

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON WORKING
DUAL JOBS AMONG WOMEN FROM THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT'S OFFICES IN THE STATE OF SABAH,
MALAYSIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyse the experiences and feelings of the women participants on working dual jobs. 10 participants were selected among women employees from eight Federal Government Offices of Sabah State, Malaysia. The said offices were located at Kompleks Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan Sabah, Jalan Sulaman Likas, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia, which was the central administration offices for the Federal Government of Sabah. This research used a phenomenological method of three-part interviews with the participants. The findings discovered six types of job scope indicated by participants as their second/other jobs namely accounting; multi-level marketing (MLM); skin care product; teaching; tourism; and catering. Theory of Rational Choice (TRC) was the theoretical framework used for this research. The original TRC confirmed that additional income, financial security and financial independent as the determinants on working dual jobs. Interestingly, these current findings presented six new factors/determinants that included: 1) having family responsibility; 2) having fun due to passion and hobby; 3) succumbing to employer's command; 4) receiving spouse's blessing and encouragement; 5) deriving from one's own self-motivation; and 6) wanting to be independent. In short, this present empirical research has not only confirmed the original TRC, it has also constructively extended its application, which significantly contributed to a new dimension about the dual jobs phenomenon among working women.

خلاصة البحث

يهدف هذا البحث لتحليل الخبرات والمشاعر للموظفات العاملات في أكثر من مهنة، حيث أجريت عشرة مقابلات مع موظفات تم اختيارهن ويعملن في ثمانية مكاتب حكومية اتحادية تقع ضمن المجمع الإداري الحكومي الاتحادي لولاية صباح، شارع سليمان ليكاس، كوتا كينابالو في ماليزيا. فمن خلال استخدام المنهج الفينومينولوجي القائم على ثلاثة أجزاء من المقابلات مع الموظفات المشاركات، أشارت النتائج إلى انخراط المشاركات في ستة أنواع أخرى من العمل الإضافي والتي منها؛ المحاسبة، والتسويق متعدد المستويات ؛ ومنتجات العناية بالبشرة، والتدريس، والسياحة، وبيع وتوزيع الطعام. وباستخدام نظرية الاختيار العقلاني كإطار نظري لهذا البحث، تؤكد نتائجها أن الدخل الإضافي، والأمن المالي، والاستقلال المالي هي من محددات العمل الإضافي. والجدير ذكره أن نتائج هذا البحث تشمل ستة عوامل ومحددات أخرى للعمل الإضافي التي منها: (1) المسؤولية العائلية، (2) استخدام العمل الثاني كترغبة وهواية، (3) الانخراط في أعمال إضافية تنفيذاً لقرارات صاحب العمل، (4) المواصلة في العمل الإضافي من خلال تشجيع الأزواج (5) الدافع الذاتي، (6) التطلع نحو الاستقلال والإعتماد على النفس. خلاصة القول، إن هذا البحث التجريبي لا يؤكد فقط على الأصالة النظرية لنظرية الاختيار العقلاني، بل يؤكد أيضاً على الجانب التطبيقي الذي يساهم في الإشارة للبعد الجديد والمتمثل في ظاهرة العمل الإضافي بين الموظفات الإناث.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in Sociology and Anthropology

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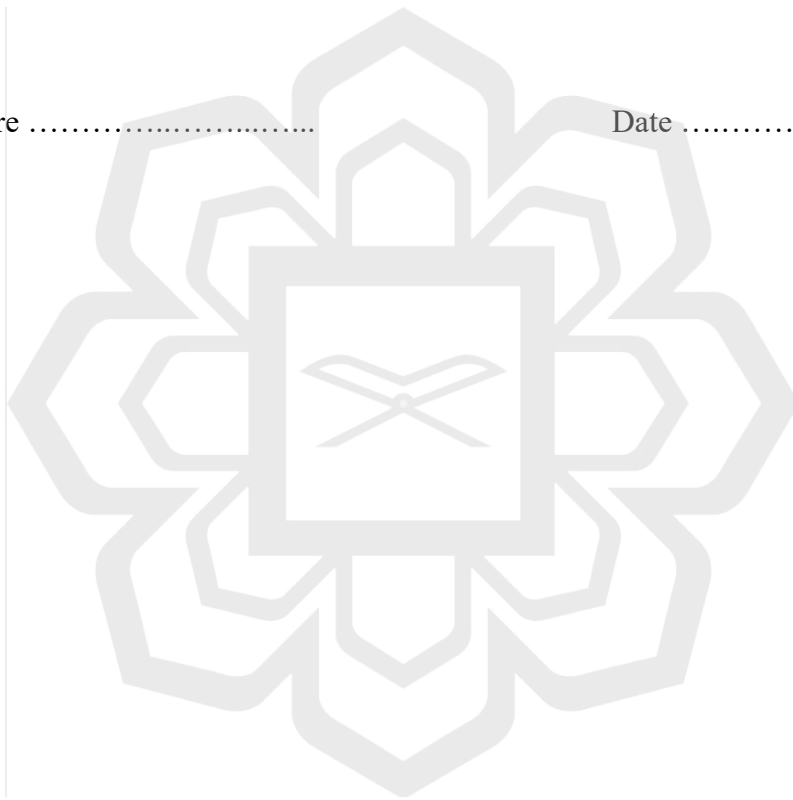
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Historically, participation rates in labour force for female in Malaysia were lower than participation rate for male. Back in 1982, it was recorded that labour force participation for male was 85.3 per cent and decreased to 79.7 per cent in 2011. However, the percentage increased again to 80.2 per cent in 2016. Surprisingly, the female labour force participation in Malaysia showed a rapid hike from 37.2 per cent to 44.5 per cent in between 1970 and 1980, followed by another 40 per cent towards 49 per cent between 1982 and 2012. The year 2013 indicated the peak of female participation in labour force with a record of more than 50 per cent which recurred in the year 2016 at 54.3 per cent (Lim, 2018).

Based on the current employment situation, Malaysian female labour participation rate for prime age of 25-34 years (73.0 per cent), 35-44 years (67.6 per cent) and 45-54 years (62.0 per cent) in the second quarter of 2019 were 55.8 per cent, adding the general record to 1.5 per cent from 2016 (Department of Statistics Malaysia (2016: 2019). This shows positive hikes and rapid participation of women in the labour force in Malaysia.

Generally, Malaysian women had joined the labour force particularly in administrative posts as well as higher positions based on their academic attainments since the past years. The participants involved mostly in all sectors of employment (Bakar, 2012). Female participations in labour force in the second quarter of the year 2019 had seen a positive hike at more than 50 per cent compared to the year 2016 of

women with age between 25 to 54 years old (Department of Statistics Malaysia (2016: 2019). Additionally, the Department of Statistics Malaysia also presented an increasing number of 23,000 for male and 49,000 for women joining the labour force compared to the first quarter of 2019. The statistics above shows an excellent development on Malaysian women participation in the labour force that is significant in this research.

The public and private sectors (including self-employment) are the two main employment sectors in Malaysia to date. The Public Services Commission of Malaysia (PSC) was founded on 31 August 1957 and functions under Article 144(1) of the Federal Constitution. The article stipulates six main functions of the Commission which include appointment, confirmation of service, conferment into pension status, promotion, transfer and exercising disciplinary control (Public Service Commission, 2019). The public services pay grade scale consists of professional scale (grade 41 and above) and supporting scale (grade 41 and below), which is applicable nationwide (Public Service Department, 2019). As for the private sectors, the Malaysia Incorporated Policy was introduced in 1981 to encourage cooperation between the public and private sectors which later launched the Privatisation Policy in 1983 to support the Malaysia Incorporated Policy in order to increase the private sector's role in the country's economic development (Public Private Partnership Unit, 2019).

Presently in Malaysia, the government has permitted 'moonlighting', or in other words, to work more than one job apart from the official job appointed by the government, as an alternative to provide additional income for everyday living and expenses (Sabron & Hassim, 2018). Additionally, with the current economic challenges, having one job to support living is not sufficient for working individuals and hence, there is the need to have two or more jobs (Jamadin & Nordin, 2014). However, public service employees are bound to Ordinance 5, Rules and Regulation of

Public Servant (Behaviour and Procedures) 1993 and Rules and Regulation of Public Servants (Behaviour and Procedures) Amendment 2002 in regards to working other jobs, i.e., starting small business and doing part time jobs are permitted with an official written permission issued from their answerable Head of Department (Sabron & Hassim, 2016).

Jamadin and Nordin (2014) have conducted a study on teachers in Malaysia to prove the existence of working multiple jobs phenomena. The study found that 60 per cent of the teachers were engaged actively as dual jobholders and multiple jobholders in various aspects of professions, i.e., education related, public service, agriculture, business and technical related. This shows an interesting finding that teachers, representing one group of public employees are actively having dual job.

This phenomenon is also practiced by other public service employees in Malaysia. Another study conducted by Sabron and Hassim (2018) on the perception of moonlighting practices among the employees of public hospitals in Klang Valley shows that the practice is not uncommon for public hospitals employees. The findings also indicated that having a second job is crucial for most of employees and they believed that they are still able to spend quality time with their families. Therefore, it shows that working dual jobs is crucial for some employees in Malaysia.

In a global context, the United States of America has seen a rapid increase on American people in working dual jobs, mainly due to the determination to earn sufficient income to support their family's necessities such as every day expenses and household expenditures (Zickar et al., 2002). Additionally, statistics show an increase of 5.2 per cent of multiple jobholders for both male and female in the United States of America in July 2018 as compared to January 2018 (United States Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2018). It was found that 38.1 per cent of workers decided to purposely work

multiple jobs to upgrade and to endure their economic condition particularly for earning extra money; while the other 25.6 per cent of workers worked to meet expenses and to settle debts; and another 17.6 per cent of workers worked for the purpose of enjoyment on working multiple jobs (Slitter & Boyd, 2014). This highlights the fact that working multiple jobs is seen as a norm and following today's standard.

While in Russia, second job is normally done after normal working hours; either shifting from one work to another after stipulated hours or working in similar work place (Clarke, 2002). According to the Labour Force Survey data, between the years 1999 and 2000, most respondents participated in the survey were registered workers in labour force data and stated that they work second job to earn additional salaries. Both male and female workers shared similar percentage of having a second job to supplement their extra income (Clarke, 2002).

Based on the above global findings, this research only concentrates on the concept of “dual jobs” rather than “multiple jobs” or “secondary jobs”, though these concepts are interchangeably used in the literatures. The dual jobs basically refer to the two kinds of work in which an individual worker holds. This research particularly aims to provide new dimensions in understanding the phenomenon of working dual jobs among female workers under the Prime Minister Department, in the State of Sabah. The following section presents statement of the problem, focusing on Malaysian context and its parallel issues.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Malaysia has experienced improvement and positive development for women in workforce. Khazanah Research Institute has presented a report on working-age population consists of 9.5 million by women and 9.8 million by men in 2017 (Khazanah

Research Institute, 2018). Malaysian women are reported to join the labour force for various reasons. Seeking financial security, gaining satisfaction to oneself and developing social class in society are some of the factors for women to join labour force and engage in employment (McGin & Oh, 2017).

On the other hand, all developed nations are concerned with issues on work-life balance which affects some crucial aspects including aging and differing rates in fertility among the people (Gregory & Milner, 2009). Additionally, both men and women in the United States of America are actively engaged in being dual jobholders equally (U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, 1996). However, most previous studies were done only on individual work and not as phenomenological (Paxson & Sicherman, 1996). This shows at some point, the discussion regarding work-life balance of a dual jobholder is an equally important substance for further research.

According to Zickar et al. (2004), although the existence of working dual jobholders are recognised, the study on this existence is still quite unfruitful due to the fact that most studies were done within organisational behaviour context that were only focusing on single job working experiences. Looking at the United States context, even though there are seven million people doing more than a single job, the growing phenomenon of this existence is still understudied in organisational research (Sliter & Boyd, 2014). Therefore, it is suggested that further study needs to be done in order to value dual jobholders' experience for a better perspective (Webster et al., 2018).

In the Malaysian context, household debt condition among public service employees are quite worrisome due to the rising statistics on debt (Nizar, 2015); and it is challenging to be free from debt (Azman et al., 2015). Additionally, the debt management programmes under the surveillance of Credit Counselling and Debt Management Agency (AKPK) has received 50,361 debt cases (Nizar, 2015). This

worrisome situation keeps is continuous due to various reasons such as the rising cost of living and other crucial financial commitments which lead to financial distress and struggle for a living (Mokhtar & Husniyyah, 2017).

Around the year 2016, Malaysian public employees had received a new salary scheme (Anis et al. 2016). However, the initiative did not help to resolve household debt issues among employees due to their income condition which remains as an on-going argumentative topic nationwide, with employees' definite stands that employees' income is at appropriate sum (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2018).

Concurrently, the Ministry of Health in Malaysia allows its medical officers to do multiple jobs such as opening private practices or becoming medical consultants at private hospitals (Sabron & Hassim, 2017). Similarly, the Ministry of Education of Malaysia allows teachers to conduct private tuitions apart from doing their official jobs (Kenayathulla & Ubbudari, 2017).

However, previous reviews on Malaysian public service officers who work multiple jobs apart from their official jobs are still limited. Therefore, most of the time studies from international contexts have been used to support the Malaysian working multiple jobs phenomena (Sabron & Hassim, 2017). Due to this situation, this research is conducted as an effort to supplement recent discoveries and knowledge regarding the matter.

To fill the research gap, this research attempts to explore the issues of dual-working women at the Federal Government Offices in the State of Sabah, Malaysia. By applying the phenomenological study, this research focuses on the factors for women to take dual jobs and their ways of effectively managing their roles as dual jobholders. This effort has yet to be explored in Malaysia, so far.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This phenomenological research study aims to document and analyse the experiences and feelings of the participants on the research subject-matter. Accordingly, this research applies one main research question that is further distinguished into two subsequent sub-questions on the phenomenon of working dual jobs among women at the selected government's offices in Sabah.

The central research question:

RQ1:	What are the lived experiences of women working dual jobs at the Federal Government Offices in the State of Sabah, Malaysia? The subsequent research questions:	
	RQ1.1:	What are the factors that contribute to the phenomenon of working dual jobs among these women?
	RQ1.2:	How do these women effectively manage their roles as a dual jobholder?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the research questions above, the objective of the research is formulated. The central research objective:

RO1:	To explore women's lived experiences of working dual jobs at the Federal Government Offices in the State of Sabah, Malaysia. The subsequent research objectives:
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	RO1.1:	To identify factors that contribute to working dual jobs among these women.
	RO1.2:	To understand their effective roles management as a dual jobholder.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of Rational Choice (TRC) is used as the theoretical framework of this research. It explains a social phenomenon of individual choice that can be construed as an individual rational decision to achieve specific goals (Wittek, 2013). TRC concerns preferences, beliefs, and constraints which are the key elements of all rational choice explanations. This framework allows the researcher to understand the phenomenon of working multiple jobs among workers (Wittek, 2013). In a case study done in Nepal (Ghosh et al., 2017), most of women work multiple jobs based on seasonality of the nature for the whole year. The work was divided based on months; from April to July, work related to agriculture and commercial vegetable took place in between the months. Whereas from September to November, women continue working in various types of paid work, i.e., keeping livestock, collecting herbs and non-agricultural wage work simultaneously for daily sustenance of the household. Additionally, since there is an existence of low wage in nature of work, this has been the determinant from women to work multiple jobs in Nepal. Furthermore, the choices of work depended on employment opportunities within their living area (Ghosh et al., 2017). From the above case study, the Theory of Rational Choice (TRC) has projected sustenance of the household as the goal for women in Nepal on working multiple jobs throughout the whole year.

TRC is also a framework to understand people's rational choice based on social and economic behaviour (Bourdieu, 2005). According to this framework, people's social and economic behaviours are rational depending on their goal-orientation, evaluative assessment that consistently fit well with their different kind of choice situations (Allingham, 2002; Bolland, 1982; Edward & Errouaki, 2011). William Stanley Jevons and other early neoclassical economists had applied the framework in relation to how people make their consumption choices to maximise their happiness and utility (Arrow, 1987; 1989).

TRC involves the process of determining the available options before choosing the most preferred option based on a few criteria. From another perspective, TRC is a booster-based approach (Levin & Milgrom, 2004). The theory posits that when a person intends to make a decision, both positive and negative impact from such a decision are taken into consideration together with the ultimate advantages a person may gain from the decision (Hechter & Kanazawa, 1997; Martinàs & Reguly, 2013).

Using the model of TRC, this research applies its own theoretical framework that considers a variety of choices that may involve in the decision of working dual jobs. See Figure 1.

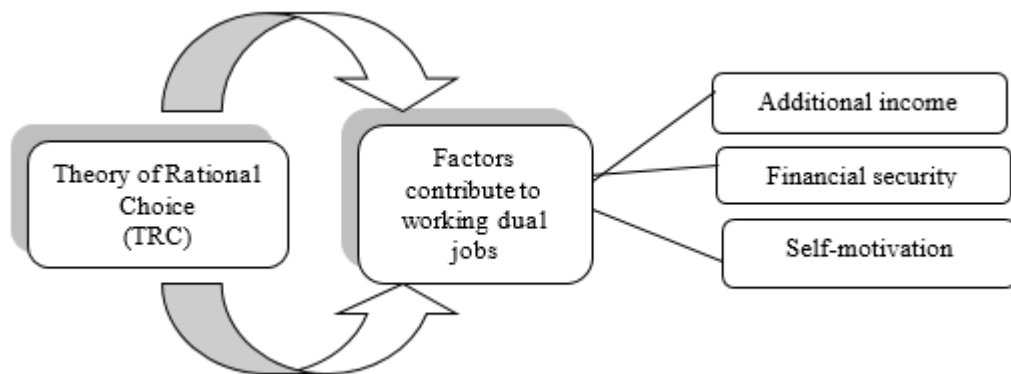


Figure 1.1 TRC Application on Working Dual Jobs

The benefit of the TRC is that it allows people's rational preferences to be represented as real-valued utility functions. It is expected that the individuals' economic decision is based on their rational ways of maximising utility functions of the professional and domestic life. It is claimed that due to its universal nature, TRC has been used to analyse not only personal and traditional economic matters household such as consumptions and savings (Martin & Edward, 1975), but also choices about business decisions such as investment (Walsh, 1996).

In a more recent case study done in Oman, one of the findings indicates that in order to have her freedom of work in a free market, a woman participant which has a free visa worker from Qatar choses to work in multiple homes as a domestic worker with different employers on the ground of earning more income, working only at fewer hours at each home and have a weekly off in between work (Mehta, 2017).

Based on the above case study, the Theory of Rational Choice (TRC) has projected freedom of work as the goal of women on working multiple jobs as domestic workers with different employers in Qatar. Aligning with Wittek's (2013) statement, TRC posits that individuals are fully aware of decision alternatives, outcomes probabilities, consequences, and unlimited perception upon this information processes. Wittek (2013) also adds that individuals weigh their decisions on cost-benefit calculations and choose the alternative that generates the highest expected utility simultaneously.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research provides new dimensions for understanding the social phenomenon of working dual jobs among Sabahan women who work as civil government staff. The emphasis on ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions are able to explore the real experiences and challenges of women on a phenomenon of having dual jobs. The research data and findings are also consequently able to be translated towards policy implications for the benefits of these women.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This research took place in eight Federal Government’s Offices of Sabah State located in Kompleks Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan Sabah, Jalan Sulaman Likas, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. Since the research only involved women employees at selected government’s offices, it may not be an ideal overall representation of other population.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the reviews on literatures regarding women and genderised choice of employment, the living wage or ‘gaji kehidupan wajar’, work-life balance, dual and multiple jobholders, work-family conflict, public sector employees' conflict on real job vs part-time job, multiple jobs affecting health and Islamic perspectives on women and work. The reviews emphasise both conceptual and theoretical framework that are related to this research, with the aim to explore women’s lived experiences of working dual jobs at the federal government offices in the state of Sabah, Malaysia. This chapter also incorporates the perspectives, ideas, experiences and contemporary issues which have been discussed in previous studies into this current research.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1. Women and Genderised Choice of Employment

Walsh (2016) states that feminine and masculine are two different gender entities that in some ways comprises both male and female characteristics. According to Peters et al. (2014), women show significant involvement in professional positions including in accounting scope, journalism scope and general medical practitioner scope. In addition, female jobs are often related to armed forces, manufacturing and construction sectors.

According to Noor and Mahudin (2016), the National Family Policy is one of the initiative by Malaysia government, aligned with Vision 2020

in offering various policy and initiatives bound by legislation to help and accommodate Malaysian women in joining labour force, while simultaneously maintaining the well-being of their families. This shows Malaysia's effort in improving women's employment nationwide.

A research finding by McGinn and Oh (2017) indicates that consistency in employment choices by women are much related to integrity. The Expectancy-Value Model of Achievement-Related Choices indicates that women's aims for success and task-goal achievement are among the factors that lead to women's choices for work (Eccles, 2011) and hence, joining the traditional fields. Furthermore, the Career Aspiration Scale (CAS) was developed in 1996 to identify women's aspiration to be a leader and to obtain academic development in their careers (Kim et al., 2015).

Price and Shildrick (1999) have specifically explained that the maternal body follows the claim that women have a unique ethical sense that focuses on caring, relation and responsibility not only among themselves but to all human beings. They (ibid, 1999) also add that along with the uniqueness of women's maternal body, the body presents a potential of a women for intellectual achievement on the ground of an affirmation of the feminine characteristics of a woman. As stated by Foucault (1991) from the biological aspect, women through their struggle reach a stage of some redefinition on having a woman body. These reviews express the uniqueness of a woman beyond the body which becomes an interesting perspective for this research. Within the Malaysian context, according to Majid et al. (2015), women in Malaysia have gone through dramatic changes in their personal and professional lives both at work and