*MODERATING EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL SUPPORT ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND JOB PERFORMANCE*

**NURHAFIZAH BINTI ZAINAL**

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SUPPORT ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT,
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND JOB PERFORMANCE**

By

**NURHAFIZAH BINTI ZAINAL**

**Thesis Submitted to the Putra Business School, in Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**December 2018**

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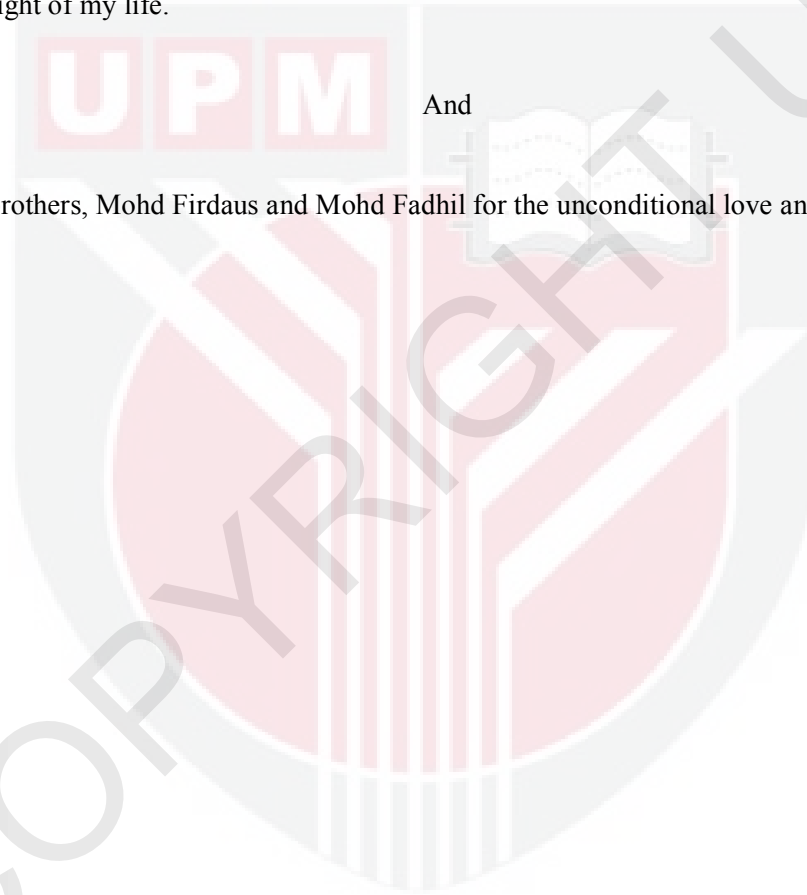
**DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Mohd Rifdie Mohd Sopian, who have supported all the way since the beginning of my studies.

My parents, Hj. Zainal Hassan and Hjh. Roslah Yunus for the endless love and support.

My beloved children, Muhammad Danish and Nur Airis Zulaikha, who are the strength and light of my life.

And

My brothers, Mohd Firdaus and Mohd Fadhil for the unconditional love and care.

# MODERATING EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL SUPPORT ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND JOB PERFORMANCE

By

## NURHAFIZAH BINTI ZAINAL

### December 2018

**Chairman** : **Associate Professor Dahlia Zawawi, PhD**
**Faculty**  : **Putra Business School**

Service industry has become the major player in Malaysian economy. The heavy workloads in service companies in order to cater the needs of the people have led to work-family conflict among employees. Work and family represent important life roles for most employees. However, many employees are grappling with conflicts experienced in meeting the demands and responsibilities of these two roles. Work-family conflict consists of two domains namely work interference family (WIF) and family interference work (FIW). Employees experienced WIF and FIW when demands of one role interfere with participation or performance of the other role.

The main objective in this study is to examine the moderating role of emotional intelligence and social support on the relationship between work-family conflict, psychological well-being, and job performance among employees in Malaysian service industry. Emotional intelligence and social support were chosen as moderating variables in this study due to limited studies found in addressing the effect of these variables on work-family conflict. Furthermore, emotional intelligence may act as a buffer on negative effect of work-family conflict. Meanwhile, social support may function as maladaptive coping strategies when work and family roles collide.

The present study adopted Role Theory and Conservation of Resource Theory as the underpinning theories for its proposed conceptual framework. Based on the positivist paradigm, this study employed a quantitative method through questionnaires distribution. The data was obtained from the service employees' sample (n = 377) in the area of Selangor and Klang Valley, Malaysia.

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis results suggested that nine out of twelve proposed hypotheses were supported. The study found that work-family conflict does not contribute significantly to employee's psychological well-being. However, work-family conflict contributes significantly to employee's job performance. In addition, the study found that emotional intelligence and social support play a significant role in moderating the relationship between work-family conflict, employee's psychological well-being and job performance.

The results of this study are deemed important in work-family conflict literature, providing new perspectives to the employees in service companies on ways to manage multiple roles in their daily lives. Apart from that, this study has important implications for service companies. A good understanding on how work-family conflict affecting employee's psychological well-being and job performance is expected to help the service companies in managing their employees.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN MODERATOR KECERDASAN EMOSI DAN SOKONGAN SOSIAL KE ATAS HUBUNGKAIT ANTARA KONFLIK KERJA-KELUARGA, KESEJAHTERAAN PSIKOLOGI, DAN PRESTASI KERJA**

Oleh

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**Disember 2018**

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Industri perkhidmatan telah menjadi penyumbang utama di dalam ekonomi Malaysia. Bebanan kerja yang berat di dalam syarikat perkhidmatan demi memenuhi keperluan orang ramai telah membawa kepada konflik kerja-keluarga di kalangan pekerja. Kerja dan keluarga mewakili peranan kehidupan yang penting bagi kebanyakan pekerja. Walaubagaimanapun, ramai pekerja sedang bergelut dengan mengalami konflik dalam memenuhi permintaan dan tanggungjawab terhadap dua peranan tersebut. Konflik kerja-keluarga terdiri daripada dua domain iaitu kerja ganggu keluarga *(WIF)* dan keluarga ganggu kerja *(FIW)*. Pekerja mengalami *WIF* dan *FIW* apabila permintaan pada satu peranan mengganggu penglibatan atau prestasi pada satu peranan yang lain.

Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menguji peranan kecerdasan emosi dan sokongan sosial sebagai moderator di atas hubungkait antara konflik kerja-keluarga, kesejahteraan psikologi, dan prestasi kerja di kalangan pekerja dalam industri perkhidmatan Malaysia. Kecerdasan emosi dan sokongan sosial telah dipilih sebagai pembolehubah moderator di dalam kajian ini kerana terdapat limitasi kajian dalam menangani kesan pembolehubah tersebut ke atas konflik kerja-keluarga. Tambahan lagi, kecerdasan emosi boleh bertindak sebagai penampan di atas kesan negatif konflik kerja-keluarga. Sementara itu, sokongan sosial boleh berfungsi sebagai strategi pencegahan maladaptif apabila berlaku pertembungan peranan kerja dan keluarga.

Kajian ini menggunakan Teori Peranan dan Teori Pemuliharaan Sumber sebagai teori asas untuk cadangan kerangka konseptual. Berdasarkan paradigma positivis, kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kuantitatif melalui edaran soal kaji selidik. Data telah diperolehi daripada sampel pekerja perkhidmatan (n=377) di kawasan Selangor dan Lembah Klang, Malaysia.

Hasil analisis *Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)* telah mencadangkan sembilan daripada dua belas cadangan hipotesis adalah disokong. Kajian ini mendapati konflik kerja-keluarga tidak menyumbang secara signifikan kepada kesejahteraan psikologi pekerja. Walaubagaimanapun, konflik kerja-keluarga menyumbang secara signifikan kepada prestasi kerja pekerja. Selain itu, kajian ini mendapati bahawa kecerdasan emosi dan sokongan sosial memainkan peranan penting dalam mengurangkan hubungkait antara konflik kerja-keluarga, kesejahteraan psikologi dan prestasi kerja pekerja.

Hasil kajian ini dianggap penting dalam kesusasteraan konflik kerja-keluarga, ia dapat memberi perspektif baru kepada pekerja di dalam syarikat perkhidmatan berkenaan dengan cara-cara untuk menguruskan pelbagai peranan dalam kehidupan seharian mereka. Selain itu, kajian ini mempunyai implikasi penting untuk syarikat perkhidmatan. Kefahaman yang baik terhadap bagaimana konflik kerja-keluarga boleh memberi kesan kepada kesejahteraan psikologi dan prestasi kerja pekerja adalah dijangkakan untuk membantu syarikat perkhidmatan dalam menguruskan pekerja mereka.

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**In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the Merciful, Praise be to Allah, Lord of the World (The Holy Quran, 1.1).**

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Last but not least, I am greatly indebted to my devoted husband and children. They form the backbone and origin of my happiness. Their love, support, sacrifice and understanding has enabled me to complete my PhD journey. I owe my achievement to them.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 7 December 2018 to conduct the final examination of Nurhafizah binti Zainal on her thesis entitled "Moderating Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Social Support on Relationship Between Work-Family Conflict, Psychological Well-Being And Job Performance" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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I hereby confirm that:
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| | |
|---|---|
| AGFI | Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index |
| AIC | Akaike Information Criterion |
| AMOS | Analysis of Moment Structures |
| AVE | Average Variance Extracted |
| CFA | Confirmatory Factor Analysis |
| CFI | Comparative Fit Index |
| CMIN | Chi Square per Degree of Freedom |
| COR | Conservation of Resource Theory |
| CR | Construct Reliability |
| DOSM | Department of Statistics Malaysia |
| EI | Emotional Intelligence |
| FIW | Family Interference Work |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Products |
| GFI | Goodness-of-Fit Index |
| JP | Job Performance |
| MATRADE | Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation |
| MCAR | Missing Completely at Random |
| MI | Modification Indices |
| MOHR | Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia |
| NFI | Normed Fit Index |
| PGFI | Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index |
| PNFI | Parsimony Adjustment Normed Fit Index |

| | |
|---|---|
| PWB | Psychological Well-Being |
| RMSEA | Root Mean Square Error of Approximation |
| S.E | Standard Estimates |
| SEM | Structural Equation Modeling |
| SPSS | Statistical Program for Social Sciences |
| SS | Social Support |
| Std Dev | Standard deviation |
| TLI | Tucker Lewis Index |
| VIF | Variance of Inflation |
| WIF | Work Interference Family |
| $\chi^2$ | Chi square |
| $\chi^2/df$ | Chi square per degree of freedom |

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides general information and overview of the whole thesis. The chapter begins with the background of the study in section 1.1. Meanwhile, section 1.2 focused on the overview of the Malaysian service industry as a research setting in this study.In section 1.3, statement of the problem that underlie for this study is addressed. In addition, research objectives for this study are identified in section 1.4. In the meantime, research questions are specified in section 1.5. Furthermore, section 1.6 explained the scope of the study. Section 1.7 highlighted the significance of the study. Meanwhile, several key terms used in this study are defined in section 1.8. In addition, section 1.9 specified the overall thesis organisation. Lastly, section 1.10 indicated the summary of Chapter One.

## 1.1 Background of Study

Work and family are the two most significant constituents of an individual's life. Managing multiple roles is a challenge for individuals as well as for organisations. In a similar vein, fulfilment of multiple responsibilities on work and family domains require a great amount of time and energy (Rathi & Barath, 2013). Quite often, balancing multiple roles across the two domains can increase interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict among individuals, which further could result in work-family conflict (Rathi & Barath, 2013). Moreover, when roles are incompatible, conflicts between work and family can arise (Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000).

Meanwhile, technological advancement has contributed towards making people work long hours and also at a faster pace. This has made the contemporary way of work more satisfying and compelling (Gambles, Lewis, & Rapoport, 2006). As work offers psychological satisfaction to some employees, others are physically drained from working longer hours because they feel obliged or compelled to give more energy, emotional labour, or more of themselves to their paid work activities (Gambles et al., 2006). Similarly, dramatic changes in the composition of families have resulted in a rise of dual-earner, single-parent family and growth in the number of working mothers (Benjamin & Samson, 2014). In addition, the increase in the number of women in the formal employment sector may be related along the lines of the need to enhance family economy due to high cost of living (Karimi & Nouri, 2009). Therefore, the changes in society mean that, today more individuals juggle the demands from both work and family than in previous generations (Halpern, 2005). The demands from these two domains can cause work-family conflict (Greenhause & Beutell, 1985).

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In recent decades, the global labour market has changed significantly with the influx of a large number of women into the workforce (Hsu, Chen, Wang, & Lin, 2010). These changes occurred due to a rise in educational level of women, the desire for self-realisation, and economic pressures (Hsu et al., 2010). In Malaysia, the female labour participation rate escalated from 44.5% in 1982 to 54.8% in 2017 (Department of Statistics Malaysia [DOSM], 2017). These figures suggest that Malaysian family structure has moved from a traditional, single-income family to a double-income. The growing time that Malaysian women spend at work on obligation basis has limited the time they spend with their families. As a result, a greater number of men have begun to participate in traditionally female-orientated household duties, and in part to turn their focus from work towards family (Hsu et al., 2010). According to the contemporary societal structure, both husband and wife play multiple roles, including employee, spouse, parent, and household caretaker (Hsu et al., 2010). Therefore, the limited time and energy available to fulfil all of these roles will lead to role conflicts. This trend of increased dual-earner households has fuelled a growing body of research on work-family conflict (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Greenhause & Parasuraman, 1999).

Recently, research in work-family issues have received much attention due to the increased number of female workers in the labour force and the prevalence of dual earner families (Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011; Odle-Dusseau, Britt, & Greene-Shortridge, 2012). Scholars have paid increasing attention to work-family conflict, particularly its negative consequences (Amstad et al., 2011). Moreover, conflict between the two domains has harmful effects on important work outcomes such as absenteeism, burnout, and performance (Amstad et al, 2011; Peeters, Ten Brummelhuis, & Van Steenbergen, 2013), family outcomes such as family satisfaction and marital quality (Michel, Mitchelson, & Kotrba, 2009; Voydanoff, 2007), and individual outcomes such as affective and physical well-being, depression, and substance abuse (Lapierre & Allen, 2010; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992). For example, Karatepe (2013) found that employees who have heavy workloads and are unable to establish a balance between work and family roles are emotionally exhausted. Such employees in turn are less embedded in their jobs and display poor job performance.

Meanwhile, the association between work-family conflict and psychological well-being has been examined by researchers in disciplines such as business studies, sociology and psychology (Kalliath, Hughes, & Newcombe, 2012; Noor, 2010; Polatci & Akdogan, 2014; Schjoedt, 2013; Winefield, Boyd, & Winefield, 2014). It can be concluded that, when work interferes with family issues, it will create negative impacts towards employee health and well-being outcomes, particularly low job satisfaction, low psychological well-being, burnout and depression (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Franche, Williams, & Ibrahim, 2006; Cortese, Colombo, & Ghislieri, 2010; Yanchus, Eby, Lance, & Drollinger, 2010). This is because in recent theorising on work and family interface, the theory suggests that work-related stress cannot be contained within the workplace without it impacting on other life domains such as the family (Kalliath et al., 2012). Similarly, it has been claimed that family-related issues also affect what happens at work (Kalliath et al., 2012).

A survey reported that 74% of workers in various industries are struggling to balance their careers and personal lives (Towers Watson, 2017). There is no exceptional for those who are working in service companies. Service companies and businesses have grown rapidly to cater to the needs of the people. Malaysia is regarded as a service-economy country since its service industry contributes more than 54.2% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2017 (DOSM, 2017). Service industry has become a major player in our economy which was previously dominated by manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and mining industries. Therefore, service industry offers more employment opportunities to job seekers which is about 52.8% as 2017 (Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia [MOHR], 2017). The boost for service industry is due to certain factors like the increase in the standard of living and higher income level (Productivity Report, 2017). Financial institutions, insurance companies, hotels, transportation companies, hospitals, restaurants and others turn up to be the key stakeholders in the economic sector. They provide wide range of services to different categories of customers. Nevertheless, the empirical observation reveals that overloading and extreme burden of work, strictly time pressure of completion of tasks, more than 12 hours of work duration, long travel, and fear of termination of job contract are very common problems in service industry (Pahuja & Sahi, 2012). These problems are leading to non-balancing work and family life. Therefore, this situation is creating work-family conflict.

Work-family conflict has a reciprocal nature in such that work interference family and family interference work coexist (Frone et al., 1992). Even though work interference family and family interference work are related, they are often treated as distinct construct (Allen et al., 2000). According to Netemeyer, Boles, and McMurrian (1996), work interference family is defined as a form of inter-role conflict occurred as a result of general demands and strain created by the job interfering with ones' ability to perform family-related responsibilities. On the other hand, they defined family interference work as the role conflict resulting from general demands and strain created by the family interfering with an employee's ability to perform responsibilities related to work. The negative impact of work interference family and family interference work on employees' job and non-job related outcomes have demanded for much research attention recently. Therefore, to increase employees' job and non-job-related outcomes, it is important for organisations particularly, service companies to relieve their employees' work-family conflict. Next section discussed the background of Malaysian service industry as a study setting.

## 1.2 Malaysian Service Industry

Malaysia post-independence economic has witnessed radical transformation from commodity-based in 1950s to manufacturing-based in the 1970s to the 1980s. However, starting in 1990s until the present day, the economic growth of Malaysia is predominantly driven by the service industry. Service industry has contributed more than 54.2% of the country's GDP in 2017 (DOSM, 2017). Table 1.1 indicated the distribution of country's GDP as at 2017. Service industry has become the major player in Malaysian economy which was previously dominated by manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and mining industries. The boost for service industry is due to certain factors

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like the increase in the standard of living and higher income level (Productivity Report, 2017). The growth of service industry leads to the expansion of workforce in this industry. There is about 52.8% of Malaysian workforce in the service industry and estimated to increase to 62.5% in year 2020 (MOHR, 2017).

**Table 1.1 : Distribution of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

| Industry | Percentage Share to GDP (%) |
|---|---|
| Services | 54.2% |
| Manufacturing | 23.5% |
| Agriculture | 7.8% |
| Construction | 4.5% |
| Mining and Quarrying | 8.5% |

(Source : DOSM, 2017)

Among service sector, total revenue for wholesale and retail trade, food and beverages and accommodation sub-sector recorded a productivity growth of RM303.8 billion. Thus, wholesale and retail trade, food and beverages and accommodation sub-sector indicated the major contribution in the service industry. Meanwhile, total revenue for information and communication and transportation and storage sub-sector contributed RM57.1 billion. Along the same line, health, education and arts, and entertainment and recreation recorded a productivity growth of RM14.2 billion. Meanwhile, the total revenue for professional and real estate agent sub-sector contributed RM8.4 billion. Table 1.2 indicated the performance of service sub-sector as at 2017.

**Table 1.2 : Performance of Service Sub-Sector**

| Sub-Sector | Revenue (RM Billion) |
|---|---|
| Wholesale and Retail Trade, Food and Beverages, and Accommodation. | RM303.8 |
| Information and Communication and Transportation and Storage. | RM57.1 |
| Health, Education and Arts and Entertainment and Recreation. | RM14.2 |
| Professional and Real Estate Agent. | RM8.4 |

(Source : DOSM, 2017)

Having said the above points, there is no doubt that service industry has dominated the country economic contribution. Therefore, service industry has been given priority compared to other industry. In the service industry, employees' outcomes are the main part of the product that determines organisational profits (Leidner, 1999). It is important to note that jobs in the service industry require high emotional and psychological demands that can either result in stress or drive employees to perform better (Mumin & Syed Khalid Wafa, 2017). Along the same line, it is a common situation that most individuals are occupied with multiple social roles as a worker and family member. The

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process of fulfilling responsibilities as a worker and family member in a stressful and demanding work setting such as in the service industry can create work-family conflict among employees (Mumin & Syed Khalid Wafa, 2017). By considering the above points, examining work-family conflict in Malaysian service industry can be considered as well-fitting. Next section discussed the problem statement of this study.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

Service industry has served as a growth engine that contributed significantly to the Malaysian economy. Based on the forecasted figures by DOSM (2017), service industry has contributed more than 54.2% of the country's GDP. Service companies like financial institutions, insurance companies, hotels, transportation companies, hospitals, restaurants and others have grown rapidly to cater to the needs of the people. Indirectly, service industry offers more employment opportunities to job seekers which is about 52.8% as of 2017 (MOHR, 2017). Service companies provide wide range of services to different categories of customers. The competition in the service industry is very high which forces the companies to differentiate their services compared to their competitors. The competition requires the service companies to offer facilitating and supporting services along with the core services. Therefore, employees in service companies are often required to spend more time and energy at the workplace. Thus, more work-family conflict issues are found among employees in service companies. Moreover, an empirical observation reveals that overloading and extreme burden of work, strict time pressure on task completion, more than 12 hours of work duration, long travel, and fear of termination of job contract are very common problems in service industry (Pahuja & Sahi, 2012). The above-mentioned situations lead towards imbalance in work and family life.

There are facts and figures from professional workforce solution companies which have proven an increase in the percentage of unbalanced work and family life among employees. A survey conducted in Asian country reported that 74% of workers in various industries are struggling to balance their careers and personal lives (Towers Watson, 2017). There are no exceptions for those who are working in service companies. Specifically, a survey conducted in Malaysia found that the most significant stressor in life was work-family conflict (85%) which lead to physical illness and mental health (Towers Watson, 2017). The figures show that work and family conflict simply happen when an individual is unable to arrange their time and energy to meet responsibilities expected of them.

Work-family conflict has become an issue in Malaysia as the increase of women in employment escalated from 44.5% in 1982 to 54.8% in 2017 (DOSM, 2017) due to higher cost of living. This trend has resulted in the increase of dual-earner couples where family obligations co-exist with job responsibilities in the lives of employed men and women. Due to an increase in dual-earner households, non-traditional gender roles, and an increase in the number of hours individual work within each household, conflict between work and family has become part of everyday life for millions of adults

(Greenhause, Collins, & Shaw, 2003). Specifically, there are several issues related to work and family conflict. According to a report from National Population and Family Development Board of Malaysia (2017), failure to fulfil responsibilities as a husband or wife was the second highest contributor in divorce cases. This finding indirectly indicates that balancing work and family roles is an issue nowadays. In a similar vein, work and family conflict may also lead to the greater number of neglected children where 43% of cases were reported in 2017 (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development). When parents are juggling between work and family, they could not spend their quality time with children and allow the children to take care of themselves. This is proven by a survey conducted in Malaysia that reported 65% of individuals do not spend their quality time with family due to long working hours (JobStreet.com, 2017).

Past studies have investigated the effect of work-family conflict by considering work-family conflict as having one domain which is work interference family (e.g. Jamadin, Mohamad, Syarkawi, & Noordin, 2015; Sharma, Dhar, & Tyagi, 2016; Kappagoda, 2014; Gao, Shi, Niu, & Wang, 2013). However, Greenhause and Beutell (1985), conceptualised work-family conflict as having two distinct domains; work interference family and family interference work. This notion was in line with Frone et al. (1992). However, there are limited studies that investigated the effect of such conflict within these two domains (e.g. Warokka & Febrilia, 2014; Benjamin & Samson, 2014; Rudolph, Michel, Harari, & Stout, 2014; Nohe, Michel, & Sonntag, 2014). Due to an ongoing debate about the pattern of relationships of work-family conflict with domain-specific consequences (Amstad et al., 2011), examining these two domains is thought to be beneficial.

In addition, research has begun to address the factors that affect work-family conflict (e.g. Mumin & Syed Khalid Wafa, 2017; Abd Razak, Che Omar, & Yunus, 2010; Karatepe, Sokmen, Yavas, & Babakus, 2010) and consequences of work-family conflict (e.g. Benjamin & Samson, 2014; Burke, Koyuncu, & Fiksenb, 2013; Karatepe, 2013). As indicated by the previous studies, work-family conflict could give negative impact towards employee's psychological well-being (e.g. Kalliath et al., 2012; Noor, 2010) and job performance (e.g. Netemeyer, Brashear-Alejandro, & Boles, 2004; Chaudhry, Malik, & Ahmad, 2011). However, there is little empirical research conducted to address the consequences of work-family conflict on employee's psychological well-being (e.g. Su & Zhang, 2014; Sharma et al., 2016) and job performance (e.g. Warokka & Febrilia, 2014; Zaman, Anis Ul-Haque, & Nawaz, 2014) specifically in the Asian context. Therefore, this study was conducted in order to fill in the said gap.

In addition, previous research has investigated several moderating factors on work-family conflict such as role salience (Noor, 2010), demographic factors (Benjamin & Samson, 2014; Yavas, Babakus, Karatepe, 2008), and positive affectivity (Karatepe et al., 2010). Yet, there are other potential moderators on work-family conflict that remained largely unexplored. For instance, studies have examined the moderating effect of emotional intelligence (Gao et al., 2013; Kappagoda, 2014; Sharma et al., 2016) and social support (Garcia-Cabrera, Lucia-Casademunt, Cuellar-Molina, & Padilla-Angulo,

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2018; Nohe et al., 2014; Pluut, Llies, Curseu, & Liu, 2018) in the context of work-family conflict. Based on those findings, emotional intelligence and social support are deemed to be a noteworthy construct in reducing the negative impact of work-family conflict. Although inroads have been made in identifying factors that may assist in reducing work-family conflict, there has been a call for additional research to continue to identify mechanisms at the individual level that will lessen the effect of work-family conflict (Frone, 2003). In order to address this gap, this study was conducted to examine how other kinds of individual resources such as emotional intelligence and social support act as moderators on the relationship between work-family conflict, employees' psychological well-being and job performance. As according to Gao et al. (2013), emotional intelligence may act as an individual resource that buffers the negative impact of work-family conflict. In a similar vein, social support received from family and workplace can reduce the negative effect of work and family conflict (Rathi & Barath, 2013). Work and family social support from both supervisor and family members may function as protective factors that prevent negative emotions and maladaptive coping strategies when work and family roles collide (Wang, Liu, Zhan, & Shi, 2010).

Most work-family conflict research have been carried out within the Western context. Thus, it is necessary to conduct more studies across different culture and gender. The Western context practices non-traditional gender role perception whereby men and women are viewed as having equal responsibility in managing their works and household duties (Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994). On the other hand, the Asian context practices traditional gender role perception whereby the proper place for women should be in the family where they are primarily responsible for household duties and family care takers (Aminah & Zoharah, 2008; Chang, Zhou, Wang, & Heredero, 2017; Duxbury et al., 1994). Based on the differences of viewing gender role perceptions, this study was conducted in the Malaysian service industry. Malaysian culture is quite similar to other Asian countries in term of addressing work-family conflict specifically in the traditional gender roles perceptions. Therefore, this study can serve as a sample to other Asian countries for comparative purpose in addressing work-family conflict issues. Besides that, Malaysian service industry is a good representative in this study because the statistical data related with work-family conflict issues showed some alarming figures. Hence, in order to minimise work-family conflict issues in Malaysian service industry, this study aims to investigate on how emotional intelligence and social support can reduce the deleterious effect of work-family conflict towards employees' psychological well-being and job performance.

## 1.4 Research Objectives

The researcher has formulated six specific research objectives for this study:

1. To examine the relationship between work-family conflict and psychological well-being among employees in Malaysian service industry.
2. To examine the relationship between work-family conflict and employee's job performance in Malaysian service industry.

3.  To investigate the moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between work-family conflict and psychological well-being among employees in Malaysian service industry.
4.  To investigate the moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between work-family conflict and employee's job performance in Malaysian service industry.
5.  To investigate the moderating effect of social support on the relationship between work-family conflict and psychological well-being among employees in Malaysian service industry.
6.  To investigate the moderating effect of social support on the relationship between work-family conflict and employee's job performance in Malaysian service industry.

## 1.5 Research Questions

There are two research questions formulated by researcher as follow:

1.  To what extent does work-family conflict influence psychological well-being and job performance of employees in Malaysian service industry?
2.  To what extent does emotional intelligence and social support moderate the relationships between work-family conflict, psychological well-being and job performance of employees in Malaysian service industry?

## 1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is mainly focusing on the impact of work-family conflict on employee's psychological well-being and their job performance. Besides that, the study also examined on the role of emotional intelligence and social support in reducing the impact of work-family conflict. The study was conducted in Malaysian service industry. The reason behind this study setting was due to Malaysian service industry has served as a largest economic contribution with more than 54.2% of the country's GDP (DOSM, 2017). This figure indirectly indicated the importance of service industry in Malaysia. Hence, about 52.8% of Malaysian workforce in the service industry and estimated to increase to 62.5% in year 2020 (MOHR, 2017). Service industry is highly competitive and required to offer unique and facilitating services in order to differentiate among the competitors. Therefore, employees in service industry are required to spend more time and energy at the workplace due to heavy workloads. These situations create imbalance between work and family responsibilities among employees in Malaysian service industry.

Specifically, the study was conducted in service companies located in Selangor and Klang Valley circuit. The participated service companies consist of different types of service industry such as electricity, oil and gas, water supply, transportation,

communication, wholesale, accommodation, finance, insurance, real estate, and business services. The reason behind this study setting is because of Selangor and Klang Valley are considered as the most developed areas (Gin, 2009) where companies and businesses concentrate their operations (Gross & Campbell, 2015). Furthermore, with the most advanced facilities, world-class infrastructure, and easy access to public and private offices make these areas attractive to companies and business operators. Most of the service companies' headquarters are located in these areas with concentration of 63% as registered in Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE, 2017). On the other hand, the unit analysis of this study comprises of individual employees working in Selangor and Klang Valley service companies. Meanwhile, the sample that participated in this study were ranged from lower, middle and higher level management.

## 1.7     Significance of the Study

Significance of the study explained the rationale and importance of this study. Significance of the study can be viewed in terms of theoretical and practical. The detailed theoretical significance of this study is discussed in section 1.7.1. Meanwhile, the detailed practical significance of this study is discussed in section 1.7.2.

### 1.7.1     Theoretical Significance

The current study has several theoretical significances. First, the relationship between work-family conflict, emotional intelligence, social support, employees' psychological well-being and job performance were examined from an integration of two theories namely Role Theory and Conservation of Resource Theory perspective. Role Theory has been applied to understand the effect of work-family conflict on employees' affective and behavioural outcomes (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, & Snoek, 1964). In other words, Role Theory only explains the negative consequences of work-family conflict has on individual. Therefore, it can be assumed that Role Theory is limited in explaining moderating factors on the relationship between work-family conflict and employees' affective and behavioural outcomes (Grandey and Cropanzano, 1999). Thus, the integration of Conservation of Resource Theory could be a comprehensive theoretical framework to understand the effect of work-family conflict on employees' emotional and behavioural reactions. According to Conservation of Resource Theory, people are motivated to strike a balance between obtaining and loosing valued resources (Hobfoll, 1989). In this study, emotional intelligence and social support are considered as individual valued resources. Based on the Conservation of Resource Theory, emotional intelligence is considered as personal characteristics resource. Meanwhile, social support is considered as condition resource (Hobfoll, 1989). High emotional intelligence helps employees to balance their work-family conflict. This is because emotional intelligence may buffer the negative impact of work-family conflict (Gao et al., 2013). Employees that perceived high social support are able to alleviate the negative consequences of work-family conflict. This is supported by Wang et al. (2010) indicating that social support may function as protective factor that prevent negative emotions and maladaptive coping strategies when work and family roles collide. Therefore, the

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findings of the study have theoretical significance on the applicability of Role Theory and Conservation of Resource Theory in explaining the effect of work-family conflict on employees.

Second, this study provides an integrative framework on work-family conflict, employees' psychological well-being and job performance by investigating the moderating effect of emotional intelligence and social support. To date, most prior research on work-family conflict has only focused on its antecedents or consequences (e.g. Bethge & Borngräber, 2015; Benjamin & Samson, 2014; Bazana & Dodd, 2013; Amstad et al., 2011). Thus, there is still limited understanding of the process inter-relating emotional intelligence and social support on work-family conflict. Therefore, this study contributes to the work-family conflict literature by suggesting an integrated perspective of work-family conflict.

Third, this study extends the work-family conflict literature by examining work-family conflict as two distinct domains; work interference family and family interference work. Many studies have investigated the effect of work-family conflict by considering work-family conflict as a one domain; work interference family (e.g. Jamadin et al., 2015; Sharma et al., 2016; Kappagoda, 2014; Gao et al., 2013). However, there are limited studies that investigated the effect of work-family conflict by considering two distinct domains; work interference family and family interference work (e.g. Warokka & Febrilia, 2014; Benjamin & Samson 2014; Rudolph et al., 2014; Nohe et al., 2014). Therefore, it is beneficial to examine work-family conflict as two distinct domains as there is an ongoing debate about the pattern of relationships on work-family conflict with domain-specific consequences (Amstad et al., 2011). In work interference family, work is considered as sending domain and family is considered as receiving domain. Meanwhile, in family interference work, family is considered as sending domain and work is considered as receiving domain (Amstad et al., 2011). The matching hypothesis assumes that the primary effect of work interference family and family interference work on domain specific consequence lies within the sending domain (e.g. work interference family primarily affects work-related outcome such as job performance and family interference work primarily affects non-work related outcome such as psychological well-being) (Amstad et al., 2011). However, according to the cross-domain perspective, the primary effect of work interference family and family interference work on domain specific consequence lies within the receiving domain (e.g. work interference family primarily affects non-work related outcome such as psychological well-being and family interference work primarily affects work-related outcome such as job performance) (Frone et al., 1992). Therefore, the finding of this study extends the literature on work-family conflict with domain-specific consequences.

Lastly, this study examined work-family conflict by using a sample of employees in Malaysian service industry. In this country, there is a large number of female participations in the work force with conservative gender role perceptions whereby the proper place for women should be in the family where they are primarily responsible for household duties and family care takers (Aminah & Zoharah, 2008; Chang et al., 2017; Duxbury et al., 1994). This situation may give different perspectives on viewing work-

family conflict. Thus, this study contributes to the growing cross-cultural literature on work-family conflict in the context of Asian cultures. Although most of work-family conflict studies have been carried out within western context, populations in other countries are also experiencing difficulties in balancing requirements from work and family domains (Joplin, Shaffer, Francesco, & Lau, 2003). Therefore, it is essential to investigate work-family conflict in non-Western societies, such as in Malaysia. Malaysian service industry can be served as a representative of other Asian countries with similar cultures. Indirectly, the current study provides a test of the Role Theory and Conservation of Resource Theory in another culture background to support the generalisability of theories developed in previous research.

### 1.7.2 Practical Significance

This study has several practical significances. This study may be useful for policy makers, service organisations and individual employees. The policies of Malaysian government are to encourage the growth of service industries as service industry plays a key role in economic contribution. Therefore, from policy maker's perspective, government could play important role in providing support for dual-earner couples. This can be done by regulating special leave for married-working man to take part in family activities, such as paternity and child sick leave. The juggling demands of dual-earner couples could be lessen by implementing government supportive policies.

From service organisation perspective, this study provides valuable information about the work-family conflict issues. Service organisations are responsible in creating supportive work environments. Service organisations may want to offer formal work-family policies such as flexible work schedules and on-site child care that assist employees in juggling between work and family demands (Ryan & Kossek, 2008; Sutton & Noe, 2005). Thus, service organisations can improve quality of life of employees not only in the work domain, but also in the family domain by adopting supportive policies at work. Therefore, the findings of this study will provide valuable insights into the service organisations in offering better workplace environment for their employees.

In addition, the findings of the study provide beneficial information in conveying managers in service organisations about the role of emotional intelligence and social support in reducing work-family conflict among their employees. Thus, managers in service organisations will comprehend on how emotional intelligence and social support are able in increasing employee's psychological well-being and job performance. Besides, this study should help the service organisations in understanding the burden that their employees hold as a dual-role responsibility namely workers and family members.

Lastly, this study provides beneficial information to individual employees on the negative consequences of work-family conflict. In addition, employees can take initiatives on how to reduce the impact of work-family conflict. The study suggested

that emotional intelligence and social support can weaken the deleterious impact of work-family conflict. Therefore, this study provides suggestions to employees on how to cope in the stressful situations of work-family conflict by applying the concepts of emotional intelligence and social support.

## 1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Creswell (2009) has suggested for the researchers to define terms in order to help readers understand the term used in the study. Therefore, the study utilised the following operational definitions:

*Work-Family Conflict (WFC)*
> Work-family conflict is considered as inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Work-family conflict consists of work interference family and family interference work (Greenhause & Beutell, 1985).

*Work Interference Family (WIF)*
> Work interference family is defined as a form of role conflict occurred as a result of general demands and strain created by the job interfering with ones' ability to perform family-related responsibilities (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

*Family Interference Work (FIW)*
> Family interference work is defined as the role conflict resulting from general demands and strain created by the family interfering with an employee's ability to perform responsibilities related to work (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

*Emotional Intelligence (EI)*
> Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

*Social Support (SS)*
> Social support is considered as the instrumental, emotional, informational, and appraisal support individuals receive through interactions with other individuals (House, 1981).

*Psychological Well-Being (PWB)*

Psychological well-being is defined as a generalised feeling of happiness and it represents wellness that is conceived as progressions of continued growth across the life course (Ryff, 1995).

*Employee's Job Performance (JP)*

Job performance is defined as the discrete behavioural episodes that an individual performs over a standard interval of time (Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997). In the context of this study, job performance is viewed based on role-based performance with five dimensions namely job, career, innovator, team, and organisation role (Welbourne, Johnson, & Erez, 1998).

*Service Industry*

An industry made up of companies that primarily earn revenue through providing intangible products and offering services. Service industry companies are involved in electricity, gas and water, transport, storage and communication, wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and restaurant, finance and insurance, and real estate and business services (MATRADE, 2017).

*Lower Level Management*

Lower level management consists of supervisory, operative officer, section officer, and superintendent. They are concerned with direction and controlling function of management (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

*Middle Level Management*

Middle level management consists of branch managers, departmental managers, senior and junior executive. They are responsible to the top management for the functioning of their department (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

*Higher Level Management*

Higher level management consists of board of directors, chief executive and managing director. The top management is the ultimate source of authority and it manages goals and policies for a business (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

## 1.9     Thesis Organisation

This section outlined the layout of thesis organisation for this study. Overall, this thesis consists of six chapters. The structure of this thesis is organised as follows.

**Chapter One:** Chapter One provides an introduction to the study. This chapter aims to provide the background of the study and convey the importance of the study to the

service industry. Specifically, Chapter One discussed the Malaysian service industry as a research setting in this study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, and operationalised definitions of key terms used in this study.

**Chapter Two:** Chapter Two provides comprehensive literature reviews that associated with this study. Specifically, Chapter Two critically articulated the literatures on work-family conflict, emotional intelligence, social support, psychological well-being, and employees' job performance. Finally, after critically reviewing the previous empirical and conceptual research that associated with this study, Chapter Two identified and addressed the research gap.

**Chapter Three:** Chapter Three is dedicated to a conceptual framework and mainly focused on the model and hypotheses development. Chapter Three also discussed the theory used in the study. Moreover, the hypotheses development is explained in this chapter based on the review of the empirical and conceptual literatures.

**Chapter Four:** Chapter Four presented the research methodology implemented in this study. This chapter justified the choice of the method applied in this study. Besides that, Chapter Four explained in detail about the setting of this study such as population, sample size, and unit of analysis. Moreover, this chapter also explained the measurements employed in this study. In a similar vein, Chapter Four also explained the methods used for data collection. Lastly, this chapter highlighted the plan for data analysis.

**Chapter Five:** Chapter Five is devoted to the analysis of the survey responses from employees in Malaysian service companies. A general data examination and initial data analysis were carried out and explained in this chapter. Chapter Five also discussed the results of exploratory analysis by using SPSS 23.0 statistical programme. Along the same line, this chapter also presented the main analysis in which Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is applied by using AMOS 23.0. In addition, discussions of hypotheses for this study are articulated in Chapter Five.

**Chapter Six:** Chapter Six presented the discussion and conclusion of this study. This chapter begins by recapitulation of the research findings based on the formulated research objectives. Then, this chapter articulated the theoretical contributions of this study. Moreover, the implications of this study to the practitioners and policy makers also been highlighted in this chapter. This chapter also addressed the limitations and directions for future research that might be associated in this study.  inally, Chapter Six ends by presenting the conclusion of the study.

**1.10     Chapter Summary**

In summary, Chapter One addressed an overview of the study by highlighting the background of the study that associated with work-family conflict, emotional intelligence, social support, employee's psychological well-being and job performance. An overview of Malaysian service industry as a research setting in this study is also explained in Chapter One. Meanwhile, all the issues related with work-family conflict are clearly addressed in the problem statement. This was followed by research objectives, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, definition of key terms, and overall thesis organisation.

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