

# DREAM NOT! HOW INCOME AND CAREER ASPIRATION LEAD TO ROLE CONFLICT IN ISLAMIC STATE EMPLOYEES

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## ABSTRACT

*In the Islamic developing countries, women have some attributes related to the social-religious constructions. This study discusses role conflict in working women in Islamic education agencies as it is still a present controversy. Specifically, this study addresses how even dreaming of securing certain income aspiration for women may lead to the role conflict or mediated by career aspiration. A quantitative-exploratory approach is selected with the investigation to 417 career women in multiple roles on an Islamic state university. A covariance-based structural equation modelling is employed with the support of the goodness of fit measure combined with the convergence and the discriminant validity in the composite confirmatory analysis. The findings reinforce all hypothesis that income aspiration causally impacts the career aspiration and finally the role conflict directly and indirectly. This study implies that Islamic working women are still having a social constrain to achieve a big 'dream' in the public occupation.*

**Keywords:** Income, Role Conflict, Career Aspiration, Islamic Working Women.

## INTRODUCTION

In the domestic life of a married couple, financial fulfilment matters. As globalization pushes the need for a dual-income career, the positivity results present in the upgraded well-being, while the family strain serves as the negative consequences (Brough et al., 2018; Mattijssen & Pavlopoulos, 2019). It has become the new norm for the aspiring gen Y for dual working spouse (Clarke, 2015). The push toward a dual-income couple has led to certain conditions in the current workplace (Hughes, 2013), ranging from financial securities, career satisfaction, income, burnout, or even work-life conflict (Munyon et al., 2019). Some religions like Islam have a different perspective of working women that may raise interest. The women in Islam hold a particular issue with gender equality from the early tradition from the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. There are cases where women take an active role in the war, business, family management, or education (Ullah et al., 2013).

However, Islam may become another pressure for working women to contain their dreams or aspiration in the workplace (Syed et al., 2005). For example, giving birth to many babies is

foundational in early Islamic teaching, contrary to the fertility paradigm of modern public health governance or workplace pressure (Hughes, 2011; Utami et al., 2020). Thus, Islamic working women justify and extend religious teaching to be more open to change and gender appreciation (Roose, 2020; Sakai & Fauzia, 2016). Maintaining the religious agenda of women as wives (future wives) or mothers and fulfilling family needs are the raised challenges (Nurhadi, 2019). A critical reinterpretation to make a more modest view of the traditional texts in Islam can serve as a basis for a more inclusive life in the global world of Muslim-dominated countries (Alwi et al., 2021; Syed, 2010).

This study presents the evidence of how obtaining better income is related to career aspiration and work-life conflict of working women at the Islamic State Education Agency in Indonesia, as a career in academics may have a unique take on the discussions (Curtin et al., 2016). This present study advances the discussion of the role conflict in work-family settings of the women workers in the Islamic education agency. Another contribution is the conflicting discussions of how achieving certain income is related to career aspiration and eventually raising the work-family conflict. The fresh evidence shows that even dreaming of earning better pay and a career significantly boosts the work-family tensions in the Islamic working women in Indonesia.

Income serves as one of the primary incentives for participating at work, with early studies from Maslow, Taylor, or other management thinkers support the use of it as the elevator of a better position. An international evidence reveal that better income also leads to higher aspiration, as the increase of it would provide a substantial basis for the other life expectancies (Hovi & Laamanen, 2021). Human performs an ambition based on the relative comparisons in his/her environment. This comparison creates two foundations for income aspiration, i.e., social comparisons of their surroundings and adaptation to previous income or consumption level (Stutzer, 2004). The current income also serves as the benchmark for the establishment of income aspiration (Centers & Cantril, 1946). Study in the low-income Americans reports that girls are more prone to each barrier in their lives, thus shaping their career aspiration (Hill et al., 2003). A nationwide survey in china says that income aspiration is the most fundamental aspect in the well-being of the citizen (Luo et al., 2018), thus, forming the relationship between income and career aspiration.

Family may serve as foundational reasons for working women to quit career. A qualitative study in Congo's midwives supports this notion, despite their dream of doing the public health of birthing women in the harsh area (Baba et al., 2020). Career aspiration or occupational aspiration is defined as the expression of career goals among workers (Rojewski, 2005). It has many contexts with gender, race, socioeconomic factors that may influence career attainment, as reinforced by the social cognitive career theory (Lent et al., 1994). Family, peer pressure and society present a conditional explanation for forming the dreamed career (Gottfredson, 1981). A study with large datasets also reports that social status, expected education, and income position become foundational in the career aspiration of youth, even controlled by gender (Howard et al., 2011). Income is undoubtedly foundational in shaping career aspiration leading to behavioral health outcomes (Dudovitz et al., 2017). Household income, property, flexible working environment, and the underlying ideology shape the career aspiration of men and women (McDonald, 2018). By the many properties, career aspiration does not come for naught.

A study in the law firm reveals that to achieve a specific career path, women often sacrifice the balance between work and home, even perceiving it as a constrain (Walsh, 2012). This condition is often referred to as role conflict, defined as the confusion of particular interests in the workplace (Rizzo et al., 1970). The work-life conflict comes as one condition that causes the role conflict as it presents the social preference of specific gender roles in society (Bedeian & Armenakis, 1981). The study supports that career aspiration is related to the role conflict in the family of dual-income couples (Vasumathi, 2018). A study in the emerging nation of Peru proved that the traditional value of the feminine job potentially constrains women's career aspiration as it may cause work-family conflict (Dolan et al., 2011). Another research reinforces this study in the context of the movie business (Ezzedeen, 2015). The traditional occupation of women, such as nursing, is considered a safe career choice to remedy the role conflict (Muldoon & Kremer, 1995). Women experience more stress as their dream of achieving some occupational job may lead to the traditional value conflict (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). The two-person career pattern is long believed to be the social construction of attaining better occupations for highly-educated women (McBain & Woolsey, 1986; Papanek, 1973; Wahab et al., 2020). Social support may potentially remedy the stress caused by the work-family conflict (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). As the income aspiration is secured through the attainment of specific career paths and this 'dream' may create a conflict in the family, we proposed that:

- H1 Even just the income aspiration of Islamic working women will create a work-life conflict*
- H2 The income aspiration of Islamic woman workers leads to the creation of specific career aspiration*
- H3 The career aspiration of Islamic working women becomes one of the sources of role conflict in their work and family*
- H4 The career aspiration serves as a mediator for the relationship of income aspiration and role conflict in the context of Islamic working women*

## MATERIALS AND METHOD

### Design

This study investigated the associated problems by utilizing the quantitative approach in the explanatory design. Specifically, three variables become the object of interest, namely Income Aspiration, Role Conflict, and Career Aspiration (see figure 1 for the investigated relationships result). These variables form a structural model to be tested in a statistical analysis of covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM). This technique utilizes parametric statistics in a structural model of variables constructed from several indicators by employing the Lisrel software for the confirmatory factor analysis and path results. In addition, this study also provides the composite confirmatory analysis, utilizing the partial-least-square structural-equation-modeling (PLS-SEM) using the Smartpls software. This combination would allow a better look at the constructed model and provide confidence in the model quality.

There are several steps taken in presenting the results of the study. Firstly, the data are tabulated and constructed from the perspective of quality criteria of CB-SEM. The original data

starts with 20 indicators and is assessed by leaving 11 usable items. Then, all these items are self-reconstructed by the author to capture the underlying phenomenon utilizing the confirmatory factor analysis of CB-SEM and composite factor analysis of PLS-SEM. The final items investigated in the study are highlighted in Table 1.

<b>Table 1 INDICATOR SPECIFICATION</b>		
Latent Constructs	Indicators	Items
	I feel exhausted after working	Rolc1
	My family dislikes me being too busy	Rolc2
	The work demand makes it hard to get relaxed	Rolc3
	My job often consumes my family time	Rolc4
Career Aspiration	My career is more important than my spouses'	Car1
	I wish to be a leader in my field	Car2
	Along the time, I wish to lead others	Car3
	I fought hard for the dreamed position	Car4
Income Satisfaction	I am satisfied with my income stream	Inc1
	I am satisfied with my family income stream	Inc2
	Honestly, my monthly budget is (in Indonesian Rupiah) :	Inc3
	a. IDR 2.3 Million –2.5 Million	
	b. IDR 2.5 Million – 3 Million	
c. IDR 3 Million – 3.5 Million		
d. IDR 3.5 Million – 4 Million		
e. Above 4-5 Million		

## Sample

This study probes the quality of the women employees in Islamic higher institutions from the perspectives of the proposed research problems. The selection of this specific target would provide a particular contribution in terms of data and research contribution to the current knowledge pool. The employees are academic and administrative staff working in the Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, one of the largest Muslim public universities in Indonesia's middle and eastern part. As such, this research area would yield a unique take on the investigated problems. There are an estimated 2000 workers from different positions in it. This study then distributes the online questionnaires and obtains 417 responses by the random sampling of women workers in the university. 55.56% of women are married, with the majority 50.2% are 25 years old, followed by the older and the younger one. Most of them hold a bachelor's degree with a 69.7%, with the rest obtaining a higher degree. The tenures were also pretty recent, with 41.3% with two years of experience, followed by the longer serving work. All data are analyzed as the use of an online platform makes sure the data completeness among respondents. This sample size is sufficient enough, given the standard of several sampling methods (Cohen, 1977; Roscoe, 1975; Yamane, 1967). The study also passes the minimum 200

sample iterations as expected from the structural model analysis (Kline, 1998); thus, the research data is legitimate to be interpreted accordingly.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Outer Model Measurement

This study conducted statistical analysis with several stages. First, this research establishes a valid and reliable research model based on confirmatory factor analysis rules and is adjusted to the goodness of fit index results. Second, data processing narrowed the number of indicators from 20 items to only 11 items. Items are excluded from the model because they are outliers from existing data. Third, of the 11 remaining indicators, this research model also makes three modifications to the index by connecting several indicators, namely inc1 and 2; Methods 3 and 4; and CarA1 and CarA4. All amendments are executed within the same variables, thus still satisficing the expected changes within the same constructs. The final model reveals the goodness of fit as in Table 2.

<b>Table 2 THE GOODNESS OF FIT INDEX</b>		
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Decision</b>
df	38	Poor fit
Chi-Square	0.0004	Poor fit
RMSEA	0.0477	Close fit
Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)	0.148	Poor fit
The goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.969	Close fit
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.933	Close fit
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	0.950	Close fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.966	Close fit
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.966	Close fit
Critical N (CN)	344	Higher (N = 417)

Source: Adapted Lisrel Output

Based on the goodness of fit index criteria in table 1, the model is considered very good in general. Absolute measures such as df and chi-square have low values, but these two measures are susceptible to the number of samples. The larger the sample size, the larger the two sizes (Alavi et al., 2020; Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). Therefore, several fit index measures provide additional information about the quality of the model in the SEM model. This study reported that the absolute fit index is within acceptable range with the RMSEA and the Goodness of Fit index satisfied the expected close fit, compensating for the df and chi-square results. Other incremental indexes like NFI, NNFI, CFI, and IFI also meet the stringent measures, indicating the model fit quality for further tests. This study also compares the model according to the other quality

measure like composite confirmatory analysis to assure the model quality (Schuberth et al., 2018), as outlined in Table 3.

Construct	Items	Loading	t-value	Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE	VIF
	CarA1	-0.097	0.529					1.014
Career Aspiration	CarA2	0.717	9.574	0.510	0.738	0.674	0.434	1.382
	CarA3	0.870	18.970					1.274
	CarA4	0.675	9.108					1.278
	Inc1	0.625	4.622					1.665
Income Aspiration	Inc2	0.797	8.333	0.540	0.504	0.749	0.501	1.701
	Inc3	0.692	6.521					1.028
	Rolc1	0.680	9.395					1.362
Role Conflict	Rolc2	0.611	6.873	0.751	0.806	0.843	0.579	1.156
	Rolc3	0.842	20.513					2.262
	Rolc4	0.877	26.335					2.163

Source: Adapted from Smartpls Output

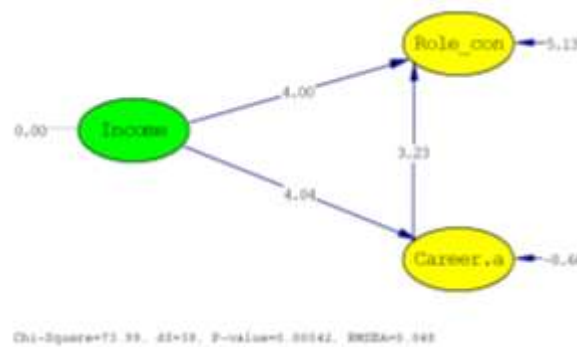
The findings in table 2 reveal support for the outer model quality as indicated by the loading scores of each item. The model is also sufficient as suspected from the alpha, composite reliability, rho-a, and the average variance extracted (AVE). It is admitted that not all criteria are met, e.g., the income aspiration does not meet the Cronbach's alpha regulation of higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016). However, the AVE—a stricter criterion than alpha—has a value above the 0.5 thresholds. The variable of career aspiration shares a similar condition with income aspiration with the lack in some measurement, but the fulfilment to other standards. This fact contributes to the acceptance of the convergent validity within the model. The investigated scales also reveal no multicollinearity and common-method bias with the variance inflation factor (VIF) lower than 3. This study also indicates the data to have discriminant validity as revealed by the fulfilment of the Fornell-Larcker criterion in Table 4; with all variables have a higher score within the same variables. The overall outer model results supported the construction of the path model in the study.

	Career Aspiration	Income Aspiration	Women Role Conflict
Career Aspiration	0.659		
Income Aspiration	0.265	0.708	
Women Role Conflict	-0.011	0.215	0.761

Source: Smartpls Output

**Inner model quality**

This study investigated the relationships of each construct by utilizing the CB-SEM in Lisrel software. Figure 1 highlights the t-value results of the model for the hypothesis tests. The income aspiration is a significant predictor of female employees' role conflict and career aspiration in the Islamic state university directly and indirectly, with the t-value above 1.9 the 6 for 0.05 p-value criterion. Table 4 summarizes the findings and will be further discussed.



**Figure 1**  
**THE STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE RESULT**

The results in Table 5 reveal the t-value, the effect size, and the R<sup>2</sup> of the investigated model. This study reports a pretty low R<sup>2</sup>; however, the topic of this study is still in line with it. As this study investigation falls within the organizational psychology conversation within the Islamic public organization, the minuscule R<sup>2</sup>'s effects are still accepted in theoretical advancement. Hair et al. (2014) explain that the effect size for a behavioral study is acceptable at any range, unlike the studies in organizational performance that require high R<sup>2</sup> for policymaking. Thus, these study aims are still beneficial for the theoretical construction.

<b>Tabel 5</b> <b>SUMMARY OF PATH COEFFICIENTS</b>			
Relationships	T-Value	Effect	Hypothesis
Income Aspiration -> Women Role Conflict	4.046	0.383	H1 Accepted
Income Aspiration -> Career Aspiration	4.035	0.300	H2 Accepted
Women Career Aspiration -> Role Conflict	3.228	0.215	H3 Accepted
Income Aspiration -> Career Aspiration -> Role Conflict	2.205	0.113	H4 Accepted
R2 to Role Conflict		0.162	
R2 to Career Aspiration		-0.057	

Source: Adapted Lisrel Output

## DISCUSSION

Various turbulence may occur within the family, one of which is a discrepancy between family matters and work pressure, hence role conflict. While Muslim workers are not independent of that problem, the women have an add-on issue. This study confirms hypothesis 1 that the aspiration to have better income is hazardous for family life in the context of family conflict. The higher the payment, the potential for role conflict, namely the role as a family member/mother, and the attraction with the demands of work also increases. The results are in line with the outcome of another study which indicated that materialism is significantly associated with family and work disorders (Promislo et al., 2010). In a meta-analysis of work-family conflict, Byron (Byron, 2005) mentioned that some work and family factors could have concurrently disruptive effects on employees' work and family life while there is differentiation. A study in the USA pointed to the strong evidence that lower-income families had more strain in their life leading to the work-family conflict (Ford, 2011). The psychology and health mechanism of this conflict are supported by other studies (Lucas-Thompson & Hostinar, 2013; Rocco et al., 2017). One particular study found that worries in work are carried to the subsequent day work, leaving the night spent uncomfortably (Casper & Sonnentag, 2020). The direction of this study finding was against the previous study, which indicates that women aiming for leadership are negatively correlated with the role conflict (Ellinas et al., 2018), indicating a potential further research agenda. This study finding also implies that the female workers in Islamic public universities have to manage their ambition to secure better income as it strongly leads to the increasing conflict in their family life. The result is confirmed as the expanding income is typically associated with a more considerable job burden and intensity, longer work hours, and time commitment (Solomon et al., 2021). The authors believe that the Muslim women workers may feel higher pressure, as the religious agenda is also a sentimental point leading to the uncomfortable mental-psychological conflicts in work/life.

As workers aspire for better income, the increase is undoubtedly subject to a better position in the workplace. This study supports this proposition by accepting hypothesis 2 that income aspiration pushes the career aspiration of Islamic women workers in public education agencies in Makassar, Indonesia. Several studies are in line with the findings that income serves as a predictor of career success (Bae, 2017; Valcour & Ladge, 2008). Exciting study results in that marriage and children are good pushes for career success as satisfaction is derived from better income (Chew Keng-Howe & Liao, 1999). The study in medical students also reports that career path selection is shaped by income probability (Newton et al., 2005). One study finds that meritocratic beliefs are strongly associated with the expected income (Hu et al., 2020). This reference may serve as a support for Islamic women's confidence to achieve a better position in the workplace, given the context of this study. However, this study's stream is not without caution. Keng-Howe & Liao (1999) found that the income level of men has a significant relationship with their family structure, but the family structure has no effect on career satisfaction. It was also found that there was no significant difference between married and unmarried women in their career satisfaction. This reference provides a rule for a more careful design of the study.



This study raises a polemical concern of women at work, especially those with Islamic beliefs in a public institution, that does even high-dream lead to a hazardous condition in the work-life regulation. The finding of this study supports this notion that the expectation of a fruitful career path degrades the life of working women as in hypotheses 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Studies have documented that female managers experienced family conflict and an increase in career aspiration (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979; Naidoo & Jano, 2003) and sometimes mocked for abandoning the traditional value of women (Mahapatra, 2018). This condition further deepens the guilty feeling in life (Sousa et al., 2018), as the career aspiration comes with higher ambition and preparation for the attainment (Murrell et al., 1991). Some exciting studies report a reciprocal relationship that conflict leads to the diminishing career aspiration in women (Bear, 2021; Xian et al., 2021), while another study finds no significant associations between them (Wu et al., 2007), signifying a careful look on the topic. This study contributes by the discussion of the selected constructs in the context of state educational institutions. Another highlight is that the career change in Islamic State University in Indonesia is relatively slow, with a monotonous work rhythm. This fact implies that different work structures in public institutions compared to private businesses construct other policy administrations (Suriyanti, 2020), thus contrasting career management (Nauta et al., 1998).

## CONCLUSION

This study provides substantial evidence of career regulation in the Islamic state university. A new agenda is proposed in the direct and indirect relationships among the selected constructs of income aspiration, career aspiration, and role conflict. Significant relationships are present by the structural model equation with substantial support from the model fit as expressed by CFA and CCA. This study highlights the slow pace of career change within Islamic State University in Indonesia provides a context to career management in this research. Further investigation may improve the insufficiency of this study's sample. The international comparisons also better understand religion's role in forming modern women's career paths. While it is still in the initial state, this study preserves a new contribution to workplace aspiration and the associated arising conflict.

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