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### FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES (FFPS) AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF WORKING MOTHERS

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study evaluate the extent to which working mothers perceive the availability of FFPs in Jeddah and to assess how does the availability of FFPs impact working mothers' Organizational Commitment (OC). About 57 working mothers were participated in the online questionnaire and the obtained results were analysed using correlation technique. The result shows there is a moderate positive relationship between the number of policies available and the perceived family supportiveness of the organization. Besides that, a moderate relationship between the overall perception of the family friendliness of employees' organizations and the Affective Commitment  $r = 0.14$ . Moreover, there is a strong relationship between the overall family friendliness of an organization and both Normative Commitment  $r = 0.53$ , and Continuous Commitment  $r = 0.41$ .

CCS CONCEPTS • Insert your first CCS term here • Insert your second CCS term here • Insert your third CCS term here

#### ***ACM Reference Format:***

First Author's Name, Initials, and Last Name, Second Author's Name, Initials, and Last Name, and Third Author's Name, Initials, and Last Name. 2018. The Title of the Paper: ACM Conference Proceedings Manuscript Submission Template: This is the subtitle of the paper, this document both explains and embodies the submission format for authors using Word. In Woodstock '18: ACM Symposium on Neural Gaze Detection, June 03–05, 2018, Woodstock, NY. ACM, New York, NY, USA, 10 pages NOTE: This block will be automatically generated when manuscripts are processed after acceptance.

## INTRODUCTION

In the late 70s the “family-friendly” concept began to spread around the world gradually throughout European countries and US, in connection with the equality of employment opportunities [1]. Nowadays, both small and large organizations try to implement the “family-friendly” concept named Family Friendly Policies and practices (FFPs) to enhance productivity of their employees to help them cope with their family commitments towards their children and dependents [2]. Grover, S. L., and Crooker, K. J. [3] claims that people with intention of having children in the future are more attached and want to stay in the companies that offer FFPs and the benefits tend to create greater Affective Commitment among employees. Veiga, Baldrige and Eddleston [4] suggested those FFPs can be categorized into three main classifications: services, policies, and benefits, which should be practiced in all organizations in order to develop the employees’ commitment and engagement.

The first category is the Family friendly services where organizations provide services to help employees to balance between their work and family commitments and reduce conflicts that may happen. For example, childcare facilities, kids care at home, partner opportunity programs, lactation accommodation, eldercare services and counselling. Secondly, the Family Friendly Policies that are related to working hours and offers flexibility on how, when, and where to perform the job aiming to diminish work/family conflicts like job sharing, permanent part time, telecommuting and flexible starting and finishing time [5]. Family friendly benefits aim to compensate employees from any monetary effects that their family commitments may cause including paid maternity/paternity leave, family medical leave and employee and family health benefits [6]. Nevertheless, employees take advantage of the FFPs in different levels due to several factors such as gender, financial status, position in the company, and their marital status. This study aimed to evaluate the extent to which working mothers perceive the availability of FFPs in Jeddah and to assess how does the availability of FFPs impact working mothers’ Organizational Commitment (OC).

## METHODOLOGY

### *Population and Sample*

The sample population for this study consisted of female employees who are employed in private and public sectors in organizations located in Jeddah. A sample population consisting of women employees from various companies was necessary to achieve the goals of this research and to be able to generalize the results on a wider scale. The total sample was 57 employees who comprised field employees, office staff, upper management and middle management. This study combination of both purposive and convenience sampling method were used to approach the participants where they were selected because of their convenience accessibility to the researcher. These sampling methods were selected also because the number of whole population (working mothers in Jeddah) was not available and consequently the researcher could not reach all of them. On the other hand, the purposive

sampling was selected because it is a method where the study sample is chosen based on the most appropriateness individuals for the study. It is mostly used when there is a limited number of a person that fulfil the criteria of the area being researched which is applied to the case of this study.

### ***Questionnaire construction***

The online questionnaire that was used to collect data started with two (Yes/No) screening questions in order to make sure that all respondents are relevant to the research sample and fulfil the criteria of being working mothers. The survey link was sent only to females and initially they were asked (1) if they are working or not and (2) if they have any dependent care responsibilities. Then if the participant chose for the two screening questions the answer Yes, she directly continues to the main questionnaire. Otherwise, if any of the two questions was answered by No, the questionnaire ends and submits the results. The main questionnaire of the research has been organized into four parts.

### ***Demographics***

In this part 11 questions were asked regarding demographic variables to help the researcher determine what factors may influence respondents' answers. Questions covered three aspects of participants' demographics; personal, family related, and work related demographics. The first part covered questions like age group, level of education, and marital status. Then participants were asked to answer questions related to their families such as number of individuals they take care of, they were also allowed to choose all applicable choices of the kind of care responsibilities they have including children, elderly family member, person with disability, and ages of children they look after. The last part was related to work including years of employment, job position to know whether the women is part or full time employee, also there was a question about their levels within the organization that include choices like CEO, VP, manager, other non-management jobs

### ***Company Information***

The second part was to designed get more information regarding respondents' organizations and to evaluate the availability of the different Family Friendly Policies in their organizations. Questions included the field of work, number of employees work for the company and Family Friendly programs that their respective organizations provide. For example, participants were asked to choose the industry that they work in from six different industries including Education, Health care, Retail, and others. They were also asked to choose all applicable family friendly programs that are offered in their organizations from a list of nine of the most common programs that most companies offer.

### ***Family Friendly Policies***

The third section was formed to measure employees' perception of family friendless of their organizations. In this section there were 10 different

statements about the organizations that employees presently work for like “My organization has many programs and policies designed to help employees balance work and family life”, “My organization makes an active effort to help employees when there is conflict between work and family life” and “My organization puts money and effort into showing its support of employees with families”. Participants expressed their level of agreement to the statements by choosing between a scale of 7 points varying from strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7). The table was originally developed by Jahn [7] and has been used widely by researchers for similar purposes.

### ***Organizational Commitment***

The last section consisted of questions on three types of Organizational Commitment; Affective, Continuous, and Normative Commitment to assess the level of employees’ commitment in each type. The three scales used in the questionnaire were originally developed by Allen and Meyer [8], which have been a great assessment tool for the three commitment types in many studies. Each type of OC consisted of eight statements and responses were made on 7-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

### ***Data Collection***

In this study, data were collected using an online survey particularly because people find it easier to understand and if respondents had any clarifications, they can contact the researcher for further explanation at any time. Also, online surveys save a lot of costs in terms of time and money and make data analysis much easier. The survey questionnaire was created online using Google Drive. The survey link was distributed among family, friends, and relatives who are working mothers.

### ***Data Analysis***

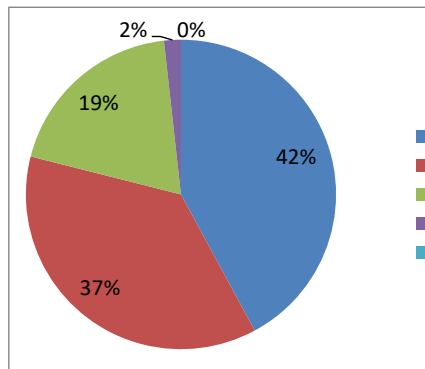
The collected data will be analyzed in MS Excel sheet. It will be analyzed in three phases; first will be using pie and bar charts to analyze the demographics data. Secondly, correlations will be used to reflect on the relationship between the two variables: the actual number of FFPS available in organizations and the perceived family friendliness of the companies by employees. Third, correlation analysis will be used to analyze the relationship between FFPS and OC.

### ***Result And Discussion***

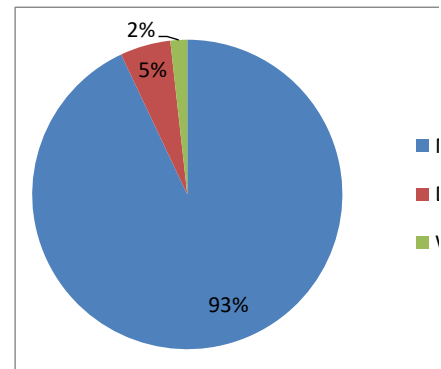
#### ***Survey Results***

There are 117 respondents who have participated in the questionnaire, only 57 were working mothers and had dependent care responsibilities. Respondents were asked questions on demographics, number of FFPS available in their companies, perceived family friendliness of the organizations, and Organizational Commitment.

Fig. 1 shows the largest age group of the participant are between 21 to 30 years old about 42%, follow by the second large age group which is between 31 to 40 years old about 37%. There are no participants more than 61 years old. Therefore, majority of the participants are young working mothers. Fig. 2 shows majority of the participants are married contributes by 93% and there is 5% of the participants are under divorced category. There is also 2% of the participants is under widowed category

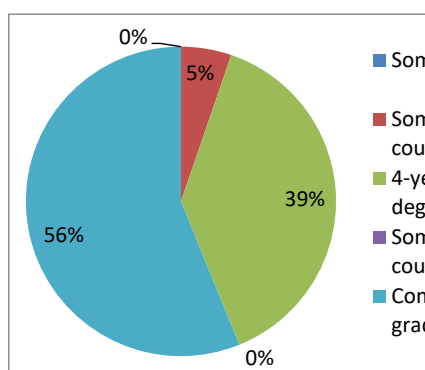


**Figure 1:** Distribution of Respondents Age group

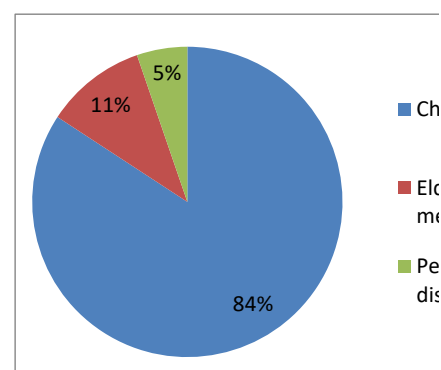


**Figure 2:** Distribution of Respondents' Marital Status

The level of education was measured in five categories as shown in Fig. 3. Most of the participants about 56% have completed graduate degree such as MA, MD, MBA, Ph. D., etc. There is also 39% of the participants have completed an undergraduate program of four years including BA or BS. Whereas, the minority that represents 5% of the respondents to the questionnaire have attended some college coursework including 2 years degree. In this question, working mothers had to choose all applicable care responsibilities that they had. Fig. 4 shows about 84% of the participants indicated children as the main care responsibility. However, some of them have chosen elderly family member or a person with disability as well. The respondents who chose elderly family member represents 11% while, 5% chose the option of a person with disability.

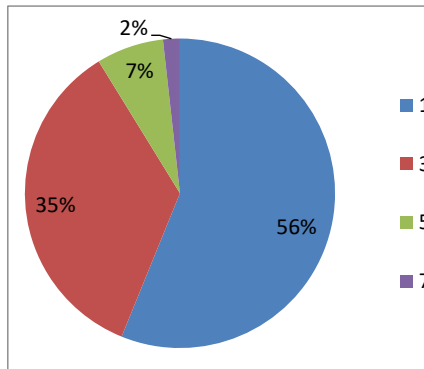


**Figure 3:** Distributions of Respondents' Level of Education

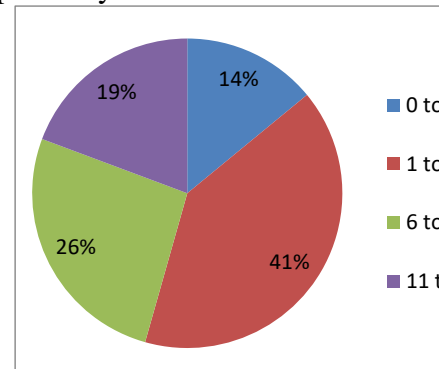


**Figure 4:** Distribution of Employees' Care Responsibilities

Fig. 5 shows the breakdown of number of individual’s one working mother look after. About 56% of the participants are looking after one to two individuals. Moreover, the second larger percentage is about 35% represents mothers who take care of 3-4 people, while a minority of participants were responsible for more than seven people. Fig. 6 illustrates the age of children. Most of the participants about 41% indicate that their children aged from 1 to 5 years, followed by 26% who look after children between the ages of 6 to 10 years. While, there are also 14% and 19% of the respondent’s children aged from 0 to 11 months and 11 to 15 years old respectively.

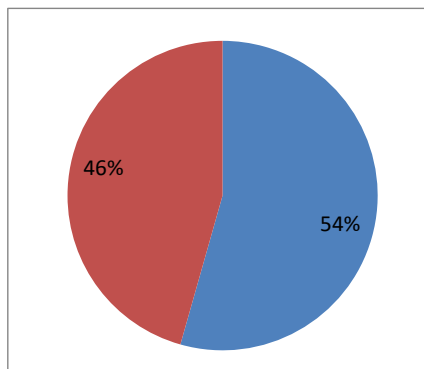


**Figure 5:** Distribution of No. of individuals employees’ take care of

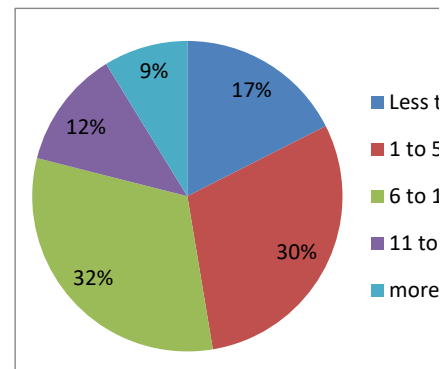


**Figure 6:** Distribution of Participants’ Children Ages

This question is to assess the level of housework load on the working mother by knowing if has any kind of paid assistance at home to help them in household work. From the graph below Fig. 7, majority of the respondent about 54% has assistance at home. Fig. 8 shows majority of the respondents about 32% have been working for 6-10 years follow by 30% of the respondents have been working for 1-5 years. There is 17% of the respondents has work for less than one year. Besides that, about 12% and 9% of the respondents have been working for 11 to 15 years and more than 16 years respectively.

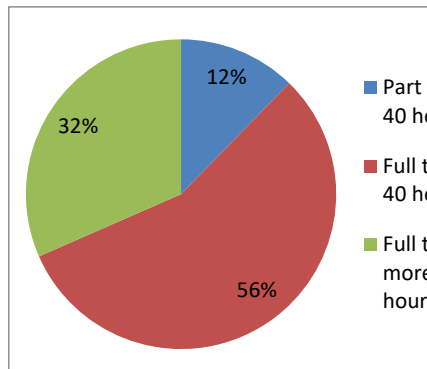


**Figure 7:** Distribution of Maid or any Paid assistance at home

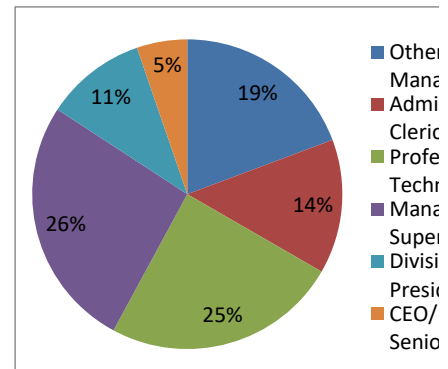


**Figure 8:** Distribution of Respondents’ Years of Employment

Fig. 9 presents the percentages of part time, full time employees (40 hours a week) and full time employees (more than 40 hours a week). About 56% of working mothers are employed as a full time employee and usually spend 40 hours per week at workplace. This question is designed to evaluate the workload and the level of accountability of the participants. Fig. 10 indicates that about 26% of respondents are either manager or supervisor in their work fields. About 25% of the respondents are from professional or technical background. There is only 5% of the respondents are holding the position as CEO/ President/ Senior VP or higher.

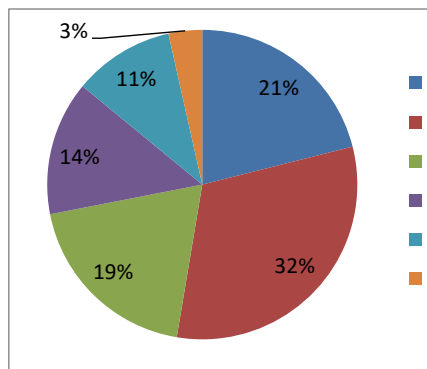


**Figure 9:** Distribution of Subjects' Job Positions

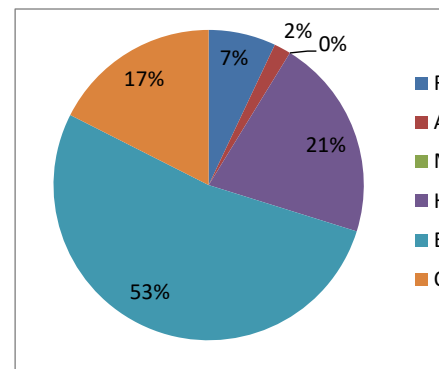


**Figure 10:** Distribution of Participants' Level at the Organization

This variable is determined by identifying the number of employees in the respondents companies. The result shown in Fig. 11 indicates that most of the respondents about 53% are working in small firms where the company has less 500 employees. While, about 14% of the respondents are employees working in large companies that have more than 5000 employees. Fig. 12 shows that women are dominantly working in Education sector, contributes by 53% of the respondents. About 21% of the respondents work in Health care industry, and 17% of working mothers are employed in other industries including IT, Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), and event planning. While, there are also 7% and 2% of the respondents are work as retail and aerospace respectively.



**Figure 11:** Distribution of Respondents' Company Size



**Figure 12:** Distribution of Industries Respondent work at industries

Based on the obtained survey feedbacks, most of the respondents had the following demographics; aged 21-30 years, married, completed a graduate degree, have children as their main care responsibility, they have one or two children to look after, their children ages varied from 1-5 years, 54% had a maid or any kind of paid assistance at home, 32% of them have been working for 6 to 10 years, they were working as full time contract and usually spend 40 hours per week at workplace, they are working for small organizations in which the total number of employees was 100-500 employees, and 53% of the respondents were working at Education sector.

### *Family Friendly Policies availability in workplace*

This section included a list of nine Family Friendly Policies that were made available to respondents to choose the policies that were offered to them by their respective employers. This list of FFPs included children care on/off site, flexible working hours, telecommuting, and family medical leaves was generated through an evaluation of existing literature review on FFPs. The analysis of this section reflects as to how many policies are available to these employees by their employers. The respondents were asked to select from the policies that in their opinion were available by their employers. Also, they were asked to choose more than one policy if applicable using a checklist.

For the purpose of analysis, each FFP was recorded into a new dummy variable with a value 1 if respondent selected it and 0 if respondent did not select it. Scores were calculated by adding up the number of FFPs selected by participants. Higher scores indicated higher perceived availability of FFPs.

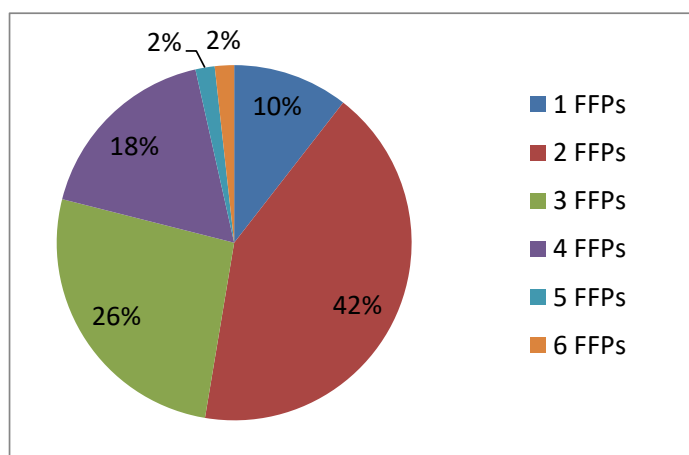
Participants showed the maximum number of FFPs available in their companies to be 5 out of 9 policies, meaning that employees were allowed up to 5 policies only in their workplaces. On average, employers of those surveyed offered 1.6 Family Friendly Practices. As shown in Fig. 13, a great majority of respondents (42%) showed that their employers offered them only 2 FFPs, and 26% of them reported that they are provided with 3 FFPs in their organizations. Moreover, very few respondents (4%) perceived the availability of five or more FFPs. The single most striking observation to emerge from the data comparison was that some participants about 10% were employed at companies that only offer one family friendly practices.

The most frequently available policy among respondents was Family leave/maternity leave (ability to take extended time off to care for family members over and above normal vacation time and what the law allows), which was chosen by 49.1%. Moreover, the second available policy was Childcare - on-site which was selected by 42.1% of the participants. The reason behind the availability of the two mentioned policies is that companies have no choice to not offer them because they are strict requirements by the Saudi Labor Law.

The obtained results showed that among the discretionary policies, 29.8% of respondents reported the availability of flexible starting and quitting times



policy, 12.2% chose work at home/telecommuting policy, and 7% selected job-sharing policy. On the other hand, the three policies that were least available in workplaces which 5.2% of the participants chose each one of them were: Compressed workweek, Part-time work or reduced work hours, and Elder care or assistance with aging parents. Apparently, it seems that most of employers provide maternity leaves and childcare policies to comply with the Governments laws, however, when it comes to the discretionary policies most of the employers do not offer discretionary FFPs to their employees



**Figure 13:** Perceived Availability of FFPs in Respondents' Organizations

***Relationship between the number of FFPs available in workplaces and how employees perceived FFPs***

This section is looking at the relationship between the reported number of the availability of FFPs in companies and employees perception of the overall family friendliness of their organizations. The correlation between these two variables was  $r = 0.39$ , which indicates a moderate positive relationship between the number of policies available and the perceived family supportiveness of the organization. The results clearly indicate that organizations offering more FFPs will be perceived as more family supportive.

***The relationship between how employees perceive their organizations as family friendly and their Organizational Commitment***

This study has found a moderate relationship between the overall perception of the family friendliness of employees' organizations and the Affective Commitment  $r = 0.14$ . Also, results represent that there is a strong relationship between the overall family friendliness of an organization and both Normative Commitment  $r = 0.53$ , and Continuous Commitment  $r = 0.41$ .

These results indicate that higher the perceived family friendliness of the organization more will be the Organizational Commitment. As per researches if the NC and CC of Organizational Commitment are strong, this means that organizations will be able to retain their valued employees because these two commitments have implications for employees' retention. Consequently, the implications for managers is that if they want to retain valued working

mothers in their companies, they need to offer them more FFPs in the future to help them balance their work and family life.

### CONCLUSION

This study concluded two important implications of for managers. First, Employers need to improve the image of their companies as family friendly organizations to attract more women to participate in the labour force. Second, if companies want to retain their valued women employees they need to provide them with more FFPs to help them attain the work life balance.

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