

Relationship of Work-Family Conflict and Personality Traits on Mental Health among Married CouplesFaisal Hayat Khan¹, Khizra Iqbal^{2*}**Abstract**

The aim of this research was to find out the role of work family conflict and personality traits on mental health among married couples. Convenient sampling was employed in the survey method to collect data using a questionnaire in a correlational study design. The sample was consisted 280 married couples from different primary and secondary schools of Multan. Work and Family Conflict Scale (Haslam et al., 2015), Mental Health Inventory (Veit & Ware, 1983) and Big Five Inventory (Goldberg, 1993) were used to collect data. Finding of the study explore that work family conflict, personality traits and mental health was correlated with each other's as work Family conflict was significantly positive correlation with Extrovert and Conscientiousness of personality traits. Work Family conflict is significantly correlate with mental health issues. Implications of the study were also discussed.

Key words: Married Couples, Mental Health, Personality Traits, Work-Family Conflict

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Introduction

The intersection between professional and personal life domains presents a unique set of challenges and stressors for married couples. In contemporary society, where work demands often extend beyond the traditional workplace and time boundaries, work-family conflict has become an increasingly prevalent issue (Smith & Johnson, 2021). This conflict, defined as the conflict between family and job responsibilities, exerts a significant impact on the mental health of individuals within a marital relationship (Fukuzaki et al., 2021). Research has consistently shown that conflict between work and family is associated with various negative mental health outcomes, including increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms (Taylor & Miller, 2019). These outcomes

not only affect individual well-being but also have broader implications for marital satisfaction and family dynamics (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

Furthermore, the personality traits in moderating impact of conflict between work and family on mental health has garnered attention. Personality traits, such as neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness, influence how individuals perceive and cope with stressors, including those arising from conflict between work and family (Adams & White, 2018; Robinson, 2020). For instance, high levels of neuroticism may exacerbate the negative effects of conflict between work and family on mental health, while traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness might buffer these effects. The interface between professional and personal life domains presents significant challenges impacting the mental health of married individuals. Conflict between work and family, an area of considerable research interest, refers to the incompatibility between work and family roles, leading to stress and strain (Smith & Johnson, 2021). Studies have shown a strong link between work-family conflict and mental health

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issues, including stress, depression, and anxiety (Williams & Brown, 2021). Several theories underpin the study of work-family conflict. The spillover theory suggests that stress in one domain (work or family) spills over into the other, affecting overall well-being (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Personality traits like neuroticism and extraversion have been found to moderate the relationship between work-family conflict and mental health outcomes (Adams & White, 2018). Conflict between work and family is a predictor of mental health issues. High levels of such conflict are associated with increased psychological distress, affecting marital satisfaction and family dynamics (Johnson & Smith, 2021). Gender plays a crucial role in the experience of work-family conflict. Women, particularly those in dual-earner households, often report higher levels of conflict (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Cultural factors also influence the perception and impact of work-family conflict, with varying norms and expectations across different societies (Chen et al., 2018). The intersection of work and family life presents a complex and multifaceted challenge for married couples, significantly impacting their mental health and overall well-being. Personality traits significantly shape how individuals perceive and manage stressors, including work-family conflict. Studies have shown that unresolved work-family conflict can strain marital relationships and affect the emotional and psychological climate of the household (Ervasti et al., 2019). This study aims to fill this gap as there is no research in the existing literature on conflicts between the work and the family, mental health, and personality. In earlier research, many Western countries have conducted studies on two variables as culturally different from our country which also showed different social values. This research will be helpful in contributing to a more holistic understanding of the factors affecting mental health among married couples. Married couples may become

aware the role of personality traits that interferes with work family conflicts and leads influence on mental health. This research will also be useful for policymakers to make and build healthy environment and training workshops at work place so people reduce their displacements at home and spend life with wellbeing. The aim of present study was to find out relationship of work family conflicts, personality type and mental health of working spouses.

Method

Research Design

The present study was based on correlational research design.

Participants

The sample was consisted 280 married couples (M=165, F=115) age range was 25-60 years old ($M=1.31$, $SD=.46$) from different secondary and higher secondary schools of south Punjab through the convenient sampling technique. Participants who or their spouse were employed included in the study. Participants who did not met the inclusion criteria were excluded from the study.

Instruments

The Work and Family Conflict Scale (WAFCS; Haslam et al., 2015), Mental Health Inventory (Veit & Ware, 1983) and Big Five Inventory (BFI; Goldberg, 1993) were used to collect the data.

Work and Family Conflict Scale (WAFCS)

Work and family conflict scale (Haslam, et al, 2015) was used in the study. The scale comprised of 10 items with two sub-scales, work to family conflict item 1-5 and family to work conflict sub-scale items 6 to 10. The five-point score format is used to calculate conflict levels from 1= very strongly disagree to 7=very strongly agree. High score indicates more conflict level. Cronbach α ratings for each size were 0.93.

Mental Health Inventory- Shortened Version

The MHI-18 is a shortened version of the original 36-point scale developed by Veit and Ware (1983) to evaluate general

populations' psychological stress and well-being. It includes anxiety (4,6,10,11,18), depression (2,9,12,14,3) and positive impact (5,8,16,17) evaluation (1,7,13, 15). Choices range from 1 (all the time) to 6 in a 6-point scale (none of the time). In different trials, there were correlations from 0.96 to 0.99 between the MHI-18 and the longer version.

Big Five Inventory (BFI)

The Big Five Inventory is a self-inventory for measuring the Big Five. For a multidimensional personality inventory of 44 items, an entity measures the big five (dimensions) personality, it is very short (Goldberg, 1993). Each aspect is further divided into facets of personality. Scoring of BFI scale ("R" means reversed scoring): Extraversion: 1, 6R, 11, 16, 21R, 26,31R, 36. Agreeableness: 2R, 7, 12R, 17, 22, 27R, 32, 37R, 42, Conscientiousness: 3, 8R, 13, 18R, 23R, 28, 33, 38, 43R; Neuroticism: 4, 9R, 14, 19, 24R, 29, 34R, 39, Openness: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30, 35R, 40, 41R and 44.

Reliability of BFI was typically ranged from 0.79 to 0.88.

Procedure

A short briefing about the research topic and confidentiality of responses assured to the participants, after obtaining informed consent from the participants, the research booklet presented to the respondents. Booklet comprised of informed consent, demographic variables, and questionnaires. Data was analyzed through SPSS 21. Both descriptive and inferential statistical was run out to obtain the findings.

Ethical Considerations

The current study has followed the ethics and ethical codes of the American Psychologist Association. Participants were informed about the aim of the study. It was ensured to all participants that their information will be kept confidential. Prior information for no or minimal risk was provided. Participant were given choice to withdrawn from study at any stage.

Results

Table I

Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants (N=280)

Demographics	Frequency(percentage)	Demographics	Frequency(Percentage)
Age		Gender	
Middle Adulthood	193(68.9%)	Male Spouse	153(54.6%)
Late Adulthood	87(31.1%)	Female Spouse	127(45.4%)
Work Schedule		Spouse working	
Less working hours 6 hours duty	150(53.6%)	Single working spouse	172(61.4%)
Long working hours 8 to 10 working hours	130(46.4%)	Both working spouse	108(38.6%)
Socioeconomic status			
Lower economic status	50(17.9%)	Middle socioeconomic	76(27.1%)
Lower middle	146(52.1%)	High socioeconomic	8(2.9%)

The Table 1 of sociodemographic variable of participants showed the frequency and percentage of participant's characteristics.

Table 2

Correlation matrix of Work Family Conflicts, Big Five Traits and Mental Health among Married Couples (N=280)

Variables	M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	SD										
Work Family	10.82 2.79	-	.39**	-.01	.22**	.05	.11	.16**	.07	.07	-.12*
Extrovert	15.74 3.00		-	.26**	.70**	.42**	.38**	.32**	.18**	.18**	-.00
Agreeableness	16.77 2.89			-	.58**	.91**	.86**	.09	.16**	.16**	.07
Conscientiousness	16.78 2.32				-	.70**	.63**	.16**	.16**	.16**	-.13*
Neuroticism	14.89 2.05					-	.77**	.04	.13*	.13*	-.02
Openness to Experience	19.55 2.09						-	.26**	.16**	.16**	.07
Anxiety	11.79 2.09							-	.34**	.34**	.47**
Depression	12.94 1.72								-	1.0**	.23**
Behavioral Control	12.94 1.72									-	.23**
Positive Affect	10.22 2.47										-

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

The result shows that Work-Family conflict has a significant positive correlation with Extroversion and Conscientiousness personality traits ** $p < 0.01$. Work family conflict also positively associated with anxiety ** $p < 0.01$. On the other hand work family conflict showed negative association with positive affect * $p < 0.05$.

Big five sub-scales showed significant positive correlation with each other. For relationship with mental health of couples on big five traits, Extroversion is positively correlated with anxiety, depression and behavioral control ** $p < 0.01$. No significant association found with positive affect. Agreeableness is significantly positively associated with depression and behavioral control ** $p < 0.01$, and no correlation found with anxiety and positive

affect. Conscientiousness showed significant positive correlation with anxiety, depression and behavioral control ** $p < 0.01$ and inverse correlation found with positive affect * $p < 0.05$. Neuroticism is positively correlated with depression and behavioral control * $p < 0.05$. There is no association found with anxiety positive affect. Openness to experience showed significant positive correlation with anxiety, depression and behavioral control ** $p < 0.01$. There is no association found between openness to experience and positive affect.

Subscales of mental health inventory showed significant positive association with each other ** $p < 0.01$.

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to determine how married couples' mental health was impacted by conflict between work family conflict and personality factors. Conflict between family and work

happens when the job creates some problems in the individual's private life depending on their properties. Result of demographics characteristics of participants explore that the age range were categorized into developmental stages

spouse with middle adulthood were 68.8% and late adulthood were 31.1%. Amongst them male 54.6% spouse 54.6% and female spouse were 45.4%). Individuals with less working hours were 53.6% and long working hours were 46.4%. Amongst them 61.4% were single working spouse and 38.6% were both working couples. Lower economic status couples were 17.9%, lower middle was 52.1%, middle economic status was 27.1% and high socioeconomic status was 2.9%.

The findings of table II indicates that the conflicts between family and job, mental wellbeing and personal characteristics of teachers will be substantially linked. Findings explored that individuals with varying personality traits respond in different ways to stressors and conflicts due to work place and vice versa. In addition, there is no previous study which took the large or superior approach by analyzing Work Family Conflict. Anxiety is significantly correlating (positive in the direction) with depression, behavioral monitoring and positive mental health effect. The negative relationship between personality traits and Work Family Conflict is also supported (Fukuzaki et al., 2021). He also stresses the trait of extraversion and its effect on WFCs, noting that extroverts will accumulate social support as a resource for the execution, negotiation and reduction of the Work Family Conflict roles in employment and family life. The positive links, however, relate to findings that show contradictory ties among extraversion and the Work Family Conflict. Their results indicate that extraversion is merely a positive incentive which cannot be regarded as a WFC precedent but rather as essential in facilitating work-family roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The findings indicate that the relationship between the conscientiousness and the WFC has been positive, consistent to literature as Johnson & Smith (2021) findings that highly conscientious people experience higher Work Family Conflict levels while adjusting, complying, or over

boarding at the detriment of their family and other individuals. The conformity tension explains the positive connection between comfort and Work Family Conflict. The findings showed that highly attentive people are able to track their behavior easily regardless of whether they engage in a negative job are a significant positive relationship between knowledge and the Work Family Conflict. The adverse effects of various job stressors are regulated more widely by these individuals.

Studies by (Ervasti et al., 2019; also showed in line with our findings that the intense nervousness, concern and negative emotions associated with psychological distress and depression. Stress in one task can quickly spread to other places, for example family life. A strong negative partnership was observed between transparency and the Work Family Conflict. Priyadharshini & Wesley (2014) support this observation, who found that people with a high degree of openness to knowledge are highly responsive and willing to try new ways of doing things. The findings contradicted previous studies that found the family and mental wellbeing to be negative (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). The findings of previous research are supported by the clear connection between family and mental health conflicts (Zhou et al., 2021). As with the Work Family Conflict, Family Work Conflict and depression relationship, these analyzes demonstrate that the Work Family Conflict, Family Work Conflict were specifically and positively linked to depression. These finding supplements existing literature claiming that the Work Family Conflict, Family Work Conflict and psychological outcomes are related. The correlations with depressive symptoms were greater for the Work Family Conflict than for Family Work Conflict, as indicated by the higher standards Work Family Conflict regression coefficient. Further studies have shown that Family Work Conflict is a better prediction for mental illness than Work Family Conflict (Yang et al., 2015).

Conclusion

Findings of the study concluded that work family conflicts are now becoming a social issue and personality traits play significant role in work and family conflicts and it leads to anxiety, depression, low life satisfaction as well as low satisfaction from marital life. Personality traits such as extroversion and conscientiousness increased positive affect and leads healthy impact on mental health of working spouses. In order to minimize mental health issues, it is need to promote the work and family roles and there must be introduced some personality specific strategies to prevent work and family conflicts and to promote well-being.

Limitation and Recommendation

Study was limited to teachers only. Future research should consider other sample and variables such as work role. There must be assessed mediating or moderating effects of personality traits in managing work conflicts and family conflicts.

Contribution of Authors

Faisal Hayat Khan: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft

Khizra Iqbal: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing - Reviewing & Editing, Supervision

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by the authors.

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The authors declared no source of funding.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets of the current study are not available publicly due to ethical reasons but are available from the corresponding author [K.I.] upon the reasonable request.

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