

## A Comparative Study of Flourishing and Boundary Management of Psychology among Male and Female IT employees in India

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### Abstract

**Background:** Work family researchers have had much success in encouraging both organizations and individuals to recognize the importance of achieving greater balance in our lives. In recent times, research on the interactions between the work and family domains have grown to be a significant area of inquiry in industrial and organizational psychology (Casper et al., 2007; Eby et al., 2005) and any change in the workplace and employees demographics have made exploring the work and family relationship even more relevant. There is a growing amount of research that shows how the blurring of boundaries of work and family life have detrimental effects to the organizations in terms of effectiveness and efficiency and to the individual in terms of stress, quality of life and hampering with well-being.

**Objective:** The study aims to see the relationship between work family conflict, boundary management and flourishing of the individuals working in the Indian private sector.

**Method:** The study is based on primary data collected from employees working in private sector.

**Findings:** Significant negative relationship between work-family conflict and flourishing with no gender difference in terms of work-family conflict, flourishing and boundary management was found in the study.

**Keywords:** work family conflict; flourishing;work-family boundary management, Family Domain, Behavior

### Introduction

Work and family are the two most important domains of an individual's life, which function in parallel and is also believed that issues might spill from one area into the other, thereby more prone to create conflict (Howard, Donofrio & Boles, 2004). However, both work and family are vital sectors of one's existence that cannot be separated (Ahmad, Muzzam, Anjum, Nawaz, 2020). Work is considered as one of the most fundamental element of an individual's life. It is seen as something that is intentional, carried out on voluntary basis and which individual performs to support itself and their families. Family on the other hand, includes everyone living and supporting one another and in the Indian context it is given most importance due to the nature of society which is collectivist in nature and holds greater emphasis on family integrity, loyalty and unity. It is a kind of society that gives group a priority over an individual. Therefore, it is safe to say that both work and family life together hold a great deal of importance which is traditionally explored in the form of conflict under the occupational stress paradigm in both western and eastern cultures. In terms of workplace work family conflict in employees are strongly related to negative organizational outcomes (job dissatisfaction, boredom, burnout) and psychological stress (depression, aggression) which ultimately results into reduced productivity of employees at workplace. (Greenhaus&Beutell, 1985; Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton,2000; Milhelic&Tekavcic,2014).

With changes in work characteristics including growing number of dual career families, there is a rapid rise in elder care demands at home due to involvement of both men and women at work which ultimately creates difficulties in focusing on family demands and therefore creating problems in participation at workplace, all of which creates hindrances in maintaining a balance. As an interdisciplinary research domain work-family conflict

can be described as a “*type of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some ways.*”(Greenhaus&Beutell, 1985).

There is a growing body of literature that addresses the conflicting demands between personal and professional responsibilities thereby reflecting that work family conflict is bi-directional. (Carlson, Kacmar& Williams). It has been suggested that the most significant sources of stress for employees are the inability to negotiate their work schedules and the requirement that they work long hours. This makes it difficult for workers to balance the demands of their jobs with their personal and family obligations.

There are several theories that explain the causes of work-family conflict among which scarcity and conflict theory are two of the most commonly mentioned theories in the literature. The scarcity theory assumes that personal resources such as time, energy, and attention are finite, and that allocating more resources to one job necessitates allocating fewer resources to the other. (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Marks 1977) and conflict theory assumes work and family domains to be incompatible since they have separate norms and duties(Greenhaus&Beutell, 1985).Combining both theories, one could argue that pressures in one domain (for example, job) can cause impatience, exhaustion, or obsession with those problems, restricting one's ability to satisfy the needs of other domains of life (for example, family), resulting in work-family conflict.

#### *Boundary Management*

Human nature is fundamentally about setting and maintaining boundaries (Nippert-Eng 1996; Zerubavel 1991). Boundary management procedure can be best explained from an individual's perception about the relationship between two roles and the opportunities and resources that encourage or discourage boundary crossing. There are underlying expectations and groundwork around work and family, and because of changes between the positions become more challenging, the borders can also be a source of conflict. When the pressures of one group's role conflict with the demands of another group's role, this is when inter-role conflict arises (Kahn et al. 1964). Greenhaus&Beutell (1985) defined work-family conflict as a particular type of inter-role conflict in which work and family roles are mutually incompatible.

#### *Flourishing*

The notion of flourishing and its components have been widely debated (Huta & Waterman, 2014; Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, & King, 2008; Waterman, 2008). It is typically thought to comprise vital or even basic physical and/or mental activity for a person. Several authors have tackled the definition and components of flourishing in different ways (e.g., Huta & Waterman, 2014; Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, & King, 2008) the most common definition of flourishing is “*A condition of well-being in which an individual recognises his or her own potential, can cope with everyday life obstacles, work productively, and contribute to his or her community*”.

The goal of positive psychology is to help people flourish, which is a combination of social and emotional well-being. For flourishing to work successfully, social contexts, as well as hopeful future expectations, are essential. and are referred to as “being in an optimal range of human functioning, which is linked to wellness, generativity, performance, growth, and resilience” (Fredrickson et. al, 2005).

## **Methodology**

### **Objectives**

The study aim to see the relationship between work family conflict, boundary management and flourishing of the IT sector employees in the Indian context. And whether work family conflict have an impact on the flourishing along with boundary management.

### **Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There will be significant relationship between work family conflict and flourishing of the employee in the Indian context.

**Hypothesis 2:** There will be significant relationship between boundary management and flourishing.

**Hypothesis 3:** There will be no significant difference between the male and female subjects on work family conflict.

**Hypothesis 4:** There will be no significant difference between the male and female subjects on boundary management

**Hypothesis 5:** There will be no significant difference between the male and female subjects on flourishing.

**Participants And Procedure**

Our study surveyed private sector employees in India. Descriptive research was adopted for assessing the underlying relationship of the variable under study. We have administered structured questionnaires. The data was collected using online (Google forms) method fully. The present study has adopted the non- probability snowball sampling where we have used referencing for collecting the responses. A sample of 200 working professionals from Private sector in India were included. The sample is further divided into 100 males and 100 females. Professionals with a work experience of at least 2 years and more were included Freshers’, interns, and retired professionals were excluded from the study.

**Analysis**

For the purpose of this study, we used standardized scales of work family conflict, flourishing and boundary management to conduct the survey. The tool used to study work family conflict was work-family conflict (WAFCS) a short 10 item 7-point Likert scale by Haslam et. al (2015) further flourishing was assessed using Flourishing scale an 8 item, 7-point Likert scale by Diener (2009) and Work Life indicator scale by Elle Kossek (2012) measuring the boundary management.

**Statical Analysis**

T-test, Correlation and ANOVA was used as the statistical analysis for the study and the data was analyzed in Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS).

**Results**

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std Deviation
<b>FL</b>	5.6369	0.84553
<b>WFC</b>	3.411	0.88889

N = 200

FL -- Flourishing

WFC – Work Family Conflict

**Table 2: Correlation Table**

		FL	WFC
FL	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	<b>-0.166*</b> <b>0.019</b>
WFC	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>-0.166*</b> <b>0.019</b>	1

N = 200

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

FL -- Flourishing

WFC – Work Family Conflict

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>WFC</b>	18.165	4.99425
<b>FWC</b>	15.945	4.60085
<b>FL</b>	5.6369	0.84553
<b>BM</b>	3.3359	0.35606

N = 200

WFC – Work Family Conflict FWC – Family Work Conflict  
 FL – Flourishing BM – Boundary Management

**Table 4: Correlation table of work to family conflict, family to work conflict, flourishing, boundary management**

		WFC	FWC	FL	BM
<b>WFC</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	0.716**	-0.137	0.174*
	Sig. (2 - tailed)		0.000	0.054	0.013
<b>FWC</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.716**	1	-0.172*	0.107
	Sig. (2 - tailed)	0.000		0.015	0.132
<b>FL</b>	Pearson Correlation	-0.137	-0.172*	1	0.271**
	Sig. (2 - tailed)	0.054	0.015		0.000
<b>BM</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.174*	0.107	0.271**	1
	Sig. (2 - tailed)	0.013	0.132	0.000	

N = 200

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

\*Correlation is significant at the level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Table 5: Gender and Work Family Conflict**

GROUP STATISTICS				
	Gender	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
<b>WFC</b>	Female	3.4860	0.83739	0.08374
	Male	3.3360	0.93577	0.09358

N = 100

**Table 6: T-Table of Gender and Work Family Conflict**

Independent Samples Test	
Levene's test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
WFC	Equal Variances Assumed	0.477	0.490	1.195	198	0.234	0.15000	0.12557	-0.9763	0.39763
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.195	195.606	0.234	0.15000	0.12557	-0.9765	0.39763

**Table 7: Gender and Flourishing**

GROUP STATISTICS				
	Gender	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
FL	Female	5.7588	0.69068	0.06907
	Male	5.5150	0.96437	0.09644

N = 100

**Table 8: T-Table of Gender and Flourishing**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
FL	Equal Variances Assumed	2.395	0.123	2.055	198	0.041	0.24375	0.11862	0.00983	0.47767
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			2.055	179.406	0.041	0.24375	0.11862	0.00983	0.47782

**Table 9: Gender and Boundary Management**

GROUP STATISTICS				
	Gender	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
FL	Female	5.7588	0.69068	0.06907
	Male	5.5150	0.96437	0.09644

N = 100

**Table 10: T-Table of Gender and Boundary Management**

<b>Independent Samples Test</b>										
		Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
FL	Equal Variances Assumed	0.000	0.999	-0.466	198	0.641	-0.02353	0.05045	-0.12303	0.07597
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-0.466	197.697	0.641	-0.02353	0.05045	-0.12303	0.07597

**Discussion**

**Relationship between work family conflict and flourishing**

It was hypothesized that there will be significant relationship between work family conflict and flourishing. The result of the present study confirmed the hypothesis (H1). There was a significant negative relationship between the work family conflict and flourishing. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics with Mean (5.63 and 3.4) & SD (.84 and .88) for flourishing and work family conflict respectively. Table 2 shows the correlation as -.166 which is a negative significant relationship at 0.05 level. Thus, work family conflict and flourishing showed a negative relationship.

**Relationship between boundary management and flourishing**

It was hypothesized that there will be significant relationship between boundary management and flourishing. The result of the present study confirmed the hypothesis (H2). There was a significant positive relationship between boundary management and flourishing. Table 3 depicts the descriptive statistics with Mean (3.3, 5.6) and SD (.35, .84) for boundary management and flourishing respectively. Table 4 depicts the correlation as .271 which shows that there is a positive significant relationship between boundary management and flourishing at 0.01 level.

**Difference between the male and female subjects on work family conflict**

It was hypothesized that there will be no significant difference between male and female subjects on work family conflict and it can be seen in table 5, that the mean difference between male and females is .15 on work family conflict. Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test,  $F(198)=.477, p=.490$ . Further, as shown in table 6, The independent sample T-Test shows that male and female subject were not statistically significant on work family conflict,  $t(198)=1.19, p=.23$ , which implies that gender has no significant difference on work family conflict and therefore, study fails to reject the null hypothesis.

**Difference between the male and female subjects on Flourishing**

It was hypothesized that there will be no significant difference between male and female subjects on Flourishing. As seen from table 7 that the mean difference between male and females is .243 on flourishing. Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test,

$F(198)=2.3$ ,  $p=.123$ . Further, as shown in table 8, The independent sample T-Test shows that male and female subject were statistically significant on flourishing,  $t(198)=2.05$ ,  $p=.041$ , which implies that gender has significant difference on flourishing and therefore, study fails to reject the null hypothesis.

#### **Difference between the male and female subjects on boundary management**

It was hypothesized that there will be no significant difference between male and female subjects on boundary management. As seen from table 9 that the mean difference between male and females is .023 on boundary management. Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test,  $F(198) = .000$ ,  $p=.999$ . Further, as shown in table 10, The independent sample T-Test shows that male and female subject were not statistically significant,  $t(198)=-.466$ ,  $p=.641$ , which implies that gender has no significant difference on boundary management and therefore, study fails to reject the null hypothesis.

#### **Conclusion**

The present study claims that people are expected to fulfil several roles (e.g., job and family responsibilities), each of which demands its own amount of time, skills, knowledge, and other demands. Conflict arises in everyday life when people take part in variety of roles and tasks each with its own set of obligations and challenges (Cheng and McCarthy, 2013) that cannot be separated and can lead to work family conflict (Ahmad, Muazzam, Anjum, Visvizi, and Nawaz, 2020). The findings of the present study reveals a negative relationship between work family conflict and flourishing and also depicts that there is no significant difference between males and females in the private sector in terms of work family conflict, flourishing and boundary management.

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