



Work family Conflict in Middle-Eastern Cultures:
The Case of Israel








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Social and Institutional Context

Working Women (%)	Jewish 64% Arab 23% Total Women 45%
Women as employers (%)	1.4%
Men as employers (%)	7.1%
Women in Managerial positions (%)	10% of CEO; %32 of Senior Managers
Women in traditional jobs (%)	50%
Average wage Total Senior managers	Women 1100\$ Vs. Men 1810\$ Women 2555\$ Vs. Men 2933\$

Governmental Policies

-  **Public laws and regulations protect women against discrimination, and assure equal opportunity and equal pay for the same job and position.**
-  **Women can't be fired during their pregnancy, and are entitled by law to 12 weeks paid maternity leave, that can be extended (without payment) to one year.**
-  **Women have the right to reduce 5 working hours a week until her children become 10 years old.**
-  **A mother is entitled to a tax reduction for each child till the age of 18.**
-  **The country has a net for childcare services for working mother, supervised by the ministry of employment.**

Israeli Focus Group - Results

Theme	Jewish sample	Arab sample
<i>WIF vs FIW</i>	<p><u>WIF (7 /7)</u> " I was reading my daughter a bed night story, and the tel. rang. When I came back-she was asleep. I felt awful "...</p> <p><u>FIW (3/7)</u> spontaneously "I can't leave home for a 2-days psychology conference home blocks me..."</p>	<p><u>WIF (2 /6)</u> "it is stressing when my routine is interfered such as when one of the children is sick".</p> <p><u>FIW (2/6)</u> only when asked "can't stay after 1700 even though the training is very interesting"</p>
<i>Conflict Vs Positive Spillover</i>	<p><u>Positive spillover (7/7)</u></p> <p>"Every facet of live complements the other"</p>	<p><u>Positive spillover (6/6)</u></p> <p>"I can't view myself only as a mother, nor can I see myself as a working woman solely"</p>

Theme	Jewish sample	Arab sample
<i>Conflicting Social Roles</i>	<u>Parent –Job (7/7)</u>	<u>Parent-job (6/6)</u> <u>House keeper-job (6/6)</u> <u>Social woman-job (6/6)</u>
<i>Types of Conflict</i>	<u>Time based conflict (7/7)</u> " the conflict is mainly technical, to arrange transportation for after school activities.." <u>Strain based conflict. (2/7)</u> " when I come home I feel emotionally exhausted , and I can't deal with my children's problems". <u>Behavior-based conflict (0/7)</u>	<u>Time based conflict (0/6)</u> - <u>Strain based conflict (0/6)</u> - - <u>Behavior-based conflict (6/6)</u> " I have an aunt who cooks for me, and it makes me feel bad as a women"

***Balancing
Work &
Family***

Good enough woman (6/7)

My perception has changed. If in the past I believed that I have to do everything perfectly, today I do mainly what I like, and to a minor degree what I ought..."

Balancing by coordinating (7/7)

"women at home function as coordinators. This is the role that the husband does not do.."

State of mind (5/7)

"It's really my decision whether I'm here to serve my husband, my children, my parents."

Superwoman (6/6)

"I have to be perfect on all facets of life. Therefore I wake up at 4AM to bake bread..."

Family and community support (6/6)

"On my way back home I take dishes that my mother in law cooked for me..."

Theme	Jewish sample	Arab sample
<i>Spouse's Support</i>	<p><u>Instrumental (4/7)</u> helping with parental responsibilities</p> <p><u>Emotional - sharing (4/7)</u> "My husband is my best friend. I share the dilemmas that raised at work with him"</p>	<p><u>Instrumental (2/6)</u></p> <p><u>Emotional- backing (6/6)</u> "my husband always tells his friends: what do you want? that's her work"</p>
<i>Extended Family's Support</i>	<p><u>Instrumental (1/7)</u> "My mother looks after my children, when I am at work..."</p>	<p><u>Instrumental (6/6)</u> Viewed as a source of instrumental support, but causes also emotional stress</p> <p>" I come back tired from work, and my neighbors comes in to drink coffee, and to check how I manage my home duties"...</p>

Theme	Jewish sample	Arab sample
<i>Extended Family's Support</i>		<p><u>Emotional backing from fathers (6/6)</u></p> <p>" I learned abroad, and he stood up for me against all the community"</p>
<i>Gender role expectations</i>	<p><u>Message from mother (1/7)</u> "My mother always said: a woman needs a profession, so that she can be independent"</p> <p><u>Dominant figure: mother (3/7)</u></p>	<p><u>Correction through the children (6/6)</u> " my parents lack any formal education, so they always encouraged me to learn... "</p> <p><u>Dominant figure: the father (6/6)</u></p>
<i>Guilt</i>	<p>Moves from guilt to positive spillover as a function of developmental life stages (4/7)</p>	<p>Guilt concerning not fulfilling the traditional gender role (6/6)</p>