

**Work-family conflict and Work-family enrichment interactions: A Work home interface perspective.**

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**ABSTRACT**

The socioeconomic situation today currently demands families to have double earners in order to guarantee basic rights to education and health. The increase of dual income household means that more people have a combination of employment and family responsibilities. Unfavorable combinations of work and homework may lead to various unfavorable outcomes for individuals and organization. Hence, its thorough interpretation is necessary to establish appropriate action and preventive guidelines. A lot of research has been put into exploring the causal association between work – family conflict (WFC) and negative measures of well-being over the past decade. There is very little awareness of the effect of work family enrichment (WFE) on wellness. Perhaps noticeably, relatively few researches have examined the simultaneous impact of both WFC and WFE on wellbeing. The purpose of this study is to fill these gaps by investigating the directionality of causal interactions between WFE, WFC and two wellbeing parameters (i.e., job engagement and job strain). The inter relationships study among these variables and the impact on each other has been carried out in this study using structured equation modelling.

Keywords: work - family conflict (WFC), work - family enrichment (WFE), job strain, job engagement, work - home interface

## **Introduction**

In the past few decades, the number of dual earner families has grown worldwide, this has led to a faster pace of living style. The problem of balancing job and home roles has therefore become a major question. A poor at-home interface (WHI) continues to be a major barrier particularly for women to work participation (World Economic Forum, 2016). WHI is a multifaceted, thoroughly studied phenomena. Work – family interfaces are critical study targets for recognizing the well-being of workers. Indeed, several findings have found that workers who experiences a major work – family conflict (WFC) are more prone to report lower occupational well-being. Most WFC work has, until recently, been focused on cross-sectional experiments making the course of causality unclear, significant attempts have been made over the past decade to investigate the causal association between WFC and health. Using panel architecture, Matthews, Wayne, and Ford (2014) have demonstrated that, although WFC forecasts the emotional well-being of workers, the reverse correlation must always be taken into consideration. Meier, Sonntag, and Michel (2015) performed a meta-analysis on 32 experiments utilizing panel structures that suggest mutual associations between WFC and work-specific pressure in the same manner.

Thus, though WFC's influence on negative measures of well-being is well established, less is known about the consequences of another dimension of the work-family interface whereby knowledge or involvement in one task improves the success or functioning of the participant in another, that is, work-family enrichment.

Although most WFC work has, until recently, been focused on cross-sectional experiments making the course of causality unclear, significant attempts have been made over the past decade to investigate the causal association between WFC and health. Moreover, the mutual impact of both WFC and WFE on well-being have not been investigated significantly (Peeters et al., 2013). Focusing solely on one of the two sides of the work-family interface restricts the comprehension of processes and impact concerning work-family conflict on well-being of workers at work(Boz, Martínez-Corts, & Munduate, 2016). It is necessary to undersand that Conflictandenrichment always coexist at certain point of times but at different degrees(Grzywacz&Butler,2005;Rantanen,Kinnunen,Mauno, &Tement,2013).

Thus, a more in-depth study of the effect of WFC and WFE on well-being and vice versa is required, to allow organizations to implement effective interferences (Peeters et al., 2013).The current research was designed to fill those literature gaps. This research attempts

to establish the directivity of the causal relationship between the work family interface (i.e., enrichment and conflict) and the variables of well-being (i.e., job engagement and job strain). As per Tziner and Sharoni's (2014), these relationships were studied using a SEM (Structured Equation Modeling) which provides the best proof of causal orientation in field experiments relative to simultaneous variable systems.

### **Theoretical Background and Hypotheses**

There are various hypotheses regarding the WHI in the area, such as position conflict hypotheses, function creation theories and demand-resource strategies. Role conflict theory (Goode, 1960) assumes that because of restricted time and energy resources, people are unable to fulfill the expectations of all their social roles. Struggle is supposed to arise when so many demands are imposed on the available resources and energy of a person (Sieber, 1974). "People usually prefer to find job - role stresses from the fields of work and family are in certain ways mutually incompatible"

Incapacity to balance job and family pressures will contribute to two kinds of dispute. The first arises as expectations for work-role hinder family obligations The second happens as the expectations of social responsibilities impede performance research. The role of work and family can also have a positive impact on each other. Involvement in multiple roles may support individuals by having exposure to information and interactions that lead to individual fulfilment .Work – family enrichment happens when involvement of a person in one role leads to enhancement of performance in the other role. Work-family enrichment is two way, implying that either work should provide benefits that enhance the functionality of the family domain or the family can provide benefits the enhance the functionality of the work domain. This study focuses specifically on the work - family path in the analysis of conflict and enrichment as this route is more likely to be affected by the activities and policies of an organization.

### **Concept of Conflict between Work - Family and Well - Being**

Work-family studies have clearly shown that elevated rates of WFC are correlated with detrimental aspects of well-being such as decreased burden on the work. Job strain can be described as work-related psychological distress when a worker feels he or she does not have resources to fulfill the requirements; (Hansez, 2008).

Due to this lack of resource utilization resulting from the work balancing cycle and family responsibilities, high WFC rates may lead employees to report more stress on their jobs.

Recent study of work family reports that, in addition to their connection with negative indices of well-being, WFC is also linked with lower levels of successful well-being factors such as job engagement (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). cross-sectional analysis of 267 South African working mothers from many organisations, conducted by Opie & Henn, 2013 found that workers became less involved in their jobs by witnessing tension due to conflicting pressures in their working and family life.

On the other hand, however, Matthews et al. (2014) observed that WFC was correlated with higher rates of subjective well-being over time, utilizing a complete panel configuration of three measurement intervals. This reverse causation (the assumption that WFC induces job engagement) may take place as observed by Greenhaus & Beutell (1985), since workers have less resources available to commit to their domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), thereby reducing their likelihood of satisfying the demands of other positions and causing them to view decrease in WFCs.

In addition, it is often probable that by functioning actively and energetically (job engagement), employees can acquire additional opportunities (Hobfoll, 2002) and minimize their view of WFC. The COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) further elucidates the interaction between the WFC and job strain, workers enrichment with their resource packages by gaining more subjective well-being, helping them to better cope with challenging situations (Hobfoll, 2002) and therefore their perception of WFC. Consequently, in this study we have considered the opinion that work involvement decreases WFC experience and hypothesized a negative association between job engagement and WFC.

So the following has been hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a reciprocal relationship between WFC and job strain in such a way that WFC have positive effect on job strain and the vice versa.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a reciprocal relationship between WFC and job engagement in such a way that WFC have negative effect on job stain and the vice versa.

### **Concept of Work–Family Enrichment and Well-Being**

WFE is expected to be positively linked to the commitment to work. Reclaiming multiple roles has positive effects on mental and physical well-being owing to better exposure to resources, according to the expansionist hypothesis (Marks, 1977). Undoubtedly, WFE is the mechanism through which work-related resources allow individuals to grow their particular resources within the family sphere, thereby promoting their success in that family domain

(Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) posits the law of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), as workers believe that their employer rewards them or their families with something valuable, they will have more chances of favourable consequences and appear to reciprocate by displaying work-related actions and activities that are compatible with the advantages they obtain.

Therefore, it is fair to assume that when workers see their job as offering valuable supports as benefits to them in their family role (WFE), they will be more involved in their work and more effort will be made. Accordingly, Wayne, Musisca, and Fleeson (2004) find that, as people encounter WFE, they report putting more efforts into their jobs and becoming more involved in their job.

We may also suggest that perceiving job pressure reduces WFE experience. The negative emotional states produced by job pressure (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) will trip over into the family domain (Pleck, 1977), resulting in a negative state and therefore deteriorating WFE perception.

So we propose the below hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a reciprocal relationship between WFE and job engagement in such a way that WFE have positive effect on job engagement and the vice versa.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is a reciprocal relationship between WFE and job strain have a reciprocal relationship in such a way that WFE have negative effect on job strain and the vice versa.

## **Methodology:**

### **Sampling**

A questionnaire was developed and distributed to staff of an IT provider operating in the software development sector in order to evaluate our hypotheses. The Participants were contacted through emails and online survey were conducted. Our design consisted of cross-sectional measurements performed over a period of 3 months. 512 respondents filled out online questionnaires. In all, after filtering incomplete questionnaires 451 respondents were considered. The sample consisted of 383 men (84.9%) and 68 women (15.1%). Two hundred and twenty-three (49.46%) were developers, 125 (27.71%) were team leaders and 103 (22.83%) were managers.

The entire sample had permanent employment in the organization and worked full-time. Participants were an average of 27.53 years old (SD = 7.89). Most respondents had a graduate or higher degree (95.66 percent), were single (81.36 percent).

**Measures**

Work - family conflict and enrichment were assessed using the validated indicators of Work-Home Interaction subscales used by Nijmegen (Etienne, Hansez & Geurts, 2006). There are eight items in the WFC subscale (e.g. " I feel irritable at home because my work is stressful "). The WFE subscale comprises five items (e.g., " After a good day at work I come home cheerfully, positively impacting the mood at home "). Responses were collected on a Likert-type scale of 5 points (1 = never to 5 = always).

The Job strain and job engagement indicators were prepared from the Positive Occupational State Inventory (POSI) and Negative Occupational State Inventory (NOSI) measurements developed by Barbier, Bertrand, Hansez and Monseur, (2012). The NOSI subscale consists of 11 items (e.g., "I feel demotivated by my work"). The POSI subscale contains eight items (e.g., "I am full with energy at work"). Responses were collected on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = never to 5 = always).

**Data Analyses**

Firstly, a test was conducted to examine the fitness and consistency of the proposed measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a maximum likelihood (Muthén & Muthén, 1998 - 2010) and that the latent constructs -WFE, WFC, work enrichment, and job strain were valid measures (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). Further, invariance to measurement of invariances were also determined (Little, 2013). Next the configural (pattern of fixed and free parameters), weak (factor loadings) and strong (indicator means) invariances of the measurement model were determined.

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the variables**

Variables		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Gender	-	-	-					
2	Age	27.25	4.63	0.05	-				
3	WFC	0.84	0.57	0.04	-0.02	(0.85)			
4	WFE	1.52	0.69	-0.06	-0.18***	-0.15***	(0.83)		
5	job strain	1.58	0.41	0.07	-0.06	0.53***	-0.08	(0.78)	
6	JE	3.05	0.55	-0.03	0.07	-0.25***	0.42***	-0.23***	(0.82)

N = 451. Correlations among variables are provided below the diagonal and Cronbach's alphas are provided on the diagonal. WFC = work-family conflict; WFE = work-family enrichment; JE = job engagement. \*\*\*p < 0.001, \*\*p < 0.01, \*p < 0.05

**Table 2. Measurement invariance**

Model	df	$\chi^2$	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	Comparison	ACFI
1 Configural invariance	235	617.18	.04	.05	.98	-	-

2	Weak invariance	330	628.51	.04	.05	.98	1 vs. 2	.000
3	Strong invariance	329	671.63	.04	.05	.98	1 vs. 3	.001

N = 451. RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; SRMR = the standardized root-mean-square residual; and CFI = comparative fit index;  $\chi^2$  = chi-square and df = the degrees of freedom. Model fit cutoff points used: RMSEA  $\leq$  0.06; SRMR  $\leq$  0.08; CFI,  $\geq$  0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

**Table 3. Results of structural models**

Model	Model description	df	$\chi^2$	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	AIC	Comparison	$\Delta \chi^2(\Delta df)$
1	Mstab. Stability model	221	745.21	.04	.97	27,301.90-	-	-	-
2	Mcaus Causal model (Mstab WFC/WFE → job strain /job engagement)	+225	721.53	.05	.96	27,276.271	vs. 2	23.68(2)***	
3	Mreve. Reversed causation model (Mstab + job strain job engagement → WFC/WFE)	225	736.58	.04	.97	27,288.401	vs. 3	8.63(2)***	
4	Mreci. Reciprocal model (Mcaus Mreve.)	+223	702.19	.05	.97	27,267.071	vs 4 2 vs 4 3 vs 4	43.02(4)*** 19.34(2)** 34.39(2)***	

Notes. N = 451. WFC = work - family conflict, WFE = work-family enrichment; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root-mean-square residual, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, AIC = Akaike Information Criterion, Chi-Square =  $\chi^2$  and the degrees of freedom = df. Model fit cutoff points used: RMSEA  $\leq$  0.06; SRMR  $\leq$  0.08; CFI,  $\geq$  0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001.

Secondly, structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted to test our hypotheses. Four models were designed and tested: (Model 1) a stability model-self-regression of WFE, WFC, job strain and job engagement were tested; (Model 2) a causal model -two paths between WFE/WFC and job strain/engagement were added to Model 1; (Model 3) a reversed causal model - 2 paths between job strain/engagement and WFE/WFC were added to Model 1; and finally (Model 4) a reciprocal model - all paths were included from the two previous models. The variances between objects were permitted to covariate in these models, and the error covariances of similar things were made to vary over time (Finkel, 1995). Parcels methods were used to limit the number of indicators used in a latent variable to be estimated, yet still preserving the robustness of the analysis, and also maintaining the common construct variance while minimizing unrelated specific variance (Little et al., 2002).

### Results and Findings

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and inter-correlations across all research variables. The reliabilities were acceptable as can be seen from the table. At each time of the measurement, the internal consistencies of all constructs were satisfactory ( $\alpha \geq 0.78$ ). The hypothesized measurement model demonstrated a good fit as,  $\chi^2(214) = 862.21$ , RMSEA = 0.05, CFI = 0.97, SRMR = 0.05. All items were found loading reliably within the standardize range from 0.65 to 0.96 on their predicted factors. Table 2 shows the tests of



invariance measurement, the CFI differences between the three invariance were found less than .01 (Little, 2013).

Therefore, measurement of every scale over time was invariant. SEM analysis demonstrated that Models 2, 3, and 4 displayed a substantial decrease in chi-square relative to the stability model (Model 1), which suggested a stronger fit (Table 3). Nevertheless, the greatest drop in chi-square is seen in Model 4,  $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 43.02$ ,  $p < .01$ . We were then contrasted to one another in order to further check which of these three models provides the better representation of the results. Compared with Model 2,  $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 19.34$ ,  $p < .01$ , and Model 3,  $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 34.39$ ,  $p < .001$ , Model 4 displayed a substantial decline in chi-square. As a result, Model 4 (i.e. Reciprocal Model) was observed as the best fitting model.

**Table 4. Lagged effects of the reciprocal model (Model 4)**

Lagged relationship	Coefficient	SE	P
WFC - job strain	.142	.038	.004
Job strain - WFC	.096	.040	.031
WFC - job engagement	-.081	.041	.018
Job engagement - WFC	-.078	.036	.070
WFE - job strain	.012	.038	.801
Job strain - WFE	.021	.032	.523
WFE - job engagement	.167	.033	.000
Job engagement - WFE	.109	.035	.003

Note. N = 451. SE = standard error; WFE = work-to-family enrichment; WFC = work-to-family conflict

**Table 5. Comparison of strength of cross-lagged relationships**

Model description	df	$\chi^2$	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	AIC	Comparison
1 Reciprocal model	223	714.45	.05	.05	.97	26,356.11	-
2 Constrained model (WFC and job strain)	224	714.53	.05	.05	.96	26,356.32	1 vs. 2 1.58(1)
3 Constrained model (WFC and job engagement)	224	715.25	.05	.05	.97	26,356.45	1 vs. 3 1.50(1)
4 Constrained model (WFE and job engagement)	224	714.45	.05	.05	.96	26,356.37	1 vs. 4 0.78(1)

Notes. N = 451. WFC = work - family conflict, WFE = work -family enrichment; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root-mean-square residual, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, AIC = Akaike Information Criterion, Chi-Square =  $\chi^2$  and the degrees of freedom = df. Model fit cutoff points used: RMSEA  $\leq$  0.06; SRMR  $\leq$  0.08; CFI,  $\geq$  0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001.

All results of Model 4 are listed in Table 4 exhibiting that the WFC was positively linked to the job strain and the job strain was positively related to the WFC. This finding is in favor of our hypothesis 1. Finding also reveal that WFC was negatively linked to job engagement and WFC was negatively related to task engagement; supporting Hypothesis 2. WFE has been positively linked to job engagement and positively linked to WFE; supporting



Hypothesis 3. Lastly, no significant relationship was found between WFE and job strain. Hence, there was no support for our Hypothesis 4. As seen in Table 5, the chi-square differential tests showed that constrained models were not distinct from the freely calculated model by constraining the respective paths to be equivalent. These findings revealed that every given causal relationship has the same impact as its reverse causal relationship.

## **Discussion**

The aim of this research was to explore the relationships between WFC, WFE, work strain and jobs engagement. Assessment of the work-family interface 's direct, reversed and reciprocal effect on the well-being of the knowledge deficit due to the relative lack of research in this area (Peeters et al., 2013). Our analysis confirms reciprocal relations between WFC- job strain (supporting Hypothesis 1) but reciprocal relational WFC-job engagement was not supported (Hypothesis 2 not supported) as the negative impact of job engagement on WFC was not significant. The results comply with traditional working-family design expectations.

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to their job. By contrast, workers are gaining more and more resources by engaging in their work, leading them to perceive WFC (Hobfoll, 2002). Regarding enrichment, our research supports reciprocal relations of WFE and job engagement (Hypothesis 3). Recognizing the work rewards them with something positive (WFE), employees become more engaged in their work in order to reciprocate the advantages earned. Alternatively, the positive feelings and conditions arising from job engagement spill over and have a significant effect on the family domain, adding to the conception of WFE among employees. Employment thus provides opportunities for workers, enriches their social lives and allows them to perceive WFE. While some studies have shown that WFE is linked to positive indicators of well-being, empirical work has shown that WFE could also be associated with negative indicators of well-being, such as depression or burnout (Innstranda, et.al, 2008). As per COR theory, while individuals are not currently threatened with stressors, they continue to create resource surpluses to minimize the risk of possible loss; in other words, by investing in other resources they increase their reserve of resources (Hobfoll, 2002). WFE may be viewed as a resource surplus which may render an person less prone to loss of resources. Nonetheless, this resource advantage may reduce the strain of multiple or discrepant commitments (Sieber, 1974), growing awareness of negative measures of well-being. However, Innstranda et.al. (2008), observed adverse reciprocal relations between the WFE and burnout. With regard to strain, Kallaith (2014 ) found that WFE had a negative relation to psychological strain. Most specifically, the findings found that only two of WFE's three dimensions (WFE-affect and WFE-capital) were correlated strongly with decreased psychological pressure. Hence, the non-significant reciprocal effects observed in the present analysis between WFE and job pressure (Hypothesis 4) may be attributed to the fact that we find WFE to be a global construct rather than a three-dimensional definition.

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

The present research is not without limitations. First, while we used gender and age as control variables, the interaction being analyzed may have influenced a number of other factors, making it difficult to ensure that the relationships are free from questionable causes (Bollen, 1989). For example, the presence of small children seems to affect work-family conflict understanding (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Second, the use of a single organisation's limited data resulting in the standard approach being biased (Podsakoff et.al 2012). It is however noteworthy that we used a quantitative method of two measuring periods to minimize the risk of this (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Moreover, it should be noted that at all stages both WFC and WFE levels are very small which may have influenced our findings.

As stated earlier, tools, and particularly factors, seem to play a significant role in the relationship between work-family interface and well-being, as the various hypotheses explored in this study show.

For eg, resource conservation theory of a resource gain or loss scale, (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002); spill over theory indicating the influence of jobs and families on one another in terms of moods, attitudes, feelings, beliefs, etc., (Pleck, 1977); positive affective spill over, (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Therefore, potential research should investigate the role of resources or affect as mediators in the work-family interface and well-being relationship in order to clarify more fully the underlying mechanism.

### **Practical Implications**

Through time, WFE raises the engagement of workers to perform; while WFC reduces their degree of job engagement and improves their level of work strain. Therefore, it is crucial that companies allow workers to manage their work and personal lives in order to reduce the burden on work and increase jobs. Organizations may do that through a variety of job and family engagement initiatives. Traditionally, employer-family involvement encompasses three workforce features that affect work-family relationships: (a) working environments and work structure, such as operating hours and work designs that allow employees flexibility on whether, where or how they do their job; (b) company culture and policies on the balance between work and non-work relationships and (c) human resource policy. Organizations should also increase consciousness among employees about how to properly handle their working and personal life by encouraging them to improve self-management skills. Admittedly, such qualities, which are essential in the creation of work-family approaches, include establishing goals, managing work and family relationships, and optimizing the minimal time utilisable for outside work (Christensen, 1999). Throughout the long run, engaging throughout work raises WFE and reduces WFC; whereas perceiving job pressure improves WFC. This study therefore emphasizes the value of focusing specifically on job engagement. The most promising way to boost engagement may be to improve various job resources and personal resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Schaufeli and Salanova (2010 ) describe two types of approaches to improve work engagement: (1) interpersonal approaches relating to methods that rely on modifying the attitudes , values, or objectives and motivations of the employee. For instance, recognizing and improving one's own personal abilities, aiming to accomplish concrete personal objectives, growing resilience; (2) organizational initiatives relating to approaches aimed at measuring and reviewing workers, planning and modifying environments, training and career selection.

This study further stresses the importance of acting explicitly on job stress. Another approach for managers to minimize job strain is through the introduction of primary types of preventive measures that seek to decrease job strain by changing the way work is organized and managed. Such primary activities are recognized as the most important preventive steps for minimizing occupational causes of stress. These involve, for example, specifically identifying the duties and obligations of employees, creating incentives for workers to engage in decisions that impact their employment or offering further resources and opportunities for social interactions amongst employees.

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