

# Social Cognitive Factors Affecting Working Mothers' Career Advancement in the Service Industry in Klang Valley, Malaysia

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## Abstract

Working mothers struggle to reconcile their personal and professional lives while under pressure at work. Working mothers currently worry about maintaining a healthy work-life balance while concentrating on improving their quality of life. Considering this, the objective of this study is to examine the relationship between individual, organizational, and family factors towards the career advancement of working mothers. This study employs explanatory

research design, and a quantitative research method was adopted. Primary data for the study were collected through questionnaires sent to the organization under study. A total of 145 responses out of 200 distributed questionnaires were used for data analysis. All research variables were operationalized, based on the literature and each of the variables was defined by a set of factors, which were rated according to the 5-point Likert Scale. The study utilized the SPSS software (latest version) to perform an analysis on the data obtained through the research. The result of the study showed career advancement is significantly impacted by independent variables (individual, family and organizational). The reliability test has been conducted to measure the consistency of the test scores, and the questions related to career advancement have high internal consistency, indicating that the survey questions are reliable. The results of this study could be used to improve the productivity of women workers, which would be good for the organization and business. As this could be a guideline for an organization to have a plan to help female employees, especially married women, feel less stressed and do a better job on the job.

**Keywords:** working mother, working women, career advancement, service industry

## 1. Introduction

A career is a person's long-term professional endeavor, typically one that offers advancement possibilities. People work because they need money (Brown & Lent, 2019). This may be true for most adults but work as a means of survival does not tell the whole story, at least not for everyone. As we know, people work for many reasons. Take for example, to earn money, contribute to their families and communities, establish a public identity, reach self-growth, and structure their lives. Worldwide, throughout history, one of the most noticeable analysts of virtually all aspects of one's work and career development is the gender.

The advancement of an employee's career is critical to the expansion of both the individual and the organization. Not only is it beneficial for the individual, but it is also beneficial for the organization they work for and the economy of the country when employees are adequately developed and given the appropriate skills, competences, information, and resources to thrive. Career development has also been seen to improve an organization in terms of attracting the public or new workers, motivating employees, lowering the turnover rate, and increasing employee loyalty, promoting the sharing of knowledge, creating a skilled and competent workforce, giving the organization a competitive edge, and improving performance and productivity.

Women are expected to hold a variety of jobs throughout their life, and society requires this of them on a consistent basis. As a direct consequence of this, women's career growth patterns, responsibilities, and the challenges they face during development, along with a few other concerns, are distinct from those of males. Despite the progress that has been made in recent decades toward more gender equality for certain men and women, there is still a long way to go in many countries around the world. In Malaysia's budget for 2020, the government is placing an emphasis on facilitating and promoting the employment of previous housewives (Malik, 2019).

According to Ritchie and Roser (2019), gender ratio data, women make up 49% of the global population. The significance of this number lies in the fact that, as the percentage of women actively participating in the labor force continues to climb, women are increasingly regarded as an asset to the labor force in terms of gender diversity, competency, and organizational productivity (Turban & Zhang, 2019). Women, on the other hand, have a few problems, and according to one survey, over 75% of Malaysian moms abandon their employment due to a lack of flexibility (HrAsia, 2018). Another 94% of women polled stated they would hunt for a new career within the following year. According to a recent McKinsey et al. (2020) analysis, more than one in four women are considering retiring from their jobs or reducing their careers. This highlights the serious issues surrounding female labor-force retention.

Women also face barriers that affect their career progression, often creating challenges between the roles of an employee and mother. According to Jauhar and Lau (2018), women frequently feel role conflict between home and professional responsibilities, which negatively impacts their productivity and consideration for executive roles. Malaysian women's participation in the workforce was among the lowest in Southeast Asia, below Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Singapore. Because of their responsibilities as housewives and mothers, approximately 2,563,800 women in the country are unemployed (Ishak, Omar, Khalid, Ghafar, & Hussain, 2019).

Komari (2021) noted that gender roles in particular cultures or countries force women to choose between work and family. Family members could assist in distributing the load of family-related tasks and responsibilities among women. Such assistance would be extremely beneficial and have a favorable effect on remote-working women. Besides, some men willingly participate in childcare, nevertheless, they are not very interested in undertaking house tasks (Del Boca et al., 2020). Moreover, in some communities, the working women believed that their efforts and sacrifice during the pandemic in terms of carrying out family tasks were unappreciated by family members (Venkataraman & Venkataraman, 2021). Therefore, working women require the support and respect of their families to strengthen their familial bonds and advance their jobs simultaneously.

This research has taken on increased significance for a variety of reasons, particularly because the number of women holding managerial professions and senior management roles is far lower than it was in the past. It is vital to understand the challenges that they will face on their way to achieving their professional goals. As mentioned by Varma (2018), many studies conducted on the topic of women's professional advancement have been conceptual rather than empirical in nature.

Research on the factors that help or hinder women in their professional lives has been largely qualitative, with only a small number of empirical research examining these issues. Since most empirical research has been undertaken in the West, it is critical to comprehend the difficulties women confront in the Malaysian environment. Furthermore, those who are considered to have done empirical study have either adopted the objective or subjective perspective of professional success; few empirical studies cover both the objective and subjective perspectives of women's career success (Spurk et al., 2019, Azmat et al., 2006).

This study therefore aims to identify the factor that affecting by working woman for career advancement in service industry. The objectives of the research were:

- 1) To examine the relationship between individual factors and working mothers' career advancement in the service industry
- 2) To examine the relationship between family factors and working mothers' career advancement in the service industry
- 3) To examine the relationship between organizational factors and working mothers' career advancement in the service industry

Therefore, this study will help to investigate the relationships of factors that affect the professional success of women. It offers an awareness of the issue of a woman's career growth in the Malaysian context, which in turn enables the understanding of factors that may influence career advancement among women. This study also gives policymakers a framework and a metric they could use to make new policies or improve the ones they already must help women get jobs.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Career Advancement Among Women in Malaysia*

The advancement of women in their careers has been a topic of discussion and focus for many years, and Malaysia is one country that has made significant progress in this area (Manning, 2006). Recent statistics have shown that the growth of career advancement among women in Malaysia has been significant in recent years, with women increasingly participating in the labor force and occupying leadership positions in various sectors (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008). One of the most notable developments in this regard is the increase in the labor force participation rate for women. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia, the participation rate for women has increased from 46.6% in 2010 to 55.2% in 2020 (Tey et al., 2021). This represents a significant increase in the number of women who are entering the workforce and contributing to the country's economy.

Another area where women have made significant progress is in management positions. The Women in Business 2021 report by Grant Thornton revealed that the proportion of women in management positions in Malaysia has increased from 32.1% in 2010 to 36.9% in 2020. This shows that women are increasingly occupying leadership positions and taking on roles that were traditionally reserved for men. The gender pay gap has also been decreasing in Malaysia, which is a positive development for women in the workforce. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia, the gender pay gap has decreased from 20.9% in 2010 to 15.2% in 2020 (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008). While there is still work to be done in closing this gap, this is a positive step towards ensuring that women are paid equally for their work.

In addition to these developments, the number of women-owned businesses in Malaysia has also increased. The Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs 2021 revealed that the percentage of women-owned businesses in Malaysia has increased from 29.5% in 2016 to 32.5% in 2021 (Fahmy et al., 2000). This shows that women are increasingly taking on

entrepreneurial roles and contributing to the growth and development of the country's economy.

Finally, the percentage of women on boards of directors in Malaysia has also increased. The Women on Boards 2021 report by the Malaysian Institute of Accountants (MIA) revealed that the percentage of women on boards of directors in Malaysia has increased from 12.5% in 2016 to 16.2% in 2021. This shows that women are increasingly occupying leadership roles in various sectors and industries.

### *2.2 Barriers in Working Women Career Advancement*

According to Bimrose and Brown (2014), there are considerable hurdles to women's career advancement. These barriers exist for women at all stages of their lives, including school, job, and having children, and they grow more harder to overcome as time goes. Here are two types of career barriers. The first style is known as "person-centered," and it refers to personal attributes, features, and behaviors that are inappropriate for managerial positions. "Situation-centered" refers to a hindrance that exists within the workplace as well as the social-cultural environment, and it is the second type of barrier. According to the findings of this research, the so-called "person-centered" hurdles to women's professional advancement refer to their level of education, whilst the "situation-centered" barriers refer to organizational support and family considerations.

### *2.3 Individual Factor*

Career is an important thing that is related to an individual's development. The development of career is involved with one's lifetime from a day of birth until death includes during the school period. Therefore, being pleased with your own career or job is an essential aspect of a person's happiness. According to Saguni et al. (2021), a career is a sequence of occupations or activities that a person practices to carry out his or her duties over a period. Sometimes, it is what people do to reach a target live.

In our working life it's important because none of us wants or wishes to stay and the same job and the same position for ever, without developing or having the career development plan we will not be able to improve ourselves and get promoted. In our personal life it is important to have a career development plan. We will be able to make our families and friends happy and proud of us because by having the career development plan we will be able to reach our goals that we have always dreamt of. The reviews attempted in deciding the individual elements impacting the working woman career advancement.

To explain individual differences in work performance and career outcomes, personality, which can be defined as a relatively constant pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguishes individuals, has been frequently used. Personality traits are characteristics of an individual that are largely stable over time, fluctuate from person to person, and remain constant across different circumstances (Anusic & Schimmack, 2016). Uduwella and Jayatilaka (2019), unconcealed that individual factors had a major positive impact on females' career development. Personality significantly determines individual behavior in the workplace (Arora & Rangnekar, 2016), and has been reported to be an important predictor of

work and career success in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies (Wille et al., 2013).

Personality traits have been widely studied to explain individual differences in work performance and career outcomes. Personality refers to a relatively stable pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguish individuals from one another. Personality traits are characteristics of an individual that are largely stable over time, vary from person to person, and remain consistent across different situations. According to the viewpoint of Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2012), said in a sense, personality is probably an important determinant of how people are going to do in their professions. Many past studies have revealed the big five personality factors strongly influence career success. Therefore, many past foreign studies have revealed the big five personality factors strongly relate to career success. Also, there are a significant number of studies that have proven the big five personality factors strongly influence career success (Semeijn et al., 2020).

#### *2.4 Family Factor*

When it comes to advancing their careers, women typically encounter several obstacles. Globally, there is still a lack of opportunities for women in management positions. Because women often juggle multiple responsibilities at once, this dichotomy creates a barrier. Women who have careers, on the other hand, must juggle two sets of obligations simultaneously: those related to their jobs and those related to their families. Consequently, this has a favorable impact on the professional advancement of women (Hussin et al., 2021).

Women have been increasing their participation in the labor force since the 1970s. Fatourech et al. (2003) reveal that the share of ladies in managerial positions has up in many countries. An individual worker, particularly a woman, places a significant amount of value on the obligations of their family as well as the activities that are related to their family. These are important elements that determine the amount of time and energy that is available for work. In addition, barriers between family and work are the most common cause of women having a lower representation in top management, poorer incomes, and fewer prospects for career advancement than men. According to the findings of the study, having duties at home can not only prevent women from being promoted but also prevent them from quitting their jobs permanently.

One of the main ways in which families can work as a barrier to a working woman's career advancement is through childcare responsibilities. Women are often expected to take on many childcare responsibilities, which can limit their ability to work longer hours or take on additional responsibilities at work. If a woman doesn't have reliable childcare support, she may have to turn down opportunities that could advance her career.

Another way in which families can work as a barrier is through work-life balance. Balancing work and family can be a challenge for working women. If a woman is constantly torn between her work responsibilities and family obligations, she may find it difficult to focus on her career advancement. She may have to take breaks from work or reduce her work hours to manage her family responsibilities, which can limit her opportunities for advancement.

Support from a spouse and family members can also impact on a woman's career

advancement. If a woman's spouse or family members are unsupportive or do not value her career, she may not have the encouragement or resources she needs to pursue opportunities that could help her advance. Women who do not have supportive partners or family members may feel guilty about pursuing their careers, which can limit their ability to advance.

Gender roles and stereotypes can also play a role in a woman's career advancement. If a woman is expected to prioritize her family over her career or if she is seen as less committed to her job because of her family responsibilities, she may face challenges in advancing her career. Women who take time off for maternity leave or to care for children or elderly relatives may be seen as less committed to their jobs, which can limit their opportunities for advancement.

In addition, the lack of family-friendly policies in the workplace can work as a barrier to a woman's career advancement. Policies such as flexible work arrangements, telecommuting, and paid family leave can help women balance work and family responsibilities, but many companies do not offer these policies. Women who do not have access to these policies may have to choose between their careers and their families, which can limit their opportunities for advancement.

### *2.5 Organization Factor*

Through these reviews, an attempt was made to determine the organizational elements that influence the career advancement of women. There are obstacles for women to overcome to advance their careers inside an organization, obstacles that do not exist for their male counterparts. Even after earning managerial experience, women continue to run across barriers in many nations, such as Japan, South Korea, India, and countries in the middle east, despite these countries having glass ceilings. The findings of research indicate that roadblocks in women's careers appear at much earlier stages than they do for men, and that as women progress up the managerial hierarchy, they are repeatedly prevented from enrolling in jobs in the science, technology, and engineering field. Additionally, the research shows that women face the glass ceiling more frequently.

Gottlieb and Travis (2018), reveals that women presently hold only 5 percent of CEO roles, 21.2 percent of board seats, 26.5 percent of executive/senior-level officials, and 36.9 percent of first/middle-level officials and managers. This demonstrates that women are still underrepresented at all levels of management, from entry-level to executive. It has been hypothesized that gender bias in the process of evaluating work performance may be to blame for the low number of women who hold high organizational positions. These kinds of preconceptions have the potential to affect how women in the workforce are evaluated.

Moreover, maintaining women's perceptual success in their careers is essential to elevating the overall performance of a company. This is because contented workers are more productive than those who are not content. Therefore, lessening the likelihood that women may believe there is a glass ceiling may enable them to experience a greater sense of subjective career success, which in turn may improve the success of the business. For instance, Helgesen (2018), for example, has described the “inhibitory environment in which

women often struggle, particularly in the formative years of their careers, to find and use their voices”.

A high level of perceived organizational support (POS) demonstrates the high level of commitment that the firm has to its workforce; it is exemplified over the course of a longer period by trust, support, respect, and caring. When employees believe that they have the support of their organization, they anticipate that their employer will recognize and appreciate their increased level of commitment to the achievement of organizational goals. When women workers at an organization have the perception that their employer is supportive of their career, they are more likely to look for every chance feasible to contribute to the organization. For instance, Jung & Takeuchi (2018) used a sample of 364 Japanese workers to find that workers were more content with their jobs when they had a higher perceived level of organizational support. This was based on the findings of the study conducted in Japan.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employs explanatory research design, and a quantitative research method was adopted. In this study, a quantitative approach is used to assess the factors that impede Malaysian women's career advancement. In selecting the sample, a probability sampling technique known as simple random sampling is used. The purpose of this technique is to collect data from respondents who are easily accessible to take part in the survey and who can supply the information that is necessary for the study. The researcher can reach many target respondents quickly, effectively, and cost-effectively by employing this sample method. There is also no selection bias because the target respondents come from a variety of age groups and racial backgrounds, each of which is intended to represent Malaysia's rich cultural diversity. The purpose of this study is to identify and investigate the obstacles that Malaysian women encounter in advancing in their careers. Thus, the Malaysian working women in the utilities industry aged 30-40 years old will be the study's target demographic.

To explore the interaction between individual factors, family factors, and organizational factors on the career progression of working women, a questionnaire that had been used by previous researchers and based on the literature that had been studied was chosen. Close-ended questions are used whereby the items in the questionnaire are in multiple choice and 5-points Likert scale. The respondents can make fast decisions by choosing among the several alternatives in the form of closed-ended questions. In this research, the questionnaires are separated into 5 sections: Section A (Individual profile), Section B (Family factor), Section C (Organizational factor), Section D (Demographic factor) and Section E (Career Advancement).

The study utilized the SPSS software to perform an analysis of the data obtained through research. This was done because the software can assist researchers in performing quantitative analyses in an efficient and effective manner. Both descriptive analysis and the Pearson correlation analysis were utilized to draw conclusions from the data collected for this study.



## 4. Results

### 4.1 Respondent Profile

A total of 200 questionnaires were sent to the targeted respondents. Based on the total of 200 distributed, the study received responses from 145 respondents, of which none were discarded as all the respondents answered all. This indicates response rate of 72.5 % and it falls within the range which is acceptable according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), whereby it mentioned that a survey response rate of 30% must be collected for an effective analysis. Hence, in this study, the survey response rate exceeds the meet. Table 1 illustrates the summary of demographic data.

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondent

Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	112	77.24%
	Male	33	22.76%
Age	18-25	15	10.34%
	26-35	61	42.07%
	36-45	40	27.59%
	46-55	29	20.00%
Ethnicity	Malay	30	20.69%
	Chinese	21	14.48%
	Indian	90	62.07%
	Others	4	2.76%
Marital Status	Married	129	88.97%
	Divorced	11	7.59%
	Widowed	5	3.45%
Highest Educational Qualification	Certificate	8	5.52%
	Diploma	33	22.76%
	Bachelor's Degree	76	52.41%
	Master's Degree	27	18.62%
	PhD	1	0.69%

### 4.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability test was performed, to measure the stability or consistency of test scores scores (Everitt et al.,2010). In this study, Cronbach alpha coefficient for each variable is measured. Table 2 presents the summary of Cronbach's alpha for all the variables in the study. According to George & Mallery (2019), alpha value is above 0.80 is good and highly reliable. Looking at each variable as per table below, it is noted that the individual factors is 0.893, family factors is 0.814, organizational factors 0.866 and career advancement 0.897. In this study, all the respondents managed to answer all the questions, leaving no excluding statements. Thus, all the variables measure is highly reliable with a well-validated scale.

Table 2. Reliability Results

Variables	Cases Processing Summary	n	%	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
<b>Independent Variables</b>					
Individual	Valid	145	100	0.893	6
	Excluded	0	0		
	Total	145	100		
Family	Valid	145	100	0.814	7
	Excluded	0	0		
	Total	145	100		
Organisational	Valid	145	100	0.866	6
	Excluded	0	0		
	Total	145	100		
<b>Dependent Variable</b>					
Career Advancement	Valid	145	100	0.897	5
	Excluded	0	0		
	Total	145	100		

#### 4.3 Normality Analysis

Q-Q plot, which stands for "quantile-quantile" plot, is used to determine whether a set of data came from a theoretical distribution. This type of plot is typically used to determine whether a set of data corresponds to a normal distribution. The points in a Q-Q plot will lie on a straight diagonal line if the data is normally distributed. Based on the findings, the Q-Q Plot will be an evident for normality test if there were any exception for individual, family, and organizational factors towards the career advancement. Following the overall findings, all variables tested indicated data is normally distributed. As it demonstrates a normal distribution, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship of individual, family, and organisational factors to career advancement.

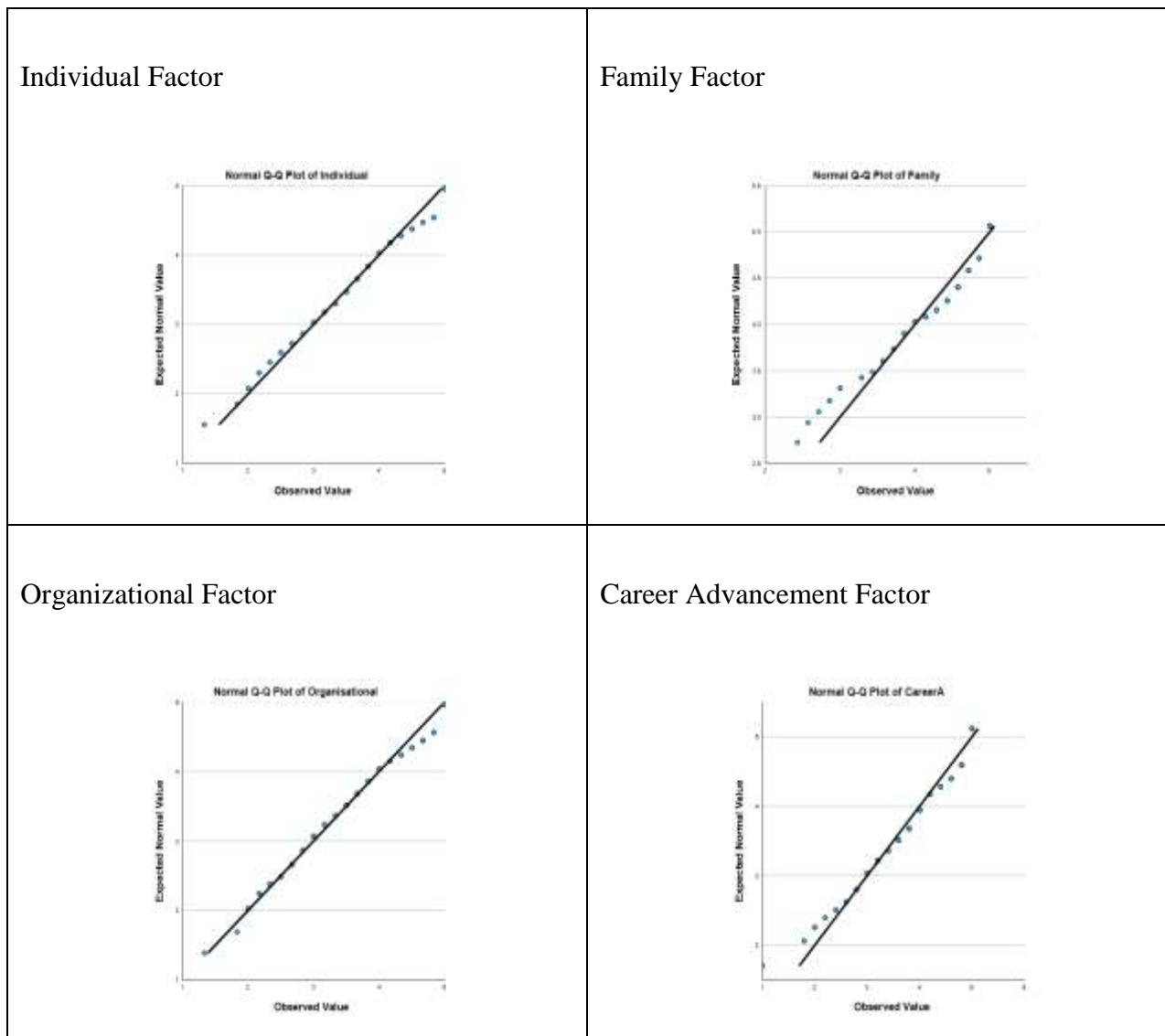


Figure 1. Normal Q-Q Plot

#### 4.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Coefficient is used to assess the relationship between variables and to assess the strength of the relationship using values. The aim of this data analysis method is to identify the relationship between an individual, a family, and an organisation in terms of career advancement.

Table 3. Correlation Results

	Individual	Family	Organisational	Career Advancement	
Individual	Pearson Correlation	1	.740**	.760**	.649**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	145	145	145	145

Family	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1	.780**	.752**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	145	145	145	145
Organisational	Pearson Correlation	.760**	.780**	1	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	145	145	145	145
Career Advancement	Pearson Correlation	.649**	.752**	.757**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	145	145	145	145

Note: \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 The Relationship Between Individual and Career Advancement

The Pearson correlation between the individual and career advancement where  $r = 0.649$  at moderate level (0.01) as illustrated in the Table above. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, it is clear to say there is a significant moderate relationship between individual and career advancement.

Theoretically, a working mother's ability to juggle multiple responsibilities at once is another contributing factor to her success in the workplace. Taking care of children, maintaining a home, and performing professionally are just a few of the many tasks that working mothers must balance. These exercises may assist them hone their multitasking abilities, which can then be used for their professional lives. Better performance, a reputation for dependability and efficiency, and professional development are all possible outcomes of developing this skill.

One of the most relevant correlations between a working mother and professional success was her level of motivation according to the findings of this study. To provide for their families and serve as role models for their children, many working women are driven to achieve professional success. They may be more likely to put in extra effort, look for ways to develop in their careers, and try new things as a result.

Also, a working mother's job success may be influenced by the level of workplace assistance she receives. Organization putting a high value on employee satisfaction could be relevant for working mothers who may place a greater emphasis on finding a workplace that is supportive and accommodating of their family responsibilities. A positive work environment and supportive organizational culture could contribute to employee satisfaction and overall job performance, which could in turn lead to career advancement. Companies that make it easier for working women to balance their personal and professional lives by offering family-friendly policies and flexible work options are better able to promote the careers of their female employees. Working mothers who have a sense of company backing are more likely to be invested in their jobs and their careers.

Work-life balance, the ability to juggle multiple priorities at once, intrinsic motivation, and institutional backing all play a role in explaining the connection between a working mother and professional success. The significant moderate association between the two variables can be partially explained by these theoretical considerations, while other factors may also be at play. By gaining an awareness of these issues, companies may better accommodate working mothers and help them advance in their careers.

### *5.2 The Relationship Between Family and Career Advancement*

The Pearson correlation between the family and career advancement where  $r = .752$  at moderate level (0.01) as illustrated in Table 3 above. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, it is clear to say there is a significant strong positive relationship between family and career advancement.

The significant strong positive relationship between family and career advancement can be attributed to various factors, which can be elaborated further. One of the significant factors is family support, which plays a crucial role in helping working mothers to balance their work and family responsibilities. The data from the table shows that many of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that family support positively correlated to career decisions of working mothers and is the utmost important aspect for working mothers to remain energetic.

Family support can include various forms of support, such as childcare, emotional support, and financial support. For instance, the respondents who agree that their children are sent to daycare while they are at work may have access to reliable and affordable childcare services, which can enable them to focus on their work without worrying about their children's well-being. Similarly, working mothers who feel more financially secure may have access to resources that can help them meet their family's needs, which can reduce their stress levels and enhance their job performance.

Moreover, family support can also provide working mothers with a sense of belonging and purpose, which can motivate them to pursue their career goals and aspirations. When working mothers receive support from their family, they may feel more connected to their family members, which can enhance their overall well-being and job satisfaction. In addition, family support can also help working mothers to manage their work and family responsibilities effectively, which can lead to better career outcomes.

The significant strong positive relationship between family and career advancement can be attributed to various factors, including family support, beliefs, and attitudes of working mothers about time and money. Therefore, it is crucial to provide adequate support and resources to working mothers to help them balance their work and family responsibilities, which can lead to better career outcomes and personal fulfilment. This support can come in the form of flexible work arrangements, affordable and reliable childcare services, emotional and financial support, and policies that promote a balance of work.

### *5.3 The Relationship Between Organizational and Career Advancement*

The Pearson correlation between the family and career advancement where  $r = .757$  at strong

level (0.01) as illustrated in Table 3 above. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, it is clear to say there is a significant strong positive relationship between organizational and career advancement.

The strong positive relationship between family and career advancement can be explained by several theoretical perspectives. One perspective is that when an organization values its employees' family needs and provides family-friendly policies, such as flexible working hours, it can lead to increased employee satisfaction and motivation, which in turn may result in higher levels of commitment, loyalty, and productivity. This positive attitude towards the organization may lead to employees being more engaged and interested in their work, resulting in better performance and career advancement opportunities.

Another theoretical perspective is that when employees perceive that their organization supports their family needs, they may experience less work-family conflict, which can reduce stress and improve their ability to manage multiple roles effectively. This can result in better mental and physical health, leading to increased job satisfaction and better career outcomes.

Study established that factors such as individual, family, and organizational correlates to the career advancement of working mothers in service industry in Klang Valley. The components of individual factors such as career planning, performances and the promotion are influencing in the progression of career advancement of working mothers. Likewise goes to family factors comprising childcare arrangement, family conflict and financial constraints being part of the contributor. Lastly, the organizational factor which has few such as overloaded with workload on tight deadlines, unpleasant work environment and unsupportive bosses and team too influences the career advancement. Most of the respondents expressed significant level of agreement on the influences of each variable towards career advancement. These findings conform to Mohamed et al. (2019) on the aspects that influence deliberately towards influence on working mother's career advancement.

In conclusion, according to study findings, a working mother must set the goal and work towards achieving it besides given more opportunities to explore on their skills. In their responses to various indicators of career advancement, most respondents indicated a significant level of choices in upgrading themselves. Their presence generates positive feelings and may lead to greater job satisfaction among working mothers. This is supported by many studies on importance of personal behavior in moving progressively towards career advancement.

Besides, the findings also shows that family support is the ultimate requirement that every working mothers expect as it will boost their confidence level and work energetically. This is where family support positively correlates to career advancement. Also, many working mothers will have to continue working as they knew mother's contribution are the utmost important aspect in children upbringing. While working mothers must juggle between work and home, they will still have the satisfaction of financially secured to run the household. This is supported by Hussin et al. (2021) whereby the family factors have got significant impact on working mother professional development advancement.

From the findings, it is also seen that working mothers can work efficiently when the support and encouragement obtained from the supervisors. It is also understood from the respondents that good organization environment will boost the career advancement among working mothers especially when they are given flexibility in performing. This is supported by Jung and Takeuchi (2018). Respondents also expect both male and female workers are being respected equally to have healthy competition and good working environment. The capacity to handle the work will be much more efficient when the organizational support is perceived.

Some respondents felt there are several reasons of not contributing towards the working mothers career advancement. A greater number of respondents mentioned on attending self-training development does not help much in the career progression besides organization not being very much helpful for the working mothers to handle stress at workplace. Also, some respondents did not agree on working overtime to reach career progression. However, looking into overall study findings, it is clearly shown there are positive relationships among all the independent variables which are individual, family, and organizational towards the dependent variable which is career advancement.

## **6. Conclusion**

The issue of working women's career advancement is an important one that requires attention from policymakers, employers, and society at large. Despite significant progress in recent decades, women continue to face barriers and challenges that hinder their career advancement in many countries, including Malaysia. This concept was the starting point of this study and was the major driver for the development of research questions and objectives.

The main objective of the study is developed based on the research problems, which is to examine the relationship between individual, organizational, and family factors towards working mothers' career advancement. This study is also anchored on two main theories which are the social cognitive career theory and Super's developmental self-concept theory. The study utilized the SPSS software (latest version) to perform an analysis on the data obtained through the research. Both descriptive analysis and the Pearson correlation analysis were utilized to draw conclusions from the data collected for this study.

The results of this study indicate that individual, family, and organizational factors have a positive effect on working mothers career advancement. The findings from this study will help the working mothers to maintain a balance between professional role and family life that will positively contribute to their career advancement. This study also hopes to help organizations to implementing work-life balance policies in which these policies will create a balance between work and life among employees especially working mothers. These policies will establish a balance that will increase employees' happiness and satisfaction with their professional and personal lives.

Future studies should carry out mixed method approaches quantitative and qualitative methods. Interview data collection will be tedious, yet the information will be reliable were we can meet them in person and the answer will be genuine. It is also recommended that the sample size be extended into more levels of positions and industries across many different

titles, authority levels, and levels of the management hierarchy.

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