed by summing up the total score of organisational support subscale, supervisory support subscale and co-worker support subscale. Therefore, the total sum could range from 14 to 70.

Multiple regression was used to analyse the relationship of the workplace in predicting parental well-being and allowed the researchers to make a predictive analysis (Field, 2011). Moreover, linear or multiple regression is robust enough to overcome the violation of normality in the data (Field, 2011). It allowed the researcher to analyse multiple predictors (organisational support, supervisory support, and co-worker support) with a single outcome (working parent well-being).

Four assumptions required fulfilment to ensure the reliability and validity of this statistical test. The four assumptions mentioned by Osborne and Waters (2002) were normality test, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity and linearity assumption. The homoscedasticity and linearity of parental well-being as a dependent variable were met. Its assumptions of normality also showed approximately assumed. The assumption of multicollinearity of all predictors was met.

A bivariate correlation test was used to analyse the relationship between control variables and predictors. This step was taken to control the possible confounding variables that might affect the accuracy of the result. Only the youngest child's age showed a significant negative correlation with parental well-being ($r = -.19$, $p < .05$). There was no significant correlation found between control variables, outcome variables and predictors.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Reporting of Findings

As shown in Table 1, 77.40% of participants were Chinese, 15.80% Malay and 6.80% Indian. The average age of participants was 39.55 years old. 73.30% worked in the white-collar industry, 21.90% worked as professionals, and 4.80% worked in the blue-collar industry. 27.40%, 47.90% and 24.70% were primary, secondary and equal family earners. The majority of them have two children (44.52%), with most of their youngest children's ages (M = 6.26, SD = 4.95) aged around one to three (38.36%).

Among all workplace support (M = 53.56, SD = 9.24), co-worker support (M = 20.82, SD = 4.76) shows the highest mean score, followed by organisational support (M = 18.39, SD = 3.46). On the other hand, supervisory support (M = 14.35, SD = 2.88) displayed the lowest mean score among all types of workplace support. Parental well-being was scored in a position that was slightly higher than the median score (M = 41.75, SD = 14.29).

Table 2 also shows that parents aged between 30 and 39 years old account for the highest number of having the youngest children of 1 to 3 years old. Working parents aged 40 to 45 years old were found to have the second-highest number of youngest children aged four to six years old. This number was even 8% higher than those parents who ranged from 30 to 34 years old**.**

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics and variables (N =146)

Demographic characteristic and variables		*M*	*SD*	*n*
Gender				
	Male			51
	Female			95
Age		39.55	6.55	
	25 - 29			6
	30 - 34			27
	35 - 39			43
	40 - 44			41
	45 - 49			14
	50 - 54			14
	55 and above			1
Race				
	Malay			23
	Chinese			113
	Indian			10
Occupation				
	Professional			32
	White-collar			107
	Blue-collar			7
Relative Income		1.97	.72	
	Primary earner			40
	Secondary earner			70
	Equal earner			36
Number of Children		1.90	.86	
	1			51
	2			65
	3			25
	4			4
	6			1
Age of Youngest Child		6.26	4.95	
	1-3			56
	4-6			40
	7-12			26
	13-18			24
Workplace Support		53.56	9.24	
Organization Support		18.39	3.46	
Supervisory Support		14.34	2.88	
Co-worker Support		20.82	4.76	

Parental Well-being	41.75	14.29

Table 2: Table of age breakdown (N =146)

	Youngest Child Age Group			
Working Parent Age Group	**1-3**	**4-6**	**7-12**	**13-18**
25 - 29	6	0	0	0
30 - 34	18	9	0	0
35 - 39	18	19	6	0
40 - 44	13	12	13	3
45 - 49	1	0	7	6
50 - 54	0	0	0	14
55 and above	0	0	0	1
Total number of children	56	40	26	24

4.2 Hypothesis Testing for Correlation of Workplace Support and Parental Well-Being

Table 3 showed there was a significant positive correlation between organisational support and working parent well-being ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). Supervisory support also showed a significant positive correlation with parental well-being ($r = .17$, $p < .05$). Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was found between co-worker support and working parent well-being ($r = .29$, $p < .01$). These supported H_2, H_3 and H_4 that were proposed for this study. The findings suggested that, regardless of the types of support, working parents will experience better psychological well-being when they perceive greater support in the workplace.

Table 3: Bivariate correlation table of organisation support, supervisory support and co-worker support with parental well-being

	Parental Well-being		
	r	p (2-tailed)	*N*
Organizational Support	.18	.05	146
Supervisory Support	.17	.05	146
Co-worker Support	.29	.01	146

Table 4 suggests that workplace support was a significant predictor of working parents' well-being while holding constant for all potential confounding variables, $F(1, 134) = 2.70.$, $p < .01$, R^2 change =.182. This supported the first hypothesis proposed. Although it was a significant model, table 4 showed only co-worker support was a significant predictor of parental well-

being (β= .28, *t* (145) = 2.81, p < .01). This model suggested 18.20% of parental well-being is predicted by co-worker support, F change (1, 134) = 4.53, p < .01. This meant every single support given by co-worker, parental well-being will be improved by 0.83.

Table 4: Summary of simple regression and multiple regression analyses for workplace support (organisational, supervisory and co-worker support as predictor variables) in predicting parental well-being (N=146)

	Simple Linear Regression			Multiple Linear Regression		
	b	(95%CI)	*p* value	Adjusted R^2	(95%CI)	*p* value
Organizational Support	.29	(-.58, 1.15)	> .01	-	-	-
Supervisory Support	-.07	(-1.18, 1.05)	> .01	-	-	-
Co-worker Support	.83	(.25, 1.41)	< .01	-	-	-
Workplace Support	-	-	-	.11	(4.88, 62.84)	.01

Note:

a. Organizational support, supervisory support, and a co-worker were entered into the second block through the force entry method while holding constants for all control variables in the first block.

b. R^2 = 0.18, The model reasonably fits well. Model assumptions are met with no multicollinearity problem (Organizational support (VIF = 1.03), supervisory support (VIF =1.06), co-worker support (VIF = 1.13), and workplace support (VIF = 1.09)).

5.0 DISCUSSION

This study indicated a significant relationship between workplace support and working parents' well-being (Hartung & Hahlweg, 2010; Klein, 2016; Ladge et al., 2015; Minnotte, 2014). JDS suggested when resources are enough to cope with demands; it would alleviate the psychological tension and improve working parents' well-being (Demerouti et al., 2001; TaŞTan, 2014). Workplace policies help parents to manage their work and family responsibilities effectively. The shared burden relieves working parents and improves well-being, fostering a positive perspective on life (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Huppert, 2009). Parents with healthy well-being will create positive functioning relationships in the family (Watanabe et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, workplace support would only be comprehensive when it embraces all internal stakeholders. Workplace support can only have a greater effect when the organisation,

supervisor, and co-worker collaborate. When organisations design a family-friendly policy, they set a baseline for their company culture (Ladge et al., 2015). This vision will then be embraced by the supervisor and subsequently affect the working culture among the co-workers (Minnotte, 2014; Allard et al., 2011). With this supportive and understanding environment, workers who would display better well-being as the clash of both domains will be eased. This working environment acknowledges their struggle as working parents, and they feel that greater grace is given to them to juggle such responsibilities.

Although all workplace support positively correlated with parental well-being, only co-worker support is the significant predictor of parental well-being when tested in the multiple regression model. It accounted for the highest variance in the relationship with working parents' well-being. This suggested working parents acquired better psychological well-being when they perceived greater co-worker support. Perhaps the organisational and supervisory support provided is too superficial to have significant impacts on individuals. Allard et al. (2011) also found that workers tend to receive more support from their co-workers than their higher management. Co-workers are a group of individuals with who the worker works closely. Indeed, such frequent interaction will foster an emotional bond that grows beyond the initial task-based relationship (Sloan, 2017). This affective commitment between co-workers fosters the development of understanding and tolerance. Subsequently, it made co-worker support outperform other workplace support in helping parents manage work and family conflicts.

This research gave a new glimpse of the importance of co-worker relationships. Sloan (2017) suggested that the relationship between co-workers affects job satisfaction. This gave the organisation a new direction in improving its family-friendly policies. It was found that employees were normally not given enough opportunities to connect with their co-workers (Sahni, 2020). Hence, the adverse impact happened in times of challenge (Sahni, 2020). Therefore, organisations could invest in programs that cultivate co-worker friendships, such as peer mentoring programs.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in 2020, woke the world to the need to access their workplace support system. Many counties implemented a strict lockdown to cope with the widespread COVID-19. The emergency switch of telework allows continuous business activities, but it also led to an unprecedented blend of work and life (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020; Sinclair et al., 2020). Work-family conflicts increased dramatically as parents needed to make new work adjustments and care for their young children, who were also stuck at home, along with the increased home chores (Sinclair et al., 2020). Furthermore, many must deal with the increased job insecurities (American Psychological Association,

2020). During this difficult time, organisational and supervisory support were found to be extensively crucial in alleviating worker well-being (Sinclair et al., 2020).

The pandemic catalyses the birth of an effective relationship between the supervisor and management team. With the acceleration of technology used and the change of work nature during the pandemic, organisational culture and behaviour are expected to shift greatly (Carnavale & Hatak, 2020). Companies' new policy and support will affect their worker immediate working experience. For example, allowing longer lunch breaks for those workers who need to prepare meals for their young. This helps ease workers' tension in balancing work and family responsibilities. As this study was carried out before the pandemic, further research could be done to investigate the relationship between workplace support and parental well-being post-COVID-19.

This study has expanded the JDR model by assessing working parents' workplace support and psychological well-being in managing their work and family responsibilities. In the past, the JDR model was commonly limited to workplace issues; the demands and resources are often found beyond the workplace. When job demand was extended to the family domain (Minnotte, 2014), job resources should also be extended to investigate the family sector. Moreover, other factors such as personal resources and spouse support could also be included as the control variables of the study as they might act as the confounding variables that affect the relationship between the two variables. Besides, future research could extend further on working parents' psychological well-being from two different groups according to child's age. Parents of different age groups of children might face different psychological threats due to the different children's developmental needs (Alexander & Baxter, 2005; Ravenswood, 2008). This creates greater knowledge and understanding of the factors that increase their psychological threat.

Since it is unavoidable for us to separate work and family, it would be good to focus on the positive outcome of integrating these two domains. Work-family enrichment focuses on the positive contributions from each domain and integrates them to strengthen each other (Wang, Shelley Tien, & Wu, 2018). It increased working parents' job satisfaction and effectiveness (Guoxia & Erhua, 2017). During the pandemic, many start to realise the importance of work-family management. Compared to work-family enrichment, work-family management takes an advanced step in redesigning the workplace to help employees cope with conflicting work-life demands (Sinclair et al., 2020). However, the basic requirement of both is well-managed resources. Workplace support reacts like a sponge that absorbs overwhelming experiences.

With adequate support, working parents have greater relief in balancing work and family demands. Subsequently, it promotes better parental well-being.

Super's Life-Span Theory suggests that while individuals aged between 25 and 40 want work stability and potential career advancement, they also want to build their own families at this point (Sharf, 2006). In this study, the researchers found that working parents aged between 35 and 39 showed the highest number of children below six years old. Furthermore, this research also found that there is a significant negative correlation between working parents' well-being and the age of the youngest child ($r = -.19$, $p < .05$). This suggested that the younger the age of the child, the greater the threat poses to parental well-being. Therefore, consistent with Super's Life-Span Theory, middle adulthood is the most hectic period in a human's life cycle as the involvement in home and work domains is the peak.

Fascinatingly, working parents aged 40 to 45 were found to have the second-highest number of young children between four and six years old. This number was 8% higher than those between 30 to 34 years old. The increased number of late marriages might cause such phenomena. Indeed, the average age of first marriage increased from 25.5 to 29 years old for men and 22.0 to 26 years old for women in 2017 (Noor Hafiza, 2017; Nation, 2018). This increased the average parents' age for children below six years old compared to the previous generation. The change extends the initial timeline proposed by Super's Life-Span theory. They have to deal with longer work-family conflicts even in their late middle adulthood as they are still responsible for nursing their young children.

This research adapted and adopted a workplace support questionnaire by changing the terms to "family-related" to facilitate the questions to be more directed to family-related issues. This thus made the questionnaire more accurate in measuring family-friendly related workplace support than the general workplace support questionnaire. A factor analysis was carried out to analyse the adopted questionnaire. With the Varimax rotation method, it was found that most of the items were correctly clustered into three main components: organisational support, supervisor support, and co-worker support. This newly adopted and adapted questionnaire provides counsellors with a new instrument for measuring perceived family-friendly workplace support. However, current research acted as an empirical study, so duplication of current research is needed to check the reliability and validity of the scales. The dominating race by Chinese participants posted potential cultural biases on the scale's reliability. Hence, more research is needed to investigate the multicultural adaptability of this questionnaire.

Although this study has extended the understanding of the JDR Model in workplace support and parental well-being, future research could further examine this model from the

family domain. When job demand was extended to the family domain (Minnotte, 2014), job resources should also be extended to investigate the family sector. Factors such as personal resources and spouse support could also be included as the control variables of the study as they might act as the confounding variable that affects the relationship between workplace support and parental psychological well-being among working parents.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study investigates the relationship between workplace support and well-being among working parents from a holistic environment. This is because working parents play an essential role in developing society. They are the leading workforce that generates the highest percentage of national income and the main caretakers that raise the future generation. Healthy well-being is essential for working parents to ensure these two domains function properly. Prompt measurements should be taken to address these phenomena, especially in this volatile situation. Happy work, productive worker, happy parents, functioning family. A safer and healthy working system should be developed to protect these key assets.

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