



The Work-Family Conflict: Dyadic View of Brazilian Couples

Alexsandro Luiz De Andrade¹, Livia Fraga Ferrão¹, Gabriela Techio²,

Fabiana Pinheiro Ramos¹

[1] *Department of Psychology, Federal University of Espírito Santo, Vitória, Brazil.* [2] *Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil.*

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Corresponding Author: Alexsandro Luiz De Andrade, Av. Fernando Ferrari, 514 - Goiabeiras, Vitória - Brazil - ES, 29075-910. E-mail: alex.psi.andrade@gmail.com

Abstract

Several changes have occurred in the family setting over the last few decades: the insertion of women into the labor market, the growth of dual-career couples, and changes in the traditional and non-traditional structures of men's and women's societal roles. In this context, the Work-Family Conflict (WFC) is a construct of work interference in the family (WIF) and family interference in work (FIW). This study's central objective was to explore the conflict between family and work in a Brazilian context according to the dyadic scope. The study with a survey design was conducted with a Brazilian sample of 65 adult couples (130 individuals). Results showed differences between men and women concerning variables that influence the WFC. Stress at work was the central aspect of WFC. The results contribute to the advancement of knowledge on the issues of WFC in Brazil, dyadic analysis procedures, family and organization interventions.

Keywords

work-family conflict, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, dyadic analysis

Work and family are essential areas of adult life, so several studies have focused on investigating their association with health questions, family values, individual differences, and organizational factors (Aguiar & Bastos, 2017; Erdogan et al., 2021; Gramacho, 2012; Kengatharan & Edwards, 2021; Netemeyer et al., 1996). Although, according to Matei et al. (2021), formal studies in the area have a two-way analysis of work-family interaction, while some research reports a conflicting interaction between work and family (Allen et al., 2000; Carlson et al., 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kossek & Lee, 2017), others



show that positive developments may originate from the conciliation between these two dimensions (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

In the scientific literature, tensions and problems between work and family are prominently studied and represented by the Work-Family Conflict (WFC) construct (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Matei et al., 2021). The WFC refers to tension in which pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. It is composed of two dimensions: work interferes with family direction (WIF), and family interferes with work (FIW) (Carlson et al., 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kossek & Lee, 2017). This conflict may stem from three forms: a) time, given that the time dedicated to one area limits the person's participation in the other; b) tension, since the tension originated in one place can damagingly spillover to the other; and (c) behavior, when a mode of action that is appropriate in one area is employed in the other in a dysfunctional way (Carlson et al., 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Concerning time, WFC occurs because time is a finite resource. As such, time dedicated to the family cannot be spent working and vice-versa (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Meanwhile, tension-based conflicts occur when stressors from one of the spheres impact the individual, affecting his performance in the other sphere. Examples are anxiety, fatigue, and irritability (Akinbode et al., 2018). Finally, behavior-based conflicts emerge when the individual has difficulty adapting their behavior, with behavioral patterns specific to one area dysfunctionally employed in the other (Nohe et al., 2015). An example of this type of conflict is when individuals adopt harsh behavior because of their work environment, extending it to their family environment instead of properly adjusting it.

Work-family conflict affects individuals, couples, families, and organizational aspects (De Andrade et al., 2021; De Andrade, Ziebell de Oliveira, et al., 2017; Erdogan et al., 2021; Matei et al., 2021). For example, from an individual perspective, there is evidence that WFC is related to lower life and family satisfaction (e.g., marital satisfaction), decreased physical health (e.g., sleep and cardiovascular disorders), psychiatric problems (e.g., depression and stress), and substance dependence (e.g., alcohol abuse) (Allen & Armstrong, 2006; Fellows et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2013). For organizations, recent evidence demonstrates that conflict can lead to incivility and turnover intention (De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al., 2017; De Andrade et al., 2021), work stress (Moen et al., 2015), and negative professional performance (Richter et al., 2015).

In a study in Portugal, Matias et al. (2011) observed that individuals had higher conflict values in the work-to-family direction than in the inverse direction. However, the authors also noted that men had significantly higher values of work-to-family conflict than women and that the latter had higher values of family-to-work conflict than men. This understanding makes each couple experience the relationship between work and family differently (Young & Schieman, 2018). According to Duarte (2015), these perceptions of conflict also affect the perceived relationship quality. For men, relationship

quality is influenced by their experience of family interference at work. In contrast, for women, it is mainly influenced by their experience of work interference in the family.

In the 1980s, investigations into dual-earner families started being developed considering the difficulties in adequately reconciling work and family, coupled with the growth in the number of relationships in which both spouses work outside the home over the last decades. One of the primary subjects of interest was the potential effects of managing multiple roles, such as worker, spouse, and parent, on the quality of family relationships (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000). Thus, the increase in working mothers has raised the probability of both sexes dealing with family responsibilities besides work. This is especially true for couples with children, who often have heavy family and work management (Allen et al., 2000).

Studies on dual-earner families have also been carried out on the topics of love relationships, relationship satisfaction, and work dimensions (De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al., 2017; Matei et al., 2021; Shiramizu & Lopes, 2013). Conceptually, relationship satisfaction can be understood as the degree of satisfaction, respect, trust, and shared interests among the dyad (Scheeren et al., 2014). Satisfaction with the relationship is negatively affected by the conflict between work and family, especially for women, who report overburdening because they are the main ones responsible for the family, often without the spouse's support (Carroll et al., 2013). Dealing with daily demands can generate feelings of injustice and detachment for the couple (Schieman & Glavin, 2017). The time devoted to work and other family members can also affect investment in the relationship (Haslam et al., 2015). However, when individuals experience high satisfaction in the relationship, benefits are found in several areas, such as mental health (Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 2010; Robles et al., 2014) and quality of life, especially in maturity and old age (Scorsolini-Comin & Santos, 2010).

There is also evidence of relationship satisfaction benefiting the labor sphere. For example, family engagement can lead to good humor, a sense of being supported, and also a sense of accomplishment, which may serve as stimuli for work engagement and for the ability to sustain more significant adaptation, energy, and trust at work (Tang et al., 2017; Wayne et al., 2004). It can also help build psychological resources, facilitating employee creativity (Tang et al., 2017). Moreover, according to Omar et al. (2015), positive experiences and family resources can improve workers' moods and provide new skills and a sense of care, dedication, and greater attention in dealing with problems, improving concentration at work. In contrast, relationship dissatisfaction may negatively interfere with work (Tang et al., 2017), and there are indications that the WFC is positively related to burnout (Gramacho, 2012). These effects show the interdependence and mutual influence between family and work.

In this context, the conflict between work and family can be exhausting for the individual, increasing the stress in the relationship and negatively impacting their partner (Carroll et al., 2013). On the other hand, when the spouse is a source of support,

expresses empathy, or gets involved in problem-solving, better results are found for their careers and families (Fallahchai et al., 2019).

Despite the conceptual clarity and evidence on the interaction of family-work aspects and gender roles, research with dyadic design points to inclusive convergences (Matei et al., 2021). Therefore, this study aims to treat couples' perceptions as an object of study, performing an individual and dyadic analysis of the data and deepening the knowledge on the issues of WFC, relationship satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, considering previous studies and the theoretical review presented, we intend to explore which factors influence WFC and evaluate men's and women's perceptions of these issues.

Hypothesis

It has been recognized that couples are complex interpersonal systems, and research developed with refined design, such as dyadic analysis, are important ways to understand interaction effects between interdependent members of the same system. The incidence of the WFC also differs between men and women, probably due to distinctions in traditional and non-traditional gender roles (Erdogan et al., 2021). Role salience produces profiles of work-family interaction, involving the salience of work roles over family (the traditional norm for men), family more important than work (the traditional norm for women), and, more recently, the non-salience roles of work or family. This is due to cultural issues, which associate women with the family domain and men with the work domain (Matias & Fontaine, 2015).

Considering that: 1) the effects of work-family conflicts lead to consequences in the social roles that people develop (Matei et al., 2021); 2) the incorporation of non-traditional roles (such as work and career issues for women and aspects of family and domestic life for men) are elements of greater tension in roles and experience of conflict between the dyads (Erdogan et al., 2021); it is expected that (hypothesis): (H1a) - Women perceive work interfering more in the family; and (H1b) - Men, a perceived state than family interferes with work aspects.

Work-family conflict has antecedents and consequences for organizations (De Andrade et al., 2021; De Andrade, Ziebell de Oliveira, et al., 2017) and dynamics of personal and family dimensions (Clark et al., 2019; Erdogan et al., 2021; Matei et al., 2021). Stress at work has long-recognized impacts on work-family conflict (De Andrade et al., 2021). Moen et al. (2015), in a study with IT employees in a large U.S. company, pointed out that working conditions are predictors of work-family conflict and the mental health of individuals. In turn, a supportive culture and work-family conciliation policies are aspects that favors satisfaction with the organization and reduces turnover (Clark et al., 2017). Such findings reveal that the mismatches between personal resources and work demands impact the level of tension with work-family elements. Based on these premises as the second and third hypothesis of this study: it is expected that work

stress is a predictor of work-family conflict (H2) and; that job satisfaction is a negative predictor of conflict between work and family (H3).

With a similar conceptualization, it has been recognized that the tensions between the domain of work and family impact dimensions of health (Miller et al., 2022; Rocco et al., 2019) and perceptions of high life satisfaction induce fewer effects of work-family conflict (Erdogan et al., 2012; Hirschele & Gondim, 2020). In this way, positively perceiving life experiences is an element that favors coping with adversity in a context of tension (Haar et al., 2014) and reducing aspects of fatigue with work (De Andrade et al., 2021). Thus, in (H4), it's expected that life satisfaction is a negative predictor of work-family conflict.

Method

Participants

The study was conducted with a Brazilian convenience sample of 65 adult couples (dyadic data structured). Participants' ages ranged from 20 to 61 years, with a mean of 35 years ($SD = 9.06$ years). The respondents were residents of different regions of Brazil. Regarding schooling, 93 participants (51.6%) reported having a postgraduate degree, 50 (27.8%) reported having completed higher education, 30 (16.7%) and 8 (3.9%) another degree. Regarding the current relationship bond, 108 (60%) responded being married, 38 (21.1%) reported having a stable union, 32 (17.8%) stated they were dating, and 2 (1.1%) reported being engaged. One hundred forty-four respondents (80%) reported living with a partner, while 50.6% of the sample (91 participants) stated that they did not have children.

Instruments

The research survey was prepared with instruments previously validated in the Brazilian context. The survey contains the following sections:

a) Sociodemographic questionnaire: An instrument developed to identify participants and their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, containing questions regarding age, schooling, relationship time, and working hours.

b) Brazilian Portuguese version of Work-Family Conflict Scale (Aguiar & Bastos, 2013; Netemeyer et al., 1996): Composed of 10 items with good Cronbach precision to be evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "5 = Strongly agree." Five out of 10 items serve to express a work-to-family conflict direction WIF ($\alpha = 0.90$; e.g., "My work interferes with family life"), and the other five express a family-to-work conflict direction FIW ($\alpha = 0.86$; e.g., "Family pressures interfere with my work performance").

c) General Questionnaire of work and life context. A mixed instrument composed of three items that evaluate Life Satisfaction (“In general, are you satisfied with your life?”) (Diener et al., 1985), Work Stress (i.e., “How much has your job been stressing you recently?”) (De Andrade, Ziebell de Oliveira, et al., 2017), and Work Satisfaction (Salessi et al., 2020) (i.g. “Are you currently satisfied with your work?”). The answer ranges from “nothing” to “completely.”

Ethical Procedures

This research followed the data collection process and the Brazilian ethical norms established in Resolution 466/12 of the National Health Council (Brazil, 2012). Therefore, it was evaluated and approved under Process Number 3.637.910.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Participants were recruited by invitation on social networks and interpersonal university networks. After the individual agreement to collaborate in the study, the questionnaire was delivered personally to the individuals and couples who accepted to participate. For couples, the application instruction involved to answer the instruments separately from the current relationship partner. Individuals whom their partners did not accompany at the time of contact with the researcher received the instructions to respond to their partner and then returned the questionnaire to the responsible researcher.

The inclusions criteria of the study were: a) being heterosexual (so that comparisons could be made between men and women); b) self-motivation to participate in the survey voluntarily; c) having at least six months of relationship time; and d) at least six months of experience in the present job. In addition, all the respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire confidentially, without the partner's presence, to avoid exposing their answers and the data contamination.

This study used an individually structured initial formatting, with a participant per row and measured variables appearing sequentially in columns. For analysis, the database was reorganized in a dyadic structure format. According to De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al. (2017, p. 1573, own translation), “To perform data analysis using dyadic procedures, the organization and registration of information in the database requires a special arrangement of variables, whether for tabulation or future statistical software analyzes.” The response data of the participating couple is arranged in a single line, and the information given by each member is arranged in columns of variables. This was done using the ItoD package (De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al., 2017). A network analysis (Epskamp et al., 2012) and multiple regression (Hair et al., 2010) were performed in dyad structures to fulfill the research objective.

Results

Demographics and Gender Differences

Table 1 presents the mean and differences between men and women in the variables of work interfering with the family, family interfering with work, life satisfaction, work stress, and job satisfaction.

Table 1

Demographics and Gender Differences

Variable	Sex	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
WIF	Men	2.50	1.15	-0.52	152	.27
	Women	2.60	1.23			
FIW	Men	1.70	0.80	-0.81	151	.91
	Women	1.81	0.79			
Lif. Sat	Men	0.71	0.46	-0.33	178	.51
	Women	0.73	0.44			
Job Stress	Men	1.94	0.75	-1.30	178	.11
	Women	2.08	0.64			
Work. Sat.	Men	3.85	0.74	1.54	151	.60
	Women	3.66	0.78			

Note. WIF = Work interfering with the family; FIW = Family interfering with work; Lif. Sat. = Life satisfaction; J. St. = Job stress; W. Sat. = Work satisfaction.

Based on the *t*-test for independent samples, no significant differences were identified between men and women, indicating similar perceptions of study variables in both genders.

Dyadic Perspective From Work-Family Conflict

With the dyadic data structure processed by ItoD support (De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al., 2017), we proceed four multiple regression analyses with each variable by men and women partners to comprehend the influence of both dimensions on work-family conflict (work-family conflict – WIF and; family-work conflict – FWC) between genders. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2*Work-Family Conflict Predictors From a Dyadic View*

WIF			FIW		
Variable	β	p	Variable	β	p
Men					
FWC_M	-.06	.53	WFC_M	-.11	.53
LifSat_M	-.02	.84	LifSat_M	-.25	.05
WorkSat_M	.16	.14	WorkSat_M	.09	.50
JobSt_M	.78	< .001	JobSt_M	.34	.09
WFC_W	-.12	.23	WFC_W	.12	.39
FWC_W	-.06	.50	FWC_W	.02	.84
LifSat_W	-.06	.58	LifSat_W	.20	.16
WorkSat_W	-.23	.06	WorkSat_W	-.15	.33
JobSt_W	-.24	.04	JobSt_W	-.15	.35
Explained variance	53%		Explained variance	6%	
Women					
FWC_W	.07	.56	WFC_W	.08	.56
LifSat_W	-.35	< .001	LifSat_W	-.10	.48
WorkSat_W	-.11	.45	WorkSat_W	-.15	.36
JobSt_W	.12	.43	JobSt_W	.12	.47
WFC_M	-.20	.23	WFC_M	.02	.84
FWC_M	.11	.39	FWC_M	-.12	.50
LifSat_M	.02	.83	LifSat_M	-.02	.85
WorkSat_M	.09	.49	WorkSat_M	.00	.98
JobSt_M	.15	.43	JobSt_M	.05	.80
Explained variance	11%		Explained variance	3%	

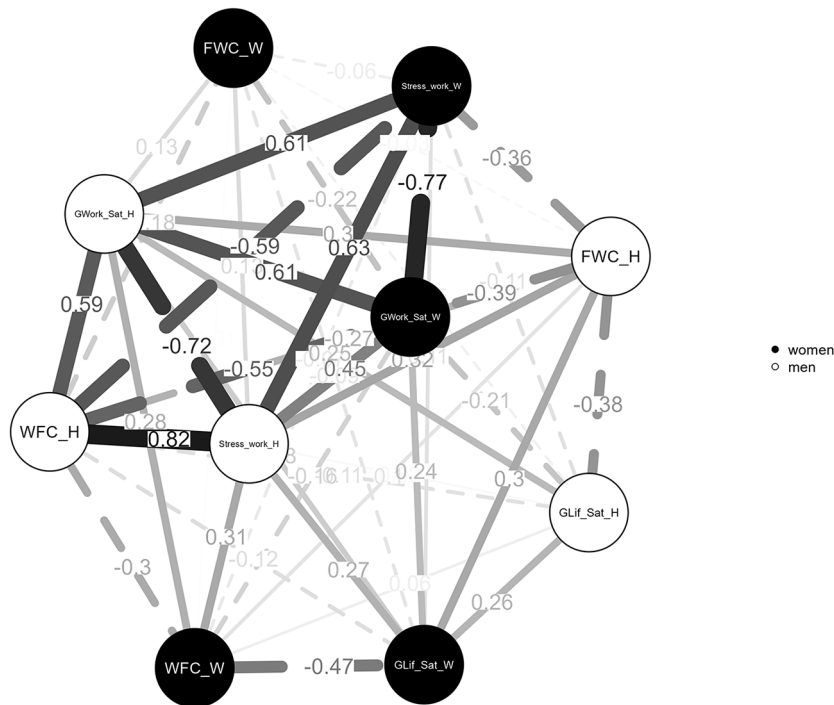
Note. WIF = work-to-family conflict; FIW = family-to-work conflict; LifSat = life satisfaction; WorkSat = work satisfaction; JobSt = Job stress; H = Men; W = women.

The model of WIF of men explained 53% of data variance and had as predictor variables of job stress for men ($\beta = .78$, $p < .001$) and women ($\beta = -.24$, $p = .04$). On the other hand, to predict men's FWC, the only significant predictor was the life satisfaction of men ($\beta = -.25$, $p = .05$), with 6% of variance explained. On the other hand, for women, the model to explain WFC had only the life satisfaction ($\beta = -.35$, $p < .001$) predictor and explained 11% of the data variance. So, to the women's FWC, neither variable is a predictor.

In Figure 1, the network analyses of work-family conflict and all research variables (work satisfaction, stress at work, and life satisfaction) are presented by a split in a dyadic structure (constructs relations between men and women).

Figure 1

Dyadic Network of WFC

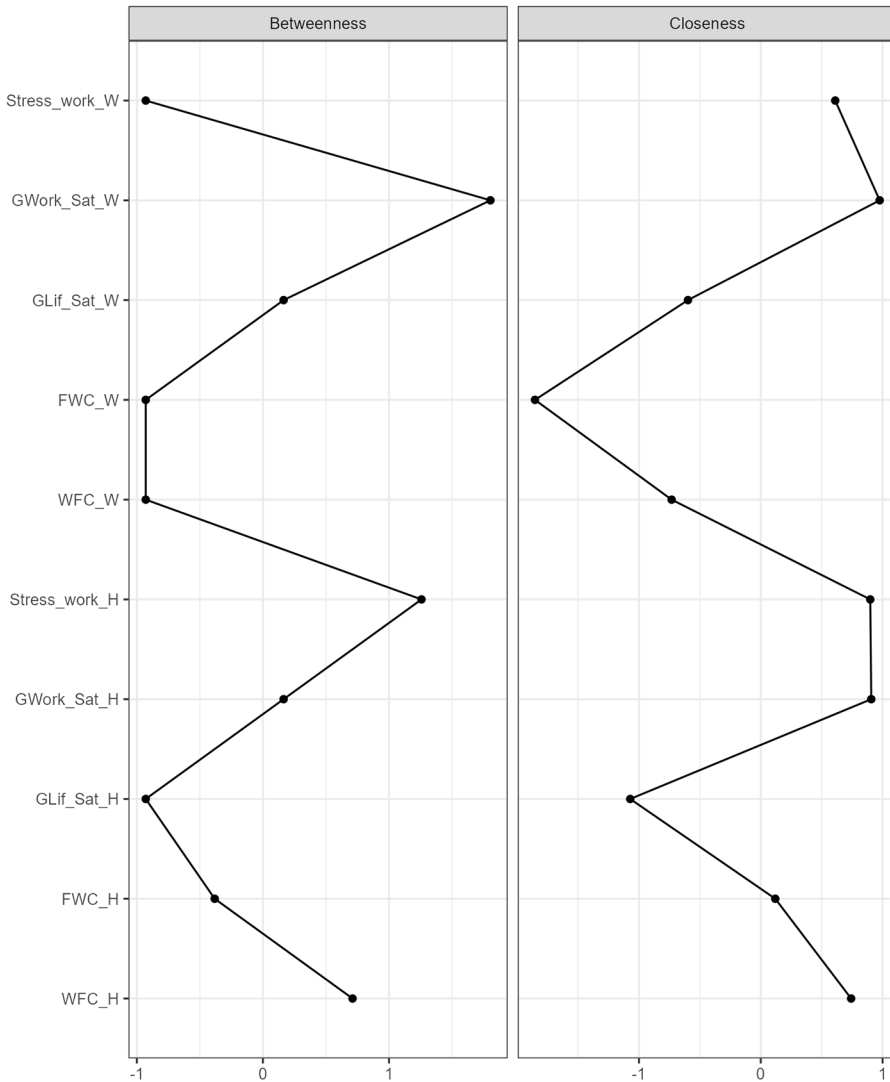


According to Figure 1, it is possible to identify a more complex and interdependent relationship between the research variables. Focusing on work-family conflict, it appears that for men, work-family tension was more strongly related to men's job stress ($r = .82$, $p < .001$) and work satisfaction ($r = .59$, $p < .001$), in addition to less salient relationships with women's job stress ($r = -.59$, $p < .001$) and work-family conflict ($r = -.30$, $p < .001$). In turn, for men, family interfering with work had weaker relations, highlighting its relationship with job stress ($r = -.32$, $p < .001$) and life satisfaction ($r = -.38$, $p < .001$). When we focus on women's work-family variables, we highlight their work-family conflict relations with: women's work satisfaction ($r = -.48$, $p < .001$), in addition to men's work-family conflict ($r = -.30$, $p < .001$) and job stress at work, ($r = .31$, $p < .001$). In turn, family interference in women's work was related to women's work satisfaction ($r = -.22$, $p < .001$) and weaker relations with men's job stress ($r = .13$, $p < .001$).

To conclude the data analysis, the connectivity and proximity of the relationship of variables in the individual (Part 1) and dyadic (Part 2) structure were evaluated. Figure 2 presents the connectivity and proximity of the variables assessed in the study.

Figure 2

Connectivity and Proximity Indicators for a Network of Work-Family



The figure showed that women’s work satisfaction was the variable with the high number of relationships (betweenness). This aspect is understood as the one with the most significant number of connections with other constructs, followed by the job stress of men. Regarding distance with other variables (closeness), job satisfaction of women

and men were, respectively, the aspects closest to other network indicators, understood as variables of significant influence on the system.

Discussion

To understand the work-family conflict, Erdogan et al. (2021) raises questions about the importance of research with dyadic data designs to understand specific aspects of work-family tension elements. The results of the present study demonstrate that work stress (positive) and life satisfaction (negative) are predictors of work-family conflict—with no significant difference for job satisfaction. It was also observed that there is no significant difference regarding the perceived amount of WFC between men and women, but rather its predictors.

Hypothesis 1 of this study expected the difference in the levels of work-family conflict between men and women. This aspect was refuted by the absence of significant differences in data collected between Brazilian couples. Other studies showed that WFC incidence differs between men and women, according to Matias et al. (2011). Their research in the Portuguese context showed that men had higher conflict values in the work-to-family direction. The study also indicated that men had significantly higher values of work-to-family conflict than women. Cultural questions can be addressed from this cause (Matias & Fontaine, 2015), but the increase in dual-earner families and demands to managing multiple roles, such as worker, spouse, and parent (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000), return the central question of work-family intersection and possibilities of tension between gender roles both instances of adult life. For future studies, we recommend more analysis of aspects of support in the family or at work that may attenuate the differences or not of the WFC between men and women.

The predictive effect of job stress on the perception of work-family conflict was the second hypothesis of this study, which was partially supported by the findings of the regression models. The results demonstrate that work interference with men's family (WIF) was significantly predicted by work stress for men and women—no significant prediction for WIF for both genders of FIW. Stress at work has long-recognized impacts on work-family conflict (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999). A recent study carried out with Brazilian professionals, in turn, points out that fatigue at work is moderately related to work interfering with the family, also causing impacts on general satisfaction with life (De Andrade et al., 2021).

Individual and marital self-regulation mechanisms change the understanding of the experience of conflict between work and family, emphasizing that the couple's search for a healthy relationship between roles is also a task (Matias & Fontaine, 2015). From another study in the European context, the work-family conflict was associated with aspects of health, like no stress (Borgmann et al., 2019). In some professional categories, as in the case of doctors, women have more significant interference from work in the

family (Mody et al., 2022) because they take more ownership of the tasks and roles related to the care of children and the elderly, as well as changes to meet the professional demands of its related partners. For future studies, a more detailed understanding of the moderation mechanism between role salience and gender is an essential step toward understanding the conditional effects of WFC.

Hypothesis 3 of this study indicated a negative predictive relationship between job satisfaction and work-family conflict, aspects not supported by the non-significant results found in the regression models of this study. Previous studies already point to divergent effects on the role of job satisfaction on work-family conflict. According to Clark et al. (2017), the loss of job satisfaction tends to favor the intention to leave organizations with unsatisfactory or absent work-family support policies. In turn, a follow study by Clark et al. (2019) with US industry workers and working students did not found evidence of the effects of job satisfaction on WIF and FIW.

Although not significant results, it is essential to highlight that the effects between men and women were different, being for women a negative effect, that is, perceived job satisfaction can promote less work-family conflict (WIF-FIT), and for men, the opposite. Furthermore, the study by Matias et al. (2011) in Portugal also found differences in the perceptions of men and women about work-relationship interaction. This corroborates our results demonstrating that men and women have inverse perceptions about the Work-Family Conflict; however, studies with other samples are necessary for a more detailed understanding of the causality or not of the variables. Career and family aspects operate differently for men and women, probably due to cultural aspects (Berlato, 2015). According to Young and Schieman (2018), this difference will be more important in couples with children, leading women to invest more in the family sphere and reduce the time dedicated to their careers. These data are supported by information from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2020), which indicates that women continue to be responsible for the family, even though they are inserted in the labor market. Working women spend an average of 8.1 hours per week on housework and caring for people compared to men, which probably leads to differences between men and women's perceptions of the family-work conflict.

The negative effect of life satisfaction about the work-family conflict was hypothesis 4 outlined and corroborated by the results of the present study. Family interference at work (FIW) for men and work interference in the family (WIF) for women were negatively predicted by life satisfaction. Furthermore, a study carried out with the German population evidenced that Work-family conflict negatively affects satisfaction with the relationship (Carroll et al., 2013). In addition, another study (Rocco et al., 2019) showed that it has association with cardiovascular health problems. Therefore, to have a life perceived as satisfactory becomes a critical characteristic for coping with tensions between work and family domains. In this way, life satisfaction and work stress are

fundamental components in research and interventions in individual and organizational work designs.

On the one hand, stress from excessive work demands, lack of training, negative support from leaders, and unsanitary working conditions drain individual resources (Hobfoll, 1989). However, on the other hand, they do not operate positive effects that may result from the work environment. Consequently, these aspects, in addition to the negative impact on work performance, extrapolate social dimensions and invade people's private lives, intricating the network of factors of work-family conflict. Its influence even advances study in the context of the expansion of remote work, impacting both dimensions of work-family interaction and engagement and innovation at work (Wang et al., 2021).

Original Contribution and Limitation of the Study

Until today, the family organization has traditionally been divided between men as workers and women as domestic caregivers (Sousa & Guedes, 2016), even with the transformations in men's and women's roles in work and family occurred in the last decades. Thus, this study design captured the perception of both actors in the work-family interaction. This meets the need for the construction of better evidence, as well as a social commitment to equity and social justice.

In our understanding, this study contributes to the knowledge of the work and family interaction theme. It stands out mainly for the relevance of the method of dyadic data analysis. Considering the importance of dyadic analysis to understand better certain social and psychological phenomena characterized by the interdependence of different subjects (De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al., 2017), other recent studies have also been conducted using this methodology. Examples are Levesque et al. (2014), who studied dyadic empathy, dyadic coping, and relationship satisfaction in Canada; Ribeiro (2016), with a Portuguese study on love and parenting; and Vedes et al. (2016), with Swiss research about love styles and relationship satisfaction.

One of the first challenges encountered by dyad research is data collection. A more significant commitment and investment of time are required when the object of study is a couple (De Andrade, Cassepp-Borges, et al., 2017). This is because, in this type of study, sample loss is common, for instance, when one participant agrees to contribute to the research and the other, for whatever reason, does not. More attention than usual must be dispensed towards data confidentiality since one participant may be curious about the other's responses. In this research design, great care was taken to maintain the research's confidentiality.

As limitations, we highlight that this study was carried out mainly with couples residing in only one of the federative units in Brazil, suggesting an expansion of the sample in future research. In addition, most participants had a graduate degree, which differs significantly from the general profile of the Brazilian population. It is also note-

worthy that all couples voluntarily agreed to participate in this research, indicating an openness to dialogue and a reasonably high engagement with their relationships. Therefore, caution should be made when inferring generalizations from the results of this study.

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