

# “It’s Not the Same for Mom and Dad” – Work-Family Integration of Indian Dual Working Parents in Covid19

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study explores the work-to-family interface of Indian dual-working parents’ and highlights the gender differences therein. Specifically, the mediating role of work-to-family conflict on role conflict and life satisfaction, and work-to-family enrichment on self-esteem and life satisfaction were observed. Additionally, the moderating effect of resilient coping on the relation between work-to-family conflict and life satisfaction was observed.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The study is based on the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002) and the Work-Home Resources Model (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012). Structural Equation Modelling using SPSS AMOS (v.23) was conducted on online data collected from Indian dual-earning parents working-from-home (n=264, male=149, female=115). 75% resided in nuclear family and had one child (68%), and 78% of their spouses worked-from-home.

**Findings:** Overall, empirical data provided mixed results. The mediating role of work-to-family conflict between role conflict and life satisfaction was unsupported. However, the mediating effect on work-to-family enrichment between self-esteem and life satisfaction was supported, and the positive impact of enrichment was established. Resilient coping acted as a moderator between work-to-life conflict and life satisfaction, in such a way that high resilient coping decreased the negative impact of work-to-life conflict on life satisfaction. In addition, gender, age, and spouse’s work-from-home status influenced the model. Respondents whose spouses worked from home experienced lesser conflict. The model also varied due to gender, with the women experiencing more conflict than men.

**Originality:** No prior study explored the impact of both work-to-family interfaces in unison on the relationships mentioned earlier of role conflict, self-esteem, and life satisfaction, exclusively in the Indian context. Hence, the study is uniquely contributing to academicians and practitioners alike.

**Keywords:** work-to-family conflict, work-to-family enrichment, role conflict, self-esteem, life satisfaction

## “It’s Not the Same for Mom and Dad” – Work-Family Integration of Indian Dual Working Parents in Covid19

### Impact of Self-Esteem and Role Conflict on Life Satisfaction – the Mediating Role of Enrichment and Conflict

#### Introduction

##### *Covid19 Context*

The pandemic created due to Covid19 since early 2020 is a catastrophic event, which exposed the current generations of humankind to unprecedented uncertainty and stress (Bakić, 2019). To curb its spread, social distancing and lockdown measures were imposed by nations worldwide (Kaplan *et al.*, 2020). Life had moved online since mid-March 2020, be it work, education, entertainment, or socializing. Forced to stay at home and unable to venture out, people turned to online avenues for business, education, entertainment, and social

interactions. Wherever possible, schools and offices shifted to work-from-home. Many organizations opted for and even imposed mandatory work-from-home policies for their employees. The situation had improved somewhat one year later (in 2021), mostly due to the invention of vaccines and mass vaccinations across nations. However, experts believe the road to normalcy is a long-drawn process. In all probability, this is ‘the new normal’, be it professional life or personal life.

##### *Indian context*

India was placed under one of the world's strictest lockdowns in 2020 (Jha and Mullick, 2020). The unlocking happened in a phased manner; however, a massive second wave (Chandra, 2021) had mandated lockdowns once again (The Indian Express, 2021). With increased infections, partial,

focussed lockdowns were reimposed. Schools and colleges remain shut after brief opening.

With the changing demographics, there is a steady rise in Indian dual-working parents and nuclear families (Buddhapriya, 2009), who struggle to balance work and family. Earlier, joint families, extended families were the norm; however, over the past few decades, this has been steadily decreasing. Raising children in a nuclear family with both parents working is difficult, with demands of work and household and parental responsibilities creating strain on the working parents' resources (time, energy). In a collectivistic society like India, support from the extended family, who may not be staying at the same residence, but nearby, acts as a huge support system. However, when extended families reside in different cities, this support diminishes. In this pandemic situation, the severity is felt by dual-earning parents the most, who have to struggle between the pressures of working-from-home while managing household chores and parental responsibilities in addition to monitoring children's online schooling. At the same time, some parents have shifted to working in physical offices, schools continuing to be run online. Thus, for a working parent whose spouse is also working, maintaining a work-life balance becomes tougher, increasing conflict and decreased enrichment.

Additionally, in Indian society, women are expected to do more household chores, irrespective of working or non-working status. In the covid19 situation, there has been an increase in inequality (Galasso *et al.*, 2020). Workload has increased for women all across the world, be it Italy (Boca *et al.*, 2020), UK (Sevilla and Smith, 2020), Spain (Farré and Gonzalez, 2020), even in gender-egalitarian countries like Iceland (Hjálmsdóttir and Bjarnadóttir, 2020), with men contributing more towards childcare and online schooling rather than housework.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

While several studies were conducted on dual-earning couples in India, most of them focussed only on the women's perspective. Some studies looked at the work-life balance of Indian dual-earning couples (Delina and Raya, 2016; Majhi, 2016; Chaudhuri *et al.*, 2020). To the best of the author's knowledge, there is no study done to examine the impact of both work-to-family interfaces (i.e., conflict and enrichment) in unison of the relationship

between role conflict self-esteem, especially more so in the Indian context.

Thus, through this study, the author intends to examine the impact and trace the relationship changes. The aim is to identify and address dual-earning parents' issues, their challenges, and the unique opportunities they present.

#### **Theoretical Background**

Multiple roles are played in life as an adult. The roles played in working life include that of a subordinate/ boss/ colleague, those in the personal life, and that of a child/ friend/ husband/ spouse/ parent. These roles create demand on the limited resources of time, energy, and attention (based on the Scarcity Theory (Goode, 1960)). In this background, when speaking about role conflict, the context of 'role' per se needs to be borne in mind. More often than not, this role conflict occurs due to the internal dilemma – the perception of self not reaching the level of 'perfection' that one should portray. Thus, the accompanying results of role conflict reflect a conflict in the work-life or the family life, which again creates stress and other symptoms. Both work and nonwork factors create work-family conflict (Byron, 2005). On the other end of the spectrum lies enrichment, based on the Expansionist Approach (Marks, 1977) and the Role Accumulation Theory (Sieber, 1974). Researchers aligned with this approach argue that combining multiple roles enable positive energy flow from one role to another, not only energy drainage, creating positive spillover, thus positively impacting the functioning in the other role. It is also the basis of the work-family enrichment theory (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). Self-esteem enables a person to look at a challenge as an opportunity and behave more positively and constructively in situations. Self-esteem is a personal trait, a key personal resource, that determines an individual's well-being (Hobfoll, 2002). A person with high self-esteem is more likely to be motivated, whereas low self-esteem more likely leads to anxiety, stress, and depression (Rashid *et al.*, 2011).

The presence of a child at home alleviates stress and reduces feelings of burnout (Lieke *et al.*, 2008), albeit increasing the family's workload. Working parents who can maintain a balance between work and family roles have a higher quality of life and satisfaction (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2003), while

those who cannot have higher conflict leading to depression, poor physical health, and even heavy alcohol use (Frone *et al.*, 1992).

This study is based on the Work-Home Resources Model (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012) looks at the conflict and enrichment process in unison. It is based on the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002), which states that individuals are motivated to maintain their resources and create new resources. Taking a process approach, the Work-Home resources Model (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012) looks at how demands in one domain decrease/ increase personal resources, which in turn decrease/ increase functioning in the other domain. In this study, it is posited that role conflict creates strain on resources, leading to work-to-family conflict, which decreases life satisfaction, while self-esteem (personal resource) leads to work-to-family enrichment, which in turn increases life satisfaction.

### Literature Support and Hypotheses

#### *Role Conflict, Work-to-Family Conflict and Life Satisfaction*

Role conflict is a type of role stress (Kahn *et al.*, 1964) arising due to incompatibility between the expectations from others or between the facets of a single role (Peterson *et al.*, 1995). Life satisfaction is a part of subjective (hedonic) well-being (Chummar *et al.*, 2019). Role conflict harms life satisfaction (Perrone *et al.*, 2005), and more so for working mothers (Diraz *et al.*, 2003). The same is expected in the Indian context too.

Work-family conflict is a specific type of inter-role conflict, which ascends from the imbalance (perceived or otherwise) from the pressure in juggling the work and family roles (obligations), especially when they are clashing (Kahn *et al.*, 1964). Participation in one role is made more difficult due to the participation in the other role is thus the reason for inter-role conflict, like that between work and family roles. Researchers have also observed that role conflict positively impacts work-to-family conflict (Boles *et al.*, 1997; Foley and Yang-hue, 2005). Thus, it is expected that:

*H1: Role conflict is positively associated with work-to-family conflict for dual working parents in India.*

Work-to-family conflict negatively influences life satisfaction (Ernst Kossek and Ozeki, 1998; Yucel, 2017), which holds true in

the Indian context (Gopalan and Pattusamy, 2020). Conflict in the workplace creates stress, draining resources, thus leaving fewer resources to be utilized in the family domain, thus creating a vacuum or need in the family role. Unable to fulfil the role requirements, in turn, lessens the satisfaction levels in the life domain. Hence, it is expected that:

*H2: Work-to-family conflict negatively impacts life satisfaction for dual working parents in India.*

Role conflict positively impacts work-to-family conflict leading to varying degrees of life satisfaction (Perrone *et al.*, 2005). A working parent who has to attend an important work meeting while making sure the child attends their online class will also have higher work-to-family conflict and thus have more strain leading to lessened satisfaction with life. Thus, it is expected that:

*H3: Work-to-family conflict mediates the relationship between role conflict and life satisfaction for dual working parents in India. Self-Esteem, Work-to-Family Enrichment and Life Satisfaction*

Self-esteem is a key factor in ones' perception and response to living their life. It is the positive or negative evaluation one holds about oneself (Smith and Mackie, 2007). Individuals with high self-esteem look for opportunities in adversities, exhibit continuous self-improvement motives. Conversely, people with lower self-esteem are more prone to have a negative disposition towards life and situations. Researchers noted individuals with high self-esteem consider an adverse situation in their job as an opportunity to overcome difficulties (Judge *et al.*, 2001), and have a positive impact on life satisfaction (Judge *et al.*, 2006), which holds true across cultures (Dienar and Dienar, 2009).

Work-family enrichment is defined by Greenhaus and Powell (2006) as "the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role." Enrichment is said to occur through the affective pathway, i.e., an increase in resources in one role increases functioning in another role by positive spillover or positive mood. Self-esteem positively influences work-to-family enrichment (Rashid *et al.*, 2011). Hence, it is expected that:

*H4: Self-esteem positively impacts work-to-family enrichment for Indian dual-working parents.*

The positive impact of work-to-family enrichment on life satisfaction is well-established (van Steenbergen *et al.*, 2007), more so as a mediator between various types of support and life satisfaction (Masuda *et al.*, 2012; Carvalho and Chambel, 2014; Gayathri and Karthikeyan, 2016). Thus, it is expected that:

*H5: Work-to-family enrichment positively impacts life satisfaction for Indian dual working parents.*

Rashid *et al.* (2011), observed that work-to-family enrichment positively mediated the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction. Self-esteem, a personal trait, is treated as a key personal resource, which can generate positive spillover from one domain to the other. This is in line with the COR theory (Hobfoll, 2002). Extending from the above result, it is expected that:

*H6: Work-to-family enrichment positively mediates the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction for dual working parents in India.*

#### *Self-Esteem and Work-to-Family Conflict*

Self-esteem also negatively influences work-to-family conflict (Rashid *et al.*, 2012). It is a key personal resource, as per the COR theory (Hobfoll, 2002), which generates positive spillover, and thus lessening the strain created due to work and family demands. An individual with high self-esteem is likely to be better buffered against stress and negative emotions (Leary *et al.*, 1995), and perceive lesser work-to-family conflict. Hence, it is expected that:

*H7: Self-esteem negatively impacts work-to-family conflict for dual working parents in India.*

#### *Work-to-Family Conflict, Resilient Coping and Life Satisfaction*

Different individuals react differently to adverse situations or adverse stimuli. The adverse effect of work-family conflict on mental health (Chandola *et al.*, 2004) is established across populations (Finland, Japan, and the UK), and those displaying negative traits are more vulnerable (Allen *et al.*, 2012). Coping strategies help in reducing the negative impact of work-to-family conflict (Kalliath and Kalliath, 2014). One way of coping is resilient coping, which is the tendency to use cognitive appraisal skills effectively, even in stressful situations (Polk, 1997). A resilient individual is able to bounce back from adverse situations

(Luthans, 2002), by buffering negative consequences in difficult times (Connor and Davidson, 2003) and is an important source of subjective well-being. In fact, resilience positively impacts life satisfaction (Liu *et al.*, 2013; Bajaj and Pandey, 2016; Wang and Kong, 2020), and individuals using resilient coping also reported higher satisfaction with life (Limonero *et al.*, 2012). Thus, it is expected that:

*H8: For dual working parents in India, resilient coping plays a moderating role in the relationship between work-family conflict and life satisfaction, such that individuals for with high resilient coping, impact of work-to-family conflict on life satisfaction is lessened.*

#### *Differences Due to Gender*

Traditional gender role expectations are that of women identifying more with family and caregiver roles and men with paid work outside their home (McDaniel, 2008). Individuals differ in how they act, communicate, and behave due to gender differences (Coates, 2015). Men and women attribute different psychological meanings to their roles (Rothbard, 2001), and they perceive work-family conflict (Livingston and Judge, 2008) as also work-family enrichment differently (van Steenbergen *et al.*, 2007). Multi-nation studies across Europe had established that women generally experience higher work-to-family conflict than men in dual working families (Steiber, 2009), and also higher work-to-family enrichment than men (Beham *et al.*, 2020). Even in gender egalitarian societies, variations were observed in gender equality levels and egalitarian beliefs about the division of work between men and women (Beham *et al.*, 2020). In the covid19 pandemic situation, working mothers experienced greater challenges (Landivar *et al.*, 2020), especially those with young children and high work-home integration (Schieman *et al.*, 2021).

Traditional gender roles are more defined for Indian society, where gender-specific roles based on societal norms and values are more distinct (Rajadhyaksha and Smita, 2004), which impacts women's professional and personal choices and creates additional stress. Women tend to prioritize family roles and responsibilities more (Desai, 1996; Aryee *et al.*, 2005) and assign more resources towards family (Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000). An Indian woman, irrespective of their work status, is expected to

look after family and children more as compared to men. India is also a collectivistic culture (Verma and Triandis, 1999), and hence the importance given to personal roles is as important, if not more, than to work roles. For dual working parents in India, handling multiple roles within the societal and familial expectations is bound to create more stress and conflict. As women are found to experience conflict (Steiber, 2009) as well as enrichment (Beham *et al.*, 2020) more than men, as also evidenced from studies conducted during the covid19 pandemic (Landivar *et al.*, 2020; Schieman *et al.*, 2021), it is predicted that:

*H9: Men and women experience the impact of role conflict and self-esteem on life satisfaction, through (work-to-family) conflict and enrichment, respectively, in different manner, owing to different gender norms.*

### Theoretical Framework

The following figure (Fig. 1) denotes the theoretical model of the above propositions.

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### Methodology

#### *Data Collection procedures and Samples*

Data was collected online from Indian dual-earning households with at least one child to test the hypotheses. All the participants were currently working from home. An online survey questionnaire created through google form was floated, with requests for further sharing ahead. No personal information (which can identify the respondents) was collected to maintain anonymity and prevent response bias. In total, the author gathered 264 fully completed and relevant responses (i.e., participant working-from-home, with at least one off-spring at home), following the minimum required sample size of 200 (Kline, 2011).

Since self-reported scales measured all the collected data, Harman's single factor test was conducted to check for common method bias (CMB) (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Results for the one-factor model showed that the variance for extraction sum of squared loadings was less than 50% (24.651%). Additionally, conducting a factor analysis with rotation revealed multiple factors with Eigenvalue more than 1, as desirable (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Hence CMB was ruled out.

The majority of the respondents were men (N= 149, 56.4%), with an average age of

42.1 years (SD= 6.47), ranging from 29 – 61 years. The average age of female participants was 37.31 years (SD= 6.68), ranging from 27 – 58 years. Three-fourth of the participants (75.4%) stayed in a nuclear family. Most of them have one child (68.2%), and 84 participants have two children. The average age of the first child was 7.5 years (SD= 4.94), and that of the second child was 6.1 (SD= 4.32). Interestingly, 78% of the respondents reported that their spouses were working from home; however, female respondents had a lesser number of spouses working from home (67.8%) than their male counterparts (85.9%).

#### *Measures*

All the items were measured in a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree" for measuring the variables (except the demographic variables). The questionnaires were presented in English using items from pre-existing scales. The reliability measures are well above the desired levels (Cronbach  $\alpha > 0.7$ ). These are listed below:

*Role Conflict (RC)* – 6 items of the Role Conflict scale (Bowling *et al.*, 2017), with  $\alpha = 0.924$ .

*Self-Esteem (SE)* – 5 items of the Brief Self-Esteem Scale (Monteiro *et al.*, 2021), with  $\alpha = 0.846$ .

*Work-to-Family Conflict* – 3 items of the Brief Work-Family Conflict Scale (Mathews *et al.*, 2010), with  $\alpha = 0.830$ .

*Work-to-Family Enrichment* – 3 items of the Brief Work-Family Enrichment Scale (Kacmar *et al.*, 2014), with  $\alpha = 0.761$ .

*Life Satisfaction* – 5 items of the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Dienar *et al.*, 1985), with  $\alpha = 0.893$ .

*Resilient Coping* – 4 items of the Brief Resilient Coping Scale (Sinclair and Waltson, 2004), with  $\alpha = 0.896$ .

#### *Control variables*

Demographics play an important role on the work-life interface (Byron, 2005; Lapierre *et al.*, 2018). The following control variables were considered for this study.

gender (coded 1= male, 2= female)

age (min: 27 years, max 61 years) (coded 1= 25-34 years, 2= 35-44 years, 3= 45-54 years, 4= 55-64 years)

family type (coded 1= nuclear family, 2= joint family)

Spouse's work-from-home status (coded 1= yes, 2= no)

v. number of children (1, 2, for those respondents without a second child, NA coded as 3)

vi. Children's age, segregated as child 1's age and child 2's age [coded as 1= infant (0=1 year), 2= toddler (2-4 years), 3= child (5-12 years), 4= teen (13-19 years), 5= adult (20-39 years), 9= not applicable].

#### Data Analysis

Structural equation modelling (SEM) using SPSS AMOS (v.23) was used to validate the proposed model. It was done in two steps, testing the measurement model and then testing the hypothesized structural models (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Firstly, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the construct validity. Secondly, the structural model was tested using Path Analysis in AMOS.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, Pearson correlations and reliability estimates for the variables are depicted in Table I.

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### Testing the Measurement Model

The measurement model was evaluated containing all the six latent variables – role conflict (RC), self-esteem (SE), work-to-family conflict (WFC), work-to-family enrichment (WFE), life satisfaction (LS), and resilient coping (BRC). While conducting factor loading, one item from the variable measuring self-esteem (BSE1) was dropped due to poor loading value. The results established reliability and construct validity for the model. Reliability was checked through Cronbach  $\alpha$  and CR (composite reliability), both  $>0.7$ . Convergent validity was established as for all latent variables with AVE  $>0.5$ . Discriminant validity was established through two steps:  $MSV < AVE$ ,  $ASV < AVE$ , and square root AVE was greater than the correlations between all the latent variables. The results are given in Table II.

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To check the model fit,  $\chi^2$ , df, RMSEA, NFI, CFI, TLI values were looked at. All of them exhibit a good model fit, with  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2 / df = 1.547$ , RMSEA = 0.046, and NFI = 0.906, CFI = 0.964, TLI = 0.958, well within the cut-off limits as specified by Awang (2012).

### Hypotheses Testing

SEM path analysis was conducted using SPSS AMOS (v.23) to test the hypotheses. The structural model displayed an acceptable fit ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2 / df = 2.543$ , RMSEA = 0.077, SRMR = 0.08). Overall, the hypothesized model (with BRC as moderator) is supported, providing empirical support to our hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that RC positively influenced WFC; the relationship was strongly significant ( $p < .001$ ). Hypothesis 2 proposed that WFC negatively influenced LS; this is also observed as strongly significant ( $p < .001$ ). Hypothesis 4 proposed that WFE positively influenced LS; this was again strongly significant ( $p < .001$ ). Hypothesis 5 proposed that WFE positively influenced LS; this was again strongly significant ( $p < .001$ ). Hypothesis 7 proposed that SE influenced WFC; this was not supported ( $p = 0.4$ ).

To check for mediation effect, bootstrapping method (bootstrapping sample = 5000, bias confidence interval = 95) was done. It was observed that hypothesis 3 was unsupported, i.e., WFC mediated between RC and LS (Est = -0.052, LCI = -0.199, UCI = 0.061;  $p = 0.352$ ). However, hypothesis 5 was supported, i.e., WFE mediated between SE and LS (BC = 0.175, LCI = 0.082, UCI = 0.313).

Hypotheses 8 looked at the moderating role of BRC on the relationship between WFC and LS; this was also supported (WFC  $\rightarrow$  LS,  $p < .004$ ; BRC  $\rightarrow$  LS,  $p < .001$ ; WFCBRC  $\rightarrow$  LS,  $p < .001$ ). Thus, overall, the hypothesized model was supported by empirical data. Fig. 2 below depicts the results of the path analyses.

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With respect to the control variables, women participants experienced greater WFC (strongly significance) ( $\beta = 0.402$ ,  $se = 0.115$ ,  $p < .001$ ). With increase in age, WFE reported was lesser (weak significance) ( $\beta = -0.248$ ,  $se = 0.124$ ,  $p = 0.047$ ). Further, respondents whose spouses were also working from reported lower WFC (moderate significance) ( $\beta = -0.36$ ,  $se = 0.128$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ). Neither age of respondent, nor the number of children in the household, nor their child's age had any significance whatsoever in the sample studied.

### Differences due to gender

To check whether the results vary for men and women (fathers and mothers), the structural model was tested grouped separately. Both structural models, for male respondents

( $n=149$ ) ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2 / dF= 1.887$ ,  $RMSEA= 0.077$ ,  $SRMR= 0.085$ ), and female respondents ( $n= 115$ ) ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2 / dF= 1.849$ ,  $RMSEA= 0.086$ ,  $SRMR= 0.0778$ ) showed acceptable model fits. The model fit marginally better for women. Interestingly, hypotheses 7 (SE impacting WFC) was supported only for women, though weakly significant ( $\beta= 0.205$ ,  $se= 0.100$ ,  $p= 0.040$ ). Men reported lesser WFE with an increase in age ( $p < .001$ ). Those who stayed in the nuclear family reported more WFC ( $p=.036$ ) and less WFE ( $p=.028$ ), and those men whose spouses were also working from home reported less WFE ( $p < .001$ ). Women who resided in nuclear families reported less WFE ( $p < .001$ ) and more WFC when their spouses were working from home ( $p < .001$ ). Respondents' age, number of children, and child's age didn't significantly impact the model, neither for men nor women.

These results show that men had less WFE as they aged, maybe due to increased pressure of family responsibilities (old parents, children, spouse) and work pressure (greater responsibilities as they climb up the corporate ladder). Men who stayed in joint families are likely to receive more support from extended family members, reducing the burden of family demands (household chores, parental responsibilities) and thus experience less work-to-family conflict and more work-to-family enrichment. For women, however, this seems to be the opposite. Women reported increased work-to-family conflict when staying in a joint family. In Indian society, women are expected to take on more household responsibilities, irrespective of their work status. Staying with extended family members increases these demands manifold, which may be the reason for the obtained results. Men experienced less work-to-family enrichment with their spouse working from home. Women reported more work-to-family conflict with their spouses working from home; this may likely be because they are expected to handle more household chores and parental responsibilities than Indian men, and the presence of their spouse at home adds to the burden. Hence, hypothesis 9 was also supported, that men and women experienced the hypothesized impacts differently.

### Discussion

This study explores the mediating role of the work-to-family interface (conflict and enrichment) in the relationship between role

conflict, self-esteem, and life satisfaction, especially for parents working from home in India. The results supported the notion that role conflict impacted life satisfaction through work-to-family enrichment, and self-esteem impacted life satisfaction through work-to-family enrichment. The moderating effect of resilient coping on the relationship between work-to-family conflict and life satisfaction was also explored and supported. Men and women experienced them differently, such that women experienced greater work-to-family conflict than men. Age and spouse's work-from-home status also acted as controls to the hypothesized model. The theoretical and practical implications of the study, along with the limitations, are detailed in the next sub-sections.

### *Theoretical Implications*

This study adds value by looking at the work-family interface, both conflict, and enrichment in unison. To the best of the author's knowledge, an integrated approach, looking at role conflict, self-esteem, and work-family interface in unison, has not been done to date. The context of Indian working parents is also relevant and important here, as very sparse studies are present which explore this arena. Situation and environment play an important role in the work-family research domain, and hence the pandemic situation is also of prime importance here. Work-from-home has become a norm in the pandemic, and it is envisaged organizations may continue with these arrangements even after the pandemic is over. The study is thus aimed at making sense of this transition process and propose suitable solutions therein.

### *Practical Implications*

Thus, the study aims to make sense in this transition process to enable practitioners to make better-informed decisions and address the workforce's demands, requirements, and motivations accordingly. One direct impact can be having segregated policies/ treatment for different employees, not a blanket one. The flexibility of working, even while working from home, customized to cater to the specific individual's needs, will enable better alignment of employee goals and organization desired outcomes. Even when forced, a policy needs to be flexible enough to satisfy employees collectively. For example, employees residing in a nuclear family may have regular meetings scheduled in the latter half of the day so that

there is no overlap with parental demands. Resilience is a dynamic process used to face unanticipated situations (Zhou *et al.*, 2017). Mindfulness-based interventions increase life satisfaction (Henriksson *et al.*, 2016) through the mediating effect of resilience (Bajaj and Pande, 2016). Thus, conducting resilience-building training sessions, like mindfulness-based training interventions (MBTI), meditation, counseling, etc., can go a long way. Thus, specific HR interventions and strategies can be designed and implemented for employees.

#### *Limitations and Future Scope*

Overall, the model received empirical support; however, it has its limitations. The study explored the role of some demographic variables as control variables. Though some of them did not yield any statistically significant results, the results of this empirical study must be treated with caution before generalizing. Further analysis with larger samples is required before arriving at a firm conclusion. Other factors like the number of working hours, timing of working hours, income, location, type of job, etc., may bring in additional results. These are important to be considered in hindsight. A comparative study across nations with stark gender differences (e.g., gender egalitarianism) may help understand whether the model holds cross-culturally. In less gender-egalitarian societies like India, the onus of household chores falls on the wife more than the husband. Staying in a joint family alleviates these demands somewhat, with other family members sharing the workload; however, results showed that the results are contrary to that expected, i.e., women staying in a nuclear family experienced lesser work-to-family conflict. It may be because of the increased workload for women due to more members in the family, which also reflects the gender norms of the Indian society per se. Having cross-cultural families (inter-regional marriages, etc.) and the cultural impact or strain affecting family interference is yet another area that needs to be explored, more so in the Indian context. It is hoped that future researchers explore this line further. Concerning the moderating role of coping strategies on the relationship between work-to-family conflict and life satisfaction, only one type of coping, i.e., resilient coping, was explored. Understanding the differential impact of various coping strategies may be scope for

future researchers. Finally, in this pandemic situation, additional stressors are created in the general environment. An economic downturn, uncertainty about the future, health worries are all major sources of stress. Many have lost their job or are forced to take salary/ bonus cuts and change their 'normal' working mode (working from home instead of office space). The constant worry about health (self, family, relatives, network), uncertain situation adds to the misery and is much more stressful than in pre-covid circumstances. Sharing the same space as an office and home inevitably leads to blurring of boundaries, and this again makes it harder to switch/ cut-off harder. Conducting a longitudinal study, with post-pandemic data may reveal further important insights.

#### **Conclusion**

Human beings are social animals, and the relationships they hold are very important in their sustenance and well-being. Most of the awake hours are spent working, and the remaining with the family, and in the pursuit of personal interests). As the family expands, children's presence exerts a greater pull towards spending the limited and scarce resources, while simultaneously adding on to the positive affect. Indian dual working couples are slowly becoming a majority of the working population in India, making this study more relevant. In addition, work-from-home is gaining importance in the post-pandemic world, being a rule rather than the exception, changing the way work is done. One hopes that this study will aid academicians and practitioners alike of these integrated domains.

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