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Individualism and Smartphone Use as Predictors of Work-Home-Interference among Married Women in Awka City, Anambra State

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Abstract
The study investigated individualism and smartphone use as predictors of work-home-interference among married women in Awka City, Anambra State. A total number of two hundred and forty-five married women served as participant for the study: Their age ranged from 22 to 55 years with mean age of 43.45 and standard deviation of 8.96. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the organizations and participants. Three instruments were employed in the study: Three-Component Individualism Scale, Smart Phone Usage Scale, and The Survey Work-Home Interference. The study adopted Correlation design and Multiple Linear Regression as appropriate statistics. The study revealed that individualism dimensions (autonomy and uniqueness) negatively predicted work home interference, while self-responsibility and smart phone use positively predicted work home interference among married women in Awka City, Anambra State. The following recommendation was made that married women should imbibe the spirit of collectivism in certain matters whether in the home or workplace instead of individualism; this will help in reducing work home interference.

Keywords: individualism, smartphone use, work-home, interference and married Women

Introduction

Presently, there are more married women in paid employment and self-employment compared to pre-millennium era. They have taken paramount positions in profitable ventures such as private and public organizations of all kinds (International Labour Organzation, 2018). Maintaining a balance between work and home demands is posing a challenge for married workers because of the dual responsibilities of managing the home and office work. This sometimes results in stress, burnout, marital dissatisfaction and disruption among other issues and also affects their work as workers (Adisa, Osabutey & Gbadamosi, 2017). Maybe these happens due to long working hours, safety issues in moving in different modes of transportation after office hours, child care facilities,

unsupportive family members, inequality in promotion processes and salaries (Vasumathi, 2018).

Hence, Work–life interference (or lack of balance) is defined as an inter-role conflict where work demands make it such that one is unable to concurrently meet personal life demands or vice versa (Greenhaus, Allen & Spector, 2006; Leiter & Maslach, 2003). Such that meeting demands in one domain (e.g., work) makes it difficult to meet demands in the other (e.g., home). The more individuals experience job demands, such as work overload and time pressure, the more work–life conflict they experience (Bakker, Demerouti &Dollard, 2008; van der Heijden, van Dam & Hasselhorn, 2009). While the direction of the conflict between work and life is bidirectional, the work and personal/family boundaries are easily permeable meaning that work demands tend to interfere with personal/family life to a greater extent than if the case was in reverse (Greenhaus et al., 2006).

This shows that changes in work and home domains involve married women struggling to combine work and family life. Unequal distribution of home duties along with a high total workload has been suggested to explain why women tend to report work-home interference to a higher degree than men (Eek & Axmon, 2015; Lundberg, 2005). More so, when married women feel that their organization is involved in a positive social exchange by assisting them in achieving less work-home interference, they have favourable attitudes towards their organization. If married women, however, feel that their organization is not meeting their expectations related to work-home interference, they may have less favourable attitudes towards their organization (Lundberg, 2005).

Research on the intersection of work with personal life has gain considerable attention in recent years, in both directions—work affecting personal life and vice versa. Work–life interference has been found to act as a "psychosocial risk factor" for ill-health and depletion of psychological health and well-being, namely, life satisfaction (Parent-Thirion, 2017). Some of the outcomes that have been consistently demonstrated in studies in work settings as it relates to work–life interference include nurse burnout and turnover intentions, absenteeism, intention to leave, stress, and poor work-related performance (Amstad et al., 2011; Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Dousin et al., 2021; . In the work context, work–life interference has been reported to be pervasive among workers, especially for

women due to the work culture that focuses on high levels of productivity and minimizes traditional/domestic roles and responsibilities (Denson, Szelényi & Bresonis, 2018).

Considering this, the interference between work and home interference has been suggested as an important explanation alongside factors relating to individuals' health, work environment, sociodemographic, and lifestyle factors (Allebeck & Mastekaasa, 2004). Hence, negative outcomes of work-home interference may result of negative spillover effects due to situations including an inter-role conflict, i.e., being involved at work may put strain on the family role, or vice versa (Allen, Herst Bruck & Sutton, 2000). Consequently, two types of work-home interference may follow: work-to-home conflict referring to work-role demands having an unfavourable impact on the home and family roles and home-to-work conflict which refers to demands at home having an unfavourable impact on married women work roles (Greenhaus, Allen & Spector, 2006). Due to high levels of job-related effort result in reduced investment of time and energy spent at home leading to an increase in work-home interference that is likely also to be related to individualism.

The term 'individualism' originates from a Latin word individuus which means 'indivisible'. Therefore, individualism is that personal orientation which attaches more importance to personal interests than group interests and puts those of the person above group if these conflict (Singelis et al., 1995). Attributes of individualism include emphasis on personal responsibility, freedom of choice, personal autonomy, distinctive personal opinions, detachment from other and functioning according to personal choices (Triandis, 1995; 1996). Individualism also relates to attributes of personal success, status and competitive characteristics (Bellah et al., 1985).

However, competition was only related to the vertical aspects of individualism, which means relative to the rank of the person within his or her social group (Triandis, 1996). The distinction of the individual from others is defined in terms of the uniqueness of the self in comparison to the other (Kim, 1994). In view of this, individualist orientation does not encourage conformity and cooperation but competitiveness (Gorodnicheko & Roland, 2010). Yet, appears higher in societies in which the rights and goals of individuals are favoured over those of the state, it is certainly not an inevitable result of the individualistic way of living (Waterman, 1984). Thus, employees high on this personal orientation are not likely to enjoy social network borne out of conformity and cooperation with coworkers.

For when married women are in certain organizational situations, they are more likely to experience sense of individualism that is likely to make them thrive in the organization with less interference from work and home (Li, 2002). However, when married women is in an organization that encourages individualism decision-making; it gives them certain sense of thriving, that can freely arrange the way of work that might interfere with their home (Li, 2002). Moreover, it is easier to trigger the individualism, which is an important factor to induce interference in the work and home. Similarly, smartphone use may impact work home interference of the married workers. This is because smartphones not only provide richer communication, but also function as portable terminals for a diverse range of purposes as such smartphones meet a variety of user needs and have penetrated deeply into married workers lives (Cui & Roto, 2008; Malinen & Ojala, 2012).

Hence, smartphone use is an individual's connection to not only friends and family, but with the world around him or her. Users can operate their smartphone with voice commands, stream live content and use their smartphone to monitor their heart rate or control home electronics. Some users even protect the security of their smartphone with a fingerprint sensor, so the possibilities for smartphones are seemingly endless. Consequently, some scholars argue that smartphones tremendously benefit the workplace by assisting internal and external communications and cooperation, while allowing the flexible organization of work and information sharing in real time (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012; Lanaj, Johnson, & Barnes, 2014).

Thus, smartphone use may help married women to better coordinate work and nonwork demands (Dettmers, Bamberg, & Seffzek, 2016; Kühnel et al., 2017). Married women who use smartphones for work get to play different roles simultaneously, as smartphones can be used during intervals especially during nonwork activities (e.g., in the gym, or during family dinner). So, smartphone use provides married women with a feeling of successfully combining work and nonwork life, this serves as a way for married women to take care of unfinished or ongoing work issues at the same time without experience of work home interference (Olson-Buchanan, Boswell, & Morgan, 2016).

However, smartphone use continues to increase and become more pervasive in married women lives, there is a need to recognize the potential negative impact. Indeed, the constant connectivity of smartphones facilitates married workers to solve work-home interference, and to extend the ongoing coordination among clients, colleagues, and supervisors. Nevertheless, its use help married women to engage in their work and home activities (Butts, Becker, & Boswell, 2015; Fujimoto et al., 2016; Perry-Jenkins & Wadsworth, 2017).

More so, with the growing irresistibility of the smartphone, its usage competes with married women attention to other activities, which may interfere with work and home affairs. For example, responding to work-related messages in another's presence while having lunch may distract one's concentration. No doubt, frequent task switching (i.e., multi-tasking) is something that everybody does, but the more often married workers switch, the more difficult it is to pay attention to and to thrive with one particular task (Gazzaley & Rosen, 2017; Rexroth, Michel, & Bosch, 2017).

Moreover, the demands to be connected to the workplace outside of working hours are due to an increase in connectivity enabled by smartphones to meet the demands from supervisors, colleagues, and clients. Because of the smartphone use during off-work time, work demands may tends to interfere with home life domain, which blurs boundaries between work and home life domain (Derks et al., 2016; Derks et al., 2015). More so, this troubling effect of using a smartphone while working or at home appears to interfere with married women in Awka metropolis, Anambra State.

Hence, the study adopted Role theory by Barnett and Gareis (2006) as anchor theory for the study variables (individualism, smartphone use, and work-home-interference). The theory assumed that work and home constitute conflicting domains, since both make claims on an individual's limited and finite resources of time and energy (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Kanter, 1977). The idea is that each individual has limited resources of time and energy, so thriving of the married women is dependent upon the allocation of these resources to each domain (work, non-work) influences whether an individual smartphone use would conflict or balance between the life domains or not. Further that the extent of interrole conflict (conflict between the roles within different domains) is directly

proportional to the amount of time or energy spent in each domain (Adams & Jex, 1999; Gutek, Searle & Klepa, 1991). According to this theory, the more individualism married women becomes, the greater the pressure on the finite resources of time and energy and the more depleted her thriving capacity which often result into psychological distress and burnout (Barnett & Gareis, 2006).). Since to be a worker, spouse, mother, or friend, etc., prescribes a set of expectations that constitute an individual's roles, and when these role expectations go beyond one and others, as they are rooted in ideologies and institutional structures. Role ambiguity can emerge when an individual does not receive enough information either through smartphone or laptop as regarded to expectations associated with a certain role that will help the worker to thrive without experiencing work-home-interference (Kahn et al., 1964).

Research Questions

1. Will individualism predict work home interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State?
2. To what extent will smartphone predict work home interference among married women in Awka City, Anambra State?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find if individualism and smartphone would predict work-home-interference among married women in Awka metropolis, Anambra State. The specific objectives were to:

1. Investigate how individualism will predict work-home-interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State.
2. Examine whether smartphone use will predict on work-home-interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State.

Hypotheses

1. Individualism will significantly predict work-home-interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State.
2. Married women smartphone use will significantly predict work-home-interference in Awka city, Anambra State.

Method

Participants

A total number of two hundred and forty-five married women in Awka city, Anambra State served as participant for the study: Their age range from 22 to 55 years with mean age of 43.45 and standard deviation 8.96. Educational level of the participants revealed that 73(298%) have M. Sc, 45(18.4%) have B. Sc, 1(.4%) have HND, 42(17.1%) have OND, 45(18.4%) have NCE, and 39(15.9%) have SSCE. Employment status showed that 87(35.5) were academic staff, 85(34.7%) were management staff, and 73(29.8%) were administrative staff. Years of employment indicated that 4(1.6%) have worked for twenty to thirty years, 87(35.5%) have worked for ten to twenty years, and 154(62.9%) have worked for one to nine years. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the organizations and participants. Because the researcher use her judgment to select them based on prior information and ability of the participants to provide the necessary data related to research question: Since participants targeted provided information-rich regarding the phenomenon being studied.

Instruments

Three instruments were employed in the study: Three-Component Individualism Scale, Smart Phone Usage Scale, and The Survey Work-Home Interference.

Three-Component Individualism Scale by Realo, Koido, Ceulemans, and Allik (2002)

The scale consisted of 24 items and subjects were asked to indicate their agreement–disagreement with items on a five-point Likert-type scale. On the basis of the three-factor solution of the 24 items, the three subscales for measuring autonomy (ten items), mature self-responsibility (seven items), and uniqueness (seven items). The Cronbach alphas for the Autonomy, Self-Responsibility, and Uniqueness subscales were 0.79, 0.76, and 0.74, respectively. The intercorrelations between the three subscales (defined as sum scores of the items divided by the number of items in each subscale) were moderate: between Autonomy and Self-Responsibility, r¼0.20; for Autonomy and Uniqueness, r¼0.30; and for Self-Responsibility and Uniqueness, r¼0.23 (all correlations significant at $p<0.05$). In this study, the researchers conducted a pilot test with 75 secondary school teachers in Onitsha and reported Cronbach alpha of 0.78 for the overall scale; and for the subscales 0.63 for autonomy, 0.70 for self-responsibility, and 0.92 for uniqueness.

Problematic Smartphone Usage Scale developed by Zencirci et al (2020)

The scale contained 10 items designed to measure how individual uses smartphone. The scale has three subscales: Intensity subscale consisted of 3 items, the daily life disturbance subscale consisted of 4 items, and the withdrawal subscale consisted of 3 items. This scale consists of 10, sestet Likert-type items, with each item scoring from 1 to 6. The answers given to the items are scored as I strongly disagree 1, I do not agree 2, partly disagree 3, partly agree 4, I agree 5, I absolutely agree 6. The Chronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale and subscales were evaluated as reliable (PSUS 0.81, usage intensity 0.62, daily life disturbance 0.74, and withdrawal 0.83). The total item correlations of the scale items ranged from 0.25 to 0.66. The correlation coefficients of the subscales ranged from 0.31 to 0.46 ($p < 0.001$). In this study, a pilot test was conducted to enhance the reliability of the instrument and Cronbach alpha of 0.88 was reported. The researchers conducted a pilot test with 75 secondary school teachers in Onitsha and confirmed Cronbach alpha of 0.93 for the overall scale. 0.8 for usage intensity, 0.78 for daily life disturbance, and 0.84 for withdrawal.

The Survey Work-Home Interference developed by Wagena and Geurts (2000)

The SWING is a 27-item work-home interference measure. It measures four types of work-home interference: (1) negative interference from "work" with "home" (negative WHI), referring to a negative impact of the work situation on one's functioning at home (e.g. "your work schedule makes it difficult to fulfil domestic obligations"); (2) negative interference from "home" with "work" (negative HWI), referring to a negative impact of the home situation on one's job performance (e.g. "you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters"); positive interference from "work" with "home" (positive WHI), referring to a positive influence of the work situation on one's functioning at home (e.g. "you come cheerfully home after a successful day at work, positively affecting the atmosphere at home"); (4) positive interference from "home" with "work" (positive HWI), referring to a positive impact of the home situation on one's job performance (e.g. "you are better able to interact with your colleague/supervisor as a result of the environment at home"). All items are scored on a 5-point frequency rating scale, ranging from "I" (never) to *"5"* (always). The SWING was also found to be reliable when alpha scores (NHWI = 0.72; NWHI = 0.85; PWHI = 0.72; and PHWI = 0.78) for the

overall scale 0.70. And test retest of NHWI =0.87, NWHI = 0.79, PWHI =0.79, and WHI =0.76. Overall, the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the four scales are highly acceptable compared to the guideline of Cronbach alpha 0.70. In this study, the researchers conducted a pilot test with 75 secondary school teachers in Onitsha and reported Cronbach alpha of 0.96 for the overall scale; and for the subscales 0.79 for NHWI, 0.81 for NWHI, 0.80 for PHWI, 0.85 for PWHI.

Procedure

The researchers choose the workers through non-probability sampling technique (purposive sampling technique). Afterwards, the researchers obtained an oral permission from the head of management to carry out the study among their staff. The respondents were given written instructions on how to respond to each of the items in the questionnaire booklet. On the visitation days, the researchers gave corresponding number of questionnaire to a staff to share to his or her colleagues which were collected back afterwards. It took an average of 20 minutes for the respondents to complete the questionnaire. 260 questionnaires were distributed and 254 were collected back. Only 245 valid questionnaires were used for analysis. Ethically, consent of the participant was obtained, before administration the questionnaire. After securing the participants informed consent, they were debriefed about the study. Why the study was conducted, the right to withdraw from participating in the study was given to the participants if they wish. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of whatsoever information they provided.

Design and Statistics

A cross-sectional survey research was used to reach the objectives of this research: Cross-sectional research are used to examine groups of subjects in various stages of development simultaneously, while the survey describes a technique of data collection in which questionnaires are used to gather data about an identified population. Correlation design and Multiple Linear Regression was adopted because it suited for descriptive and predictive functions associated with correctional research, whereby relationships between variables are examined.

Result

This section present the result of the study.

Table: Multiple Linear Regressions of Individualism, Smartphone Use and Work Home Interference

Variables	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	Std.E.E.	F	df	β	t	Sig.
	.914[a]	.836	.834	11.21	306.41	4			
A.1.							-.44	-9.74	.000
S.R.I.							1.23	11.71	.000
U.I.							-.66	-10.04	.000
SPU							1.36	24.85	.000

Results from table, showed that individualism and smart phone use accounted for 83.6% of the work home interference, with R = .914, R^2 = .836, adjusted R^2=.834, ($F_{4, 240}$) = 306.41, p<.01 shows that the overall model has significant contribution to work home interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State.

Autonomy of individualism negatively predicted work home interference at ($F_{4, 240}$) β= -.44, t = -9.74, p<.01; self-responsibility of individualism predict work home interference at ($F_{4, 240}$) β= 1.23, t = 11.71, p<.01; and uniqueness of individualism negatively predicted work home interference at ($F_{4, 240}$) β= -.66, t = -10.04, p<.01. Smartphone use predict work home interference at ($F_{4, 240}$) β= 1.36, t = 24.85, p<.01.

Summary of the Findings

Individualism dimensions (autonomy and uniqueness) negatively predict work home interference, while self-responsibility and smart phone use positively predicted work home interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State.

Discussion

The study explored individualism and smart phone use as predictors of work home interference. The first hypothesis was confirmed. This is because individualism dimensions (autonomy and uniqueness) negatively predict work home interference. That shows that as

autonomy and uniqueness decrease work home interference increases. However, self-responsibility positively predicted work home interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State. That indicated that as self-responsibility increase work home interference increases. These findings show that individualism can cause or may not work home interference. For instance, decrease in autonomy and uniqueness may trigger work home interference, because individualism cultures "foster contractual relationships which are based on the principles of exchange" and that "people calculate profit and loss before engaging in a behaviour. Moreover, married women that uphold the independent view maybe described as being "egocentric, separate, autonomous, idiocentric, and self-contained, and this promotes interference among them whether in the home or work. Due to strive to balance work and home task; for married women often has limited resources of time and energy and that the allocation of these resources to each domain (work, and home) influences whether married women experiences interference between work and home. In as much, self-responsibility is known to increase work home interference, this could be caused by the responsibility the married women occupies, since the greater the pressure, time and energy and the more they depleted their capacity. Consequently, the consequences for such self-responsibility maybe become interference in the home and workplace which is likely to snowball into psychological distress, frustration and burnout among them. Based on this, Li, Vazsonyi and Dou (2018) believed that individualism was related to attitudinal self-control and work home interference. Because it revealed a significant interaction between individualism and work home interference such that the association between work home interference was stronger in more self-responsibility individualism (Okely, Weiss & Gale 2018).

Theoretically, it affirmed notion by Dweck and Leggett, (1988) that individuals with a performance goal orientation often seek to establish the adequacy of their ability and to avoid giving evidence of their inadequacy. As such, they may view achievement situations as tests of competence, and seek to demonstrate and be judged as competent rather than to develop their competence that will minimize work home interference (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Thompson, 2006). Individuals with a fixed mindset and performance goal orientation may also try to avoid situations where they may fail since they tend to view failure as evidence of their own immutable lack of ability (Thompson, 2006). Such individuals wish

to improve their abilities, rather than to prove them (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). This often makes them to that work and home constitute conflicting domains, since both make claims on an individual's limited and finite resources of time and energy (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Kanter, 1977).

The second hypothesis was accepted. This shows that as smart phone use increase work home interference increases among married women in Awka city, Anambra State. Perhaps the married women use of smartphone have promote their commitment, possibly due to social relationship tool that smartphone serve. This may have trigger sense of independence that is characterized with tolerance, withdrawal, difficulty of performing daily activities, or impulse control disorders that maybe link to interference in workplace and home. Since use of smartphone during work hours or home activities usually influence their focus which impact efficiency and effectiveness. For smartphones use even seems to affect married women behaviours in terms of walking, divided attention and less aware of their environment. Consequently, it seems reasonable to assume that distraction and inattention caused by these devices will increase as well fuel work home interference.

This supports what van Zoonen, Sivunen and Rice (2020) stated that the use of smartphones for after-hours work was not associated with work-home interference, but was positively associated with organizational identification. However, communication about family demands with one's supervisor mediated the relationship between smartphone use and work-home interference. Similarly, the association between smartphone use and work home interference was positively mediated by communication with one's supervisor about family demands on work, but not through communication with family about work demands on family.

This affirmed the theoretical assumption that the degree of integration versus segmentation between the smartphone use and work home interference may differ between individuals due to their different wants. Although it is important to bear in mind that constraints do exist in the overall context of every individual's situation, shaped by employment relationships, politics, culture, society, family, gender, class, ethnicity, life course, etc. (Noon & Blyton, 2007). It is also important to realize that people have possibilities within these constraints. Individuals have particular goals and opportunities for education, employment, family and lifestyle, which can, in turn, impact how and

whether they wish to integrate or segment the use of smartphone and its possible interference on work and home. This suggests that although people who segment work and home domains minimize negative and positive spillover, a synergy may still be created between them because they are separate, different, and involve different needs. In other words, a mixing of different activities can be stimulating work home interference due to use of smartphone.

Implications of the Study

The study has following implications:

1. This study will help married women understand that excessive use of smartphone influence work home interference. Hence, the married women needs to know how to reduce excessive use of smartphone, since it creates interferes in their work and home.
2. It will enable married women to know how not to allow individualism to interfere with their work and home. Because interference from this domain will affect their tendency to engage in work which is well facilitated by individualism spirit.
3. Theoretically, this study enhances role theory by Barnett and Gareis (2006) that served as anchor theory for the study variables (individualism, smartphone use, and work-home-interference). The theory assumed that work and home constitute conflicting domains, since both make claims on an individual's limited and finite resources of time and energy (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Kanter, 1977). The idea of the theory is that each individual has limited resources of time and energy, so thriving of the married workers is dependent upon the allocation of these resources to each domain (work, non-work) influences whether an individual smartphone use would conflict or balance between the life domains or not.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

1. Married women should imbibe the spirit of collectivism in certain matters whether in the home or workplace instead of individualism; this will help in reducing work home interference.
2. It is important married women learn how to adjust in their use of smartphone, because of its impact and interference it creates with their work and home. This will

help them learn to cultivate an awareness of the results of their behaviour and thereby take responsibility for it.

3. Married women should train and equip themselves with the experience of direct face-to-face interactions, which will help them escaping from excessively time invested smartphone usage that often affect their work and home.

Limitations of the Study

The study used some instrument which is not standardized for the Nigeria population. Even though the scale has been used by other researchers in Nigeria, some words in the scale were too difficult for the participants to understand which might have impacted negatively on the results. Another issue to consider is that the questionnaires are self-report measures and the desire to appear good may have influenced the responses of the participants. The use of self-report measures only for data collection could limit generalization of the study results. Furthermore, population for the study are only from few married women in Awka metropolis, which invariably affects generalization of the study.

Suggestions for Future Research

Reviewed studies on individualism and smartphone use on work home interference indicate a gap in the literature on these factors in Nigeria. Therefore, this study suggests that researchers conduct similar studies to contribute to the body of literature and the theoretical understanding of work home interference of married women. Future studies can also take on a qualitative method to get an in-depth understanding of work home interference among married women. Since work home interference of married women can be attributed to many factors such as family orientation, religion affiliation, or gender. It is suggested that future studies focus on these factors and how they affect/or influence work home interference of married women. Furthermore, it is suggested that future studies use a larger sample extending to other provinces in the country that can lead to generalization of results and contribute to the development of intervention and prevention strategies for work home interference.

Conclusion

The study evaluated individualism and smartphone use as predictors of work-home-interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State. In this study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regressions. The study revealed that individualism dimensions (autonomy and uniqueness) negatively predicted work home interference, while self-responsibility and smart phone use positively predicted work home interference among married women in Awka city, Anambra State.

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