



## Predictors of Work-Family Interference: A Comparative Study of Female School Teachers

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### Abstract

The study aims to investigate the predictors of work-family interference among female school teachers in rural and urban areas. By comparing the two settings, the research seeks to identify the contextual factors that contribute to the challenges faced by teachers in balancing their work and family responsibilities. Data from the participants were gathered using a cross-sectional research design and a non-probability purposive sampling technique. Data was collected from females belongs to urban (Lahore) and rural (Toba Tek Singh) district from February to August 2022 in the Government sector. The sample was comprised of ( $N=300$ ;  $n=150$  rural and  $n=150$  urban) and work and family conflict scale (Haslam et al., 2015) was used to collect data. The comparison was made on the basis of demographics variables. The results revealed that age, ethnicity (rural and urban), marital status, number of children, and family system were remarkable to prognosticate of work-family interference among female school teachers. Moreover, the interference of work to family and from family to work was higher in the married young adult females having a greater number of children and living in the urban area as compared to unmarried and living in rural areas. Contextual factors significantly influence work-family interference. It is concluded that the demographics, such as geographical location (rural vs. urban), number of children, family system, age and marital status play a crucial role in determining the level of work-family and family-work interference experienced by female school teachers.

**Keywords:** Females, School Teachers, Work-Family Interference

### 1. Introduction

In adult life, the two crucial areas that one's strives to maintain balance in his/her life are work and family. However, sometimes these two unique domains get in conflict due to limited resources and dual responsibilities. Work-family dilemma trend to attract research attention from the last two decades. It has become challenging for many employees especially for females to manage their dual responsibilities related to work and family life. Working females dynamically manage multiple duties by frequently switching from one domain to another domain. However, executing multiple roles in work and family life, sometimes enhance negative effect on working employees. In the growing body of investigation on work family conflict has established that interference in work and family life has adverse effects on the health and well-being of the employees (Kinnunen et al., 2006; Noor, 2003), anxiousness, and low mood (Grimshaw, 1999), physical stress (Forlin & Hattie, 1996), absentees and low morale (Billingsley & Cross, 1992), resigning job (Noor & Maad, 2008).

Schools are considered as the gateway to civilized society in which teachers act as role models to enlighten the learner's personality for becoming productive members of society. The teaching profession is considered as most respectable and secure from a safety point of view for females. However, implying this does not mean that the teaching profession is free of troublesome and work stressors (Jarvis, 2002). Stress ingredient is inherent in every work field therefore, the teaching profession is also emancipated of stressors (Oliver & Venter, 2003). Teaching career is considered as stressful because of underpinning multiple work conditions such as workload, encountering stubborn students, overloaded schoolrooms, insufficient salary packages, uncooperative parents and colleagues, institutions non-friendly environment, and strict administrative obligations (Carter, 2000; Travers & Cooper, 1996; Pithers & Soden, 1998; Lewis, 1999; Goswami, 2013; Anjum et al., 2019).

Work and family interference and relationships are not the new features and experiences. Conflicts and interference arise in the work and family areas, and it is reported in the previous studies, as well as acknowledged in the discipline of social sciences (Pitt-Catsouphes et al., 2006; Sajid & Ali, 2018). The demands and expectations from different roles interfere and sometimes, resultant in role conflict (Duxbury et al., 1994). Role conflict interference is identified as bi-directional phenomena, more elaborated considered as two opposite pillars: work to family interference (WIF), and from family to work interference (FIW) (Duxbury et al., 1994; Eagle et al., 1998). WIF and FIW are the conceptually distinct concepts, but undoubtedly these are interrelated (Guttek et al., 1991; O'Driscoll et al., 1992). On the one side, work to family interference happens when the expected obligations of work intervene in performing family-related obligations. For instance, working women have to spend more time in their performing work deadlines, therefore, left with insufficient time to fulfill family-related responsibilities. Similarly, in working women's life when responsibilities specifically related to family consume more time and energy that is family to work interference increase, therefore her performance in the work domain suffered. For instance, spending time to nurture a child at home will not let working women go outside to work.

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Literature discloses three types of work and family conflicts such as time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict. The first type time-based conflict takes place when responsibilities of one domain consume more time and prevent an employee to allow sufficient time to execute responsibilities of other domain e.g., long working hours, inflexible work schedule, caring elders and children (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Pleck et al., 1980; Senturk & Ali, 2021). Conflicts related to strain-based happen when tension and strain are in one domain interfered with an individual ability to performing responsibilities of other domains. Strain based conflict occur immediately upon a tension in one domain interfered with an individual's ability to fulfill the other role demands (Netemeyer et al., 1996) e.g., anxiety, irritability, fatigue, and tension (Premeaux et al., 2007), and behavioral conflict arises when behavioral actions called for in executing role in one domain shows incompatible with those needed to execute role in another domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). e.g., females usually are supposed to remain serious and strict at the workplace contrary to being nice, calm, and polite at home (Anjum et al., 2019).

The main purpose of this study was to find out the predictors of work-family interference among working female teachers across ethnicity (urban and rural areas). In traditional societies like Pakistan, working women still considered been responsible for handling their cultural expected traditional accountabilities in combination with upholding their work. Teachers are not just an employee but they also carry all colors of social relation from daughter, sister to wife, mother, and daughter-sister-in-law, etc. (Ahmad & Muazzam, 2020). Therefore, the current paper studied the role of demographics such as age, number of children in the work-family, marital status, family system, and years of work experience in work-family interference across rural and urban areas.

## 2. Method

Data from the female school teachers were gathered using a cross-sectional research design and purposive sampling method. The interference of work to family and from family to work was measured by using (Haslam et al., 2015). This scale consists of 10 items with 7-point Likert scale. The sample was comprised of ( $N=300$ ) women working in government schools. The sample was divided into two categories, 150 women were from the rural district (Toba Tek Singh) area and 150 from the urban district (Lahore), Province Punjab, Pakistan. The age range of participants was from 21 to 50 years ( $M=33.66$ ,  $SD=6.60$ ). The participants were approached at their working institutions after getting permission from concerned authorities. A demographic sheet was used by consisting area of the participants, age, number of children, family system, marital status, and years of work experience.

## 3. Results

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that age, area, marital status, number of children, and family system, would likely to be a significant positive predictor of work-family interference in female school teachers.

**Table 1: Step-wise Regression Analysis of Demographic Variables with Work-Family Interference in Female School Teachers (N=300)**

Variables	$\beta$	$t$	$p <$
( $R = .49$ , $\Delta R^2 = .49$ )			
Age	-.25	-4.61	.001***
Area	.33	7.49	.001***
Marital Status	-.02	-.42	.670(ns)
No of Children	.21	3.13	.002**
Family System	.38	8.24	.001***

*Note.* \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , ns= non-significant

Table 1 shows that age, area, number of children, and family system (Nuclear and joint) are the significant predictors of work-family interference in female school teachers. Variables in model one or step one is found to be significant predictors of work-family interference in female school teachers under the condition  $F(5, 294) = 57.49$  as  $p = .000$  i.e.,  $p < 0.001$ .

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that age, area, marital status, number of children, and family system, would likely to be significant positive predictors of family-work interference in female school teachers.

Table 2 shows that in model one from demographics age, area, number of children, marital status, and family system (Nuclear and joint) are the significant positive predictors of family-work interference in female school teachers. Variables in model one or step one is found to be significant predictors of family-work interference in female school teachers under the condition  $F(5, 294) = 40.13$  as  $p = .000$  i.e.,  $p < 0.001$ .

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that teachers living in urban areas would likely to have more work-family interference than teachers living in rural areas.

**Table 2: Step-wise Regression Analysis of Demographic Variables with Family-Work Interference in Female School Teachers (N=300)**

Variables	$\beta$	$t$	$p <$
(R= .41, $\Delta R^2 = .40$ )			
Age	-.16	-2.82	.005**
Area	.48	10.05	.001***
Marital Status	.14	2.09	.037*
No of Children	.24	3.22	.001***
Family System	.16	3.37	.001***

Note. \* $p < 0.05$  \*\* $p < 0.01$  \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

**Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test for Area and Work-Family Interference (WFI), Family-Work Interference (FWI) (N = 300)**

Variable	Rural (n = 150)		Urban (n = 150)		$t$	$p <$	95% CI		Cohn's $d$
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
WFI	11.68	4.13	16.49	3.11	9.95	.001***	5.76	3.86	1.31
FWI	6.37	3.62	11.07	3.11	12.04	.001***	5.46	3.93	1.39

Note. \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

Table 3 shows the mean values for both area categories (rural & urban). Urban areas have greater rates of work-family and family-work interference than rural areas.

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that work-family interference would likely to have more in young adults than in middle adults.

**Table 4: Independent sample t-test for Age and Work-Family Interference (WFI), Family-Work Interference (FWI) (N = 300)**

Variable	Young Adults		Middle adult		$t$	$p <$	95% CI		Cohn's $d$
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
WFI	15.03	5.47	13.13	3.85	3.48	.001***	.83	2.98	0.40
FWI	9.46	4.28	7.97	3.79	3.20	.002**	.58	2.42	0.37

Note. \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Table 4 shows the mean values for both age categories young adults and middle adults. Young adults experience more work-family and family-work interference than middle-aged people.

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that work-family interference would likely to have more in married participants than unmarried.

**Table 5: Independent sample t-test for Marital status and Work-Family Interference (WFI), Family-Work Interference (FWI) (N = 300)**

Variable	Married		Unmarried		$t$	$p <$	95% CI		Cohn's $d$
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
WFI	14.70	4.96	12.49	4.06	3.60	.001***	1.00	3.40	0.49
FWI	8.93	4.13	8.18	4.02	1.41	.16(ns)	.30	1.79	0.18

Note. \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , ns= non-significant

Table 5 shows the mean values for both marital status categories. Married participants report more work-family interference than single participants, but there are no appreciable variations in family-work interference between married and single participants.

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that work-family interference would likely to have more in those participants who have a greater number of children than a lower number of children.

Table 6 shows the mean values for both children's categories (0 – 1) and (2 – 7) shows that work-family interference and family-work interference is higher in those participants who have a greater number of children than a smaller number of children.

**Hypothesis:** It was hypothesized that work-family interference would likely to have more in the joint family system than the nuclear family system.

**Table 6: Independent sample t-test for Number of Children and Work-Family Interference (WFI), Family-Work Interference (FWI) (N = 300)**

Variable	Children (0 - 1)		Children (2 - 7)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> <	95% CI		Cohn's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
WFI	12.38	3.98	15.30	5.05	5.40	.001***	3.98	1.85	1.15
FWI	7.69	4.15	9.46	3.92	3.75	.001***	2.70	.84	

Note. \*\*\**p*<0.001,

**Table 7: Independent sample t-test for Family System and Work-Family Interference (WFI), Family-Work Interference (FWI) (N = 300)**

Variable	Nuclear		Joint		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> <	95% CI		Cohn's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
WFI	12.45	4.31	18.30	3.30	11.22	.001***	6.87	4.82	1.52
FWI	7.87	4.00	10.90	3.54	6.08	.001***	4.02	2.05	0.80

Note. \*\*\**p*<0.001

Table 7 shows the mean values for both family system categories nuclear family system and joint family system shows significant that work-family interference and family-work interference is higher in joint family system than nuclear family system.

#### 4. Discussion

The purpose of this work was to investigate the work-family interferences in government female school teachers and explore the predictors of work-family interference. It was hypothesized that teachers living in urban areas will have more work-family interference as compare to teacher's resident in rural areas. The results show a significant positive relationship of work-family interference in female school teachers with reference to ethnicity (rural/urban). It is found that teachers living in urban areas have to face more work-family interference as compared to rural areas. Urban life is considered a little difficult as compared to rural life, because in the urban areas every person is busy in their own work, completing their particular responsibilities. Another problem in urban life is crowding, it means a huge number of people are resident in a small large number of people living in confined areas. This crowding in the urban area is connected to mental health problems such as depression, aggression, and stress (Regoezci, 2008; Stylianou & Nicolich, 2009). Moreover, urban schools are more modernized, follow rules and regulations, and practice strict checks on teaching practices, etc. These all factors aggravate the interference of work-related variables. In such a scenario, the demands and role expectations from urban female teachers would of course higher than rural-based female teachers, in short, these incompatibilities easily enhanced the interference of work and family in an urban area (Combat, 2014; Sichambo et al., 2012).

Work-family interference found to be more in young adults having less work experience as compared to middle adults with more work experience. The possible explanation of such findings could be that at a young age women employees' coping and management skills are not strong enough to cope with challenging situations. However, with the passage of time and increasing work experience, the working females' insight develops and their rationally tend to analyzed situations with effective coping management which eventually minimized interference from any domain (Namayandeh et al., 2010).

The participants who are married have more work-family interference as compared to those participants who are unmarried. This indicates that people who are married have to deal with more dissension in their work as compared to unmarried people, (Herman & Gyllstrom, 1977). On the other hand, Rehman and Khan (2013) describe that teacher who are married undergo more work-family dissension as compared to unmarried teachers. Women employees carrying the child-rearing responsibilities versus employees without a child, would experience greater conflict (Hosking & Western, 2008).

Similarly, findings from the current study are in line with previous findings that working women having young children experienced more interference in terms of time-based dissension as compared to the employees having older offspring (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1980; Pleck, 1977). Moreover, the current study revealed that work-family interference found to be more among those female employees having more children as compared to fewer children. The findings are in line with previous researches that employees having more children encountered trouble regulating their time, demands, and emotions between work and family domains (Netemeyer et al., 1996). In other words, those working people who have more children reported having more work-family conflict they compete for working women time than the families having fewer children (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Additionally, the current study proposed that joint families will experience higher work-family interference than nuclear families. The interference between job and home life for female school teachers is also significantly influenced by the family system. Teachers who are part of a joint family may feel the weight of their extended family members heavily on their shoulders. As a result, they would be unable to concentrate on their work effectively, which would ultimately result

in a conflict between work and family (Martin & Dowson, 2009). In contrast, professional women from nuclear families tend to be more independent and have less problems (Williams et al., 2013). The findings of another study concurred with those of the present study in that work/family conflict was more pronounced in joint family systems than in nuclear family systems (Iqbal & Bashir, 2021).

According to this study in the modern era the women who are working inspect the remarkable influence of work-family conflict and family-work conflict. This concern required a special need to deal and follow up with these issues appropriately so that it may not become indecision in the future. This study is helpful for the women who are working and facing difficulty in family-work conflicts, also it is helpful for organizations and for the whole society as well.

## 5. Conclusion

The value-added of current research stems from work-family interference and family work interference literature of Pakistani culture. The contribution and interference between the family and work area is discerned and undergo according to society and culture. Hence the outcome match with the presumption that women living in urban areas, being married, having more children, belonging to the joint family system, as well as having few works experience experienced higher levels of work-family interference and family-work-interference.

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