

Family–Work Multitasking and Psychological Well-Being among Working Women: The Mediating Role of Stress

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ABSTRACT

The increasing participation of women in the workforce has transformed contemporary workplaces and family structures, created new opportunities, and intensified the demands of balancing professional and domestic responsibilities. Working women frequently perform multiple roles, including employee, spouse, parent, caregiver, and household manager. Managing these overlapping responsibilities often requires continuous family–work multitasking, which may enhance efficiency but also increase psychological strain when the demands exceed available personal resources. Persistent multitasking can contribute to elevated stress levels, ultimately affecting women's psychological well-being and overall quality of life.

The present study investigates the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being among working women, with stress proposed as a mediating mechanism. A quantitative research design is employed, using data collected from female employees across different occupational sectors. The study adopts standardized measurement scales to assess family–work multitasking, perceived stress, and psychological well-being. The study is expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on women's occupational health by explaining how stress influences the relationship between multitasking and psychological well-being. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for organizations, human resource professionals, and policymakers to develop family-supportive workplace practices, stress management programs, and employee well-being initiatives. By focusing on working women who manage both occupational and family responsibilities, this research offers a comprehensive understanding of the psychological consequences of multitasking in the contemporary work–family context.

Keywords: Family–Work Multitasking, Stress, Psychological Well-Being, Working Women, Work–Family Interface, Employee Well-Being.

INTRODUCTION

Women's participation in paid employment has increased considerably during the past few decades, contributing significantly to economic development, organizational productivity, and social transformation. Improvements in educational opportunities, changing societal expectations, and expanding employment prospects have enabled women to assume more prominent roles in both the public and private sectors. While these developments have strengthened women's economic independence and career advancement, they have also increased the complexity of balancing occupational responsibilities with traditional family obligations. Unlike previous generations, many contemporary women simultaneously pursue professional careers while managing household activities, childcare, elder care, and other domestic responsibilities.

The coexistence of professional and family roles has created an environment in which multitasking has become an unavoidable aspect of everyday life for many working women. Family–work multitasking extends beyond merely performing several activities simultaneously; it involves continuously coordinating, prioritizing, and

switching between multiple responsibilities that demand cognitive attention, emotional involvement, and physical effort. A working woman may attend virtual meetings while supervising children's educational activities, respond to work-related communications during family time, or complete household responsibilities after returning from work. These overlapping responsibilities require continuous adjustments that may gradually deplete psychological and emotional resources.

Although multitasking is frequently perceived as an indicator of efficiency and productivity, research increasingly suggests that sustained multitasking may produce unintended psychological consequences. Frequent switching between work-related and family-related responsibilities increases cognitive workload, reduces opportunities for recovery, and creates role overload. As competing demands accumulate, working women may experience difficulties maintaining concentration, emotional stability, and personal satisfaction. Consequently, multitasking should not be viewed solely as a behavioural strategy but also as a psychosocial phenomenon with important implications for mental health and employee well-being.

Stress represents one of the most common psychological outcomes associated with excessive multitasking. Occupational responsibilities such as meeting deadlines, achieving performance targets, participating in meetings, and responding to organizational expectations often coexist with family commitments, including childcare, household management, and caregiving responsibilities. When individuals perceive that these multiple demands exceed their available time, energy, or coping resources, psychological stress is likely to emerge. Persistent stress may influence emotional functioning, physical health, interpersonal relationships, and work performance. Therefore, understanding the factors that contribute to stress among working women has become increasingly important for both researchers and organizational practitioners.

Despite the growing recognition of employee well-being as a strategic organizational priority, the psychological consequences of family–work multitasking remain insufficiently explored, particularly among working women in developing economies. Existing research has predominantly focused on constructs such as work–family conflict, role overload, work stress, and burnout. While these concepts provide valuable insights into the challenges employees face, they do not fully capture the dynamic process of managing multiple work and family responsibilities. Family–work multitasking is conceptually distinct because it reflects the simultaneous coordination of occupational and domestic tasks, requiring frequent cognitive switching and sustained attention across multiple roles. As organizations increasingly adopt flexible work arrangements and digital communication technologies, the boundaries between work and family have become progressively blurred, making multitasking an essential aspect of everyday life for many women.

Psychological well-being represents an important indicator of individuals' overall mental health and positive functioning. Rather than merely reflecting the absence of psychological distress, psychological well-being encompasses positive emotions, life satisfaction, personal growth, autonomy, a sense of purpose, environmental mastery, and healthy interpersonal relationships. Women experiencing higher levels of psychological well-being are generally better equipped to cope with occupational challenges, maintain productive relationships, and contribute effectively to organizational performance. Conversely, prolonged exposure to stress resulting from excessive multitasking may reduce emotional resilience, increase fatigue, diminish job satisfaction, and negatively influence overall quality of life. Understanding the factors that influence psychological well-being is therefore essential for promoting both employee welfare and organizational sustainability.

Stress is expected to play a central role in explaining how family–work multitasking influences psychological well-being. According to contemporary occupational health perspectives, individuals possess limited psychological, emotional, and physical resources. When continuous multitasking consumes these resources faster than they can be replenished, stress levels increase, reducing individuals' capacity to maintain positive psychological functioning. Consequently, stress may serve as an important mediating mechanism by which multitasking influences psychological well-being. Examining this indirect relationship contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological processes underlying women's experiences in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Although previous empirical studies have established associations between work demands, stress, and employee well-being, several important gaps remain. First, relatively few studies have examined family–work multitasking as an independent construct rather than relying exclusively on work–family conflict or role overload. Second, many existing investigations have been conducted in Western contexts, limiting the generalizability of their findings to countries where cultural expectations regarding women's family responsibilities differ substantially. Third, evidence regarding the mediating role of stress in the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being remains limited, particularly among Indian working women employed across diverse occupational sectors. Addressing these gaps will contribute to the advancement of both organizational behaviour and occupational psychology literature while providing context-specific evidence relevant to emerging economies.

The present study addresses these limitations by investigating the direct relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being while simultaneously examining the mediating role of stress among working women. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether increased family–work multitasking contributes to higher stress levels and whether this stress subsequently influences psychological well-being. The findings are expected to extend existing theoretical knowledge by integrating family–work multitasking into the broader literature on occupational stress and employee well-being. From a practical perspective, the study will provide valuable guidance for organizations in designing family-supportive human resource practices, flexible work policies, employee assistance programs, and stress management interventions that enhance the psychological well-being of female employees. As women continue to play increasingly significant roles in both economic and family life, understanding the psychological implications of managing multiple responsibilities has become essential for fostering healthier workplaces, stronger families, and more sustainable organizational performance.

Theoretical Framework, Research Gap, Conceptual Framework, and Hypotheses Development

3.1 Theoretical Framework

A strong theoretical foundation is essential for explaining the mechanisms through which family–work multitasking influences psychological well-being. The present study is grounded in Role Theory and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which together provide a comprehensive explanation of how multiple role demands generate stress and affect psychological well-being among working women.

3.1.1 Role Theory

Role Theory suggests that individuals simultaneously occupy multiple social roles, each associated with distinct expectations, responsibilities, and behavioural requirements. Working women commonly perform several interconnected roles, including employee, spouse, parent, caregiver, and household manager. While fulfilling multiple roles can create opportunities for personal growth and social contribution, it may also lead to role overload when the demands of these roles exceed an individual's available time, energy, and psychological capacity.

Family–work multitasking represents a practical manifestation of multiple role occupancy. Women frequently alternate between professional duties and domestic responsibilities, often performing both simultaneously. For example, they may respond to work-related communications while supervising children's education, manage household activities after office hours, or address family responsibilities during working time. Such continuous role switching requires sustained cognitive attention and emotional regulation, increasing the likelihood of fatigue and psychological strain.

Role Theory further proposes that competing role expectations can create tension, especially when responsibilities from one role interfere with the successful performance of another. As women attempt to satisfy both organizational and family expectations, they may experience role overload, time pressure, and emotional exhaustion. Consequently, family–work multitasking is expected to increase perceived stress, which may, in turn, reduce psychological well-being.

3.1.2 Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory proposes that individuals strive to obtain, preserve, and protect valuable personal resources such as time, energy, emotional stability, attention, and psychological resilience. Stress occurs when these resources are threatened, lost, or insufficient to meet environmental demands.

Within the context of family–work multitasking, continuous management of occupational and domestic responsibilities requires substantial investment of cognitive and emotional resources. Frequent switching between work and family roles reduces opportunities for psychological recovery and gradually depletes personal resources. When resource loss continues without adequate replenishment, individuals experience increased stress, reduced coping capacity, and diminished psychological well-being.

COR Theory, therefore, explains why stress functions as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being. Excessive multitasking consumes personal resources, increases stress, and ultimately decreases individuals' ability to maintain positive psychological functioning, emotional balance, and life satisfaction.

The integration of Role Theory and COR Theory provides a comprehensive explanation for the proposed conceptual model. Role Theory explains the origin of multiple role demands, whereas COR Theory explains the psychological process through which these demands influence well-being.

3.2 Research Gap

Although previous studies have extensively investigated work–family conflict, occupational stress, burnout, and employee well-being, several important research gaps remain.

First, much of the existing literature conceptualizes the interaction between work and family in terms of work–family conflict or role overload. Fewer studies have examined family–work multitasking as an independent construct capturing the simultaneous coordination of occupational and domestic responsibilities. Given the increasing integration of work and family domains through flexible working arrangements and digital technologies, examining multitasking provides a broader understanding of women's lived experiences.

Second, previous empirical investigations have primarily been conducted in developed countries. Cultural expectations regarding women's domestic responsibilities differ considerably across societies, particularly in developing countries such as India, where women frequently retain primary responsibility for household management despite increasing labour force participation. Consequently, evidence derived from Western contexts may not fully explain the experiences of Indian working women.

Third, although stress has consistently been associated with employee well-being, relatively limited empirical evidence has examined its mediating role in the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being. Investigating stress as a mediator enables a better understanding of the psychological mechanisms through which multitasking influences well-being.

Finally, previous studies have often focused on specific occupational groups, such as nurses, teachers, healthcare professionals, and corporate employees. Comparatively few studies have considered female employees across diverse occupational sectors, thereby limiting the generalizability of findings. The present study addresses these gaps by examining family–work multitasking, stress, and psychological well-being among working women from multiple employment sectors.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on theoretical foundations and prior empirical findings, the present study proposes that family–work multitasking directly influences psychological well-being and indirectly through stress.

Family–Work Multitasking → Stress → Psychological Well-Being

The proposed framework identifies Family–Work Multitasking as the independent variable, Stress as the mediating variable, and Psychological Well-Being as the dependent variable. This model assumes that higher levels of multitasking increase stress, which subsequently decreases psychological well-being.

3.4 Hypotheses Development

Family–Work Multitasking and Stress

Working women continuously manage professional responsibilities alongside family obligations. According to Role Theory, simultaneously performing multiple roles increases role overload and the number of competing demands. Similarly, the Conservation of Resources Theory suggests that continuous multitasking depletes cognitive and emotional resources, leading to increased stress. Previous empirical studies have consistently reported positive associations between increased work–family demands and perceived stress. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Family–Work Multitasking has a significant positive effect on Stress among working women.

Family–Work Multitasking and Psychological Well-Being

Although multitasking may improve task completion under certain circumstances, excessive multitasking often creates mental fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and reduced life satisfaction. Constant switching between occupational and domestic responsibilities may limit opportunities for psychological recovery, thereby negatively influencing psychological well-being.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Family–Work Multitasking has a significant negative effect on Psychological Well-Being among working women.

Stress and Psychological Well-Being

Stress represents one of the most important determinants of psychological health. Prolonged exposure to stress reduces emotional stability, decreases life satisfaction, weakens resilience, and impairs overall psychological functioning. Higher stress levels are therefore expected to be associated with lower psychological well-being.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Stress has a significant negative effect on Psychological Well-Being among working women.

Mediating Role of Stress

Role Theory suggests that multiple role demands create psychological strain, while Conservation of Resources Theory explains that depletion of personal resources generates stress, ultimately reducing psychological well-being. Therefore, stress is expected to explain the effects of family–work multitasking on psychological well-being.

Accordingly, the following mediation hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Stress significantly mediates the relationship between Family–Work Multitasking and Psychological Well-Being among working women.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The present study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being among working women, with stress serving as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the objective measurement of latent constructs and facilitates statistical examination of the relationships among variables. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, in which data were collected from respondents at a single point in time using a structured questionnaire. This design is widely used in behavioural and organizational research for examining causal relationships among psychological constructs.

4.2 Population and Sample

The target population consisted of working women employed in public and private sector organizations. Respondents represented diverse occupational sectors, including education, healthcare, banking, information technology, retail, manufacturing, and service industries. Including participants from different professional backgrounds enhanced the generalizability of the findings by capturing a wide range of work and family experiences. A total of 499 valid responses were obtained and used for data analysis.

4.3 Sampling Technique

The study employed a convenience sampling technique to recruit respondents. Participants were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to participate in the survey. Although probability sampling offers greater representativeness, convenience sampling is frequently adopted in organizational and behavioural studies involving working professionals because of practical constraints related to accessibility and time. To improve data quality, only female employees actively engaged in paid employment were included in the study.

Inclusion Criteria

The respondents were selected based on the following criteria:

- Female employees working in public or private organizations.
- Individuals simultaneously managing occupational and family responsibilities.
- Respondents aged 21 years and above.
- Participants who voluntarily agreed to participate in the survey.

4.4 Data Collection Procedure

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered both online and offline. Prior to data collection, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that participation was voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and respondents were informed that their responses would be used exclusively for academic purposes.

The questionnaire comprised two sections. The first section collected demographic information, including age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, work experience, monthly income, and number of dependent family members. The second section measured the study variables using standardized measurement scales.

4.5 Measurement of Variables

The study investigated three latent constructs:

Family–Work Multitasking (Independent Variable): Family–work multitasking refers to the extent to which working women simultaneously manage occupational duties and family responsibilities. The construct was measured using multiple questionnaire items adapted from validated scales for multitasking and role management. Respondents indicated their agreement using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Stress (Mediating Variable): Stress represents the psychological strain experienced when work and family demands exceed an individual's available coping resources. The construct was measured using standardized stress-assessment items adapted from established psychological stress instruments and rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Psychological Well-Being (Dependent Variable): Psychological well-being refers to individuals' positive psychological functioning, including life satisfaction, emotional balance, personal growth, a sense of purpose, autonomy, and environmental mastery. The construct was measured with validated psychological well-being items adapted from established scales, all assessed on the same five-point Likert scale. The use of standardized measurement instruments enhanced both the reliability and validity of the collected data.

4.6 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was performed using Jamovi. Initially, preliminary analyses were conducted, including data screening, descriptive statistics, assessment of missing values, normality testing using skewness and kurtosis, and reliability analysis through Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega.

Subsequently, the measurement model was evaluated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The adequacy of the measurement model was assessed through standardized factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity. Overall model fit was evaluated using multiple goodness-of-fit indices, including the Chi-square statistic (χ^2), Chi-square divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR).

4.7 Reliability and Validity

The internal consistency of each construct was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega, with values above 0.70 indicating acceptable reliability. Convergent validity was assessed through standardized factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), whereas discriminant validity was examined using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). These procedures ensured that the measurement scales accurately represented their intended constructs and were sufficiently distinct from one another.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical principles for social science research. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that all information would be treated confidentially. Respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequences. The collected data were used solely for academic research purposes, thereby ensuring the integrity and ethical conduct of the study.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the characteristics of the study variables, namely Family–Work Multitasking, Stress, and Psychological Well-Being. Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, skewness, and kurtosis values.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
Family–Work Multitasking	41.90	11.90	17	70	0.039	-0.757
Stress	19.90	8.56	1	40	0.173	-0.553
Psychological Well-Being	11.60	5.32	0	20	-0.240	-0.958

The descriptive statistics indicate that respondents reported a moderately high level of family–work multitasking ($M = 41.90$, $SD = 11.90$), suggesting that the sampled working women frequently managed multiple work and family responsibilities simultaneously. The mean stress score was 19.90 ($SD = 8.56$), indicating moderate perceived stress among respondents. The mean score for psychological well-being was 11.60 ($SD = 5.32$), indicating a moderate level of psychological well-being within the study population.

The standard deviation values demonstrate reasonable variability in respondents' perceptions across the three constructs, indicating that participants differed in their experiences of multitasking, stress, and psychological well-being.

Assessment of Normality

The skewness values ranged from -0.240 to 0.173, while the kurtosis values ranged from -0.958 to -0.553. These values fall well within the recommended thresholds of ± 2 for skewness and ± 7 for kurtosis, indicating that the data approximate a normal distribution and are appropriate for SEM analysis.

Although the Shapiro–Wilk test was statistically significant for all three variables ($p < .001$), this result is expected with a relatively large sample size ($N = 499$), where the test becomes highly sensitive to minor deviations from normality. Consequently, skewness and kurtosis provide a more appropriate basis for evaluating normality in this study.

5.2 Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Reliability Statistics

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	McDonald's Omega	Interpretation
Family–Work Multitasking	0.863	0.864	Good
Stress	0.810	0.811	Good
Psychological Well-Being	0.751	0.752	Acceptable

The Family–Work Multitasking scale demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.863 and McDonald's Omega of 0.864. Similarly, the Stress scale exhibited good reliability, with alpha and omega values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70.

The Psychological Well-Being scale also demonstrated acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.751 and McDonald's Omega of 0.752. These findings indicate that all three measurement instruments possess satisfactory internal consistency and are appropriate for further multivariate analyses.

5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to evaluate the adequacy of the measurement model and to verify whether the observed indicators adequately represented their respective latent constructs.

The standardized factor loadings for Family–Work Multitasking, Stress, and Psychological Well-Being were statistically significant ($p < .001$), indicating that each observed indicator loaded strongly on its intended latent construct. High z-values further demonstrate the stability of the measurement model.

Table 3 Factor Loadings

Construct	Indicator	Estimate	Z	p-value
Family–Work Multitasking	Total MT	11.84	31.60	<0.001
Stress	Total Stress	8.55	31.60	<0.001
Psychological Well-Being	Total PWB	5.31	31.60	<0.001

The statistically significant factor loadings provide evidence that the indicators adequately represent their corresponding latent constructs. The exceptionally high z-value (31.60) suggests strong measurement relationships and supports the construct validity of the measurement model.

5.4 Relationships among the Latent Variables

The covariance estimates among the latent variables provide preliminary evidence regarding the relationships between the constructs.

Table 4 Factor Covariances

Relationship	Estimate	Z	p-value
Family–Work Multitasking ↔ Stress	0.451	12.65	<0.001
Family–Work Multitasking ↔ Psychological Well-Being	-0.281	-6.82	<0.001
Stress ↔ Psychological Well-Being	-0.343	-8.68	<0.001

The covariance analysis revealed a **significant positive association** between Family–Work Multitasking and Stress (Estimate = 0.451, $p < .001$), indicating that women experiencing higher levels of multitasking also reported higher stress.

A **significant negative association** was observed between Family–Work Multitasking and Psychological Well-Being (Estimate = -0.281, $p < .001$), suggesting that increasing multitasking responsibilities are associated with lower levels of psychological well-being.

Similarly, Stress showed a significant negative relationship with Psychological Well-Being (Estimate = -0.343, $p < .001$), indicating that higher stress levels are associated with reduced psychological well-being among working women. These findings provide preliminary empirical support for the proposed conceptual framework.

5.5 Measurement Model Assessment

The CFA findings indicate that the measurement model adequately represents the three latent constructs investigated in the present study. All factor loadings were statistically significant, the measurement scales

demonstrated satisfactory reliability, and the relationships among the latent variables were consistent with the proposed theoretical framework.

5.6 Hypothesis Testing

A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was adopted to determine whether the hypotheses were supported.

Table 5 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Expected Relationship	Result	Decision
H1	Family–Work Multitasking → Stress	Positive	Significant	Supported
H2	Family–Work Multitasking → Psychological Well-Being	Negative	Significant	Supported
H3	Stress → Psychological Well-Being	Negative	Significant	Supported
H4	Family–Work Multitasking → Stress → Psychological Well-Being	Indirect Effect	Significant	Supported

The findings indicate that Family–Work Multitasking has a significant positive effect on Stress, suggesting that working women who simultaneously manage occupational and family responsibilities experience higher levels of perceived stress. The positive and statistically significant path coefficient supports Hypothesis 1, indicating that increasing multitasking demands contribute to greater psychological strain.

The analysis further revealed that Family–Work Multitasking has a significant negative effect on Psychological Well-Being. This finding suggests that continuously balancing multiple family and work responsibilities adversely affects women's psychological functioning, reducing their overall well-being. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

The results also demonstrate that Stress has a significant negative effect on Psychological Well-Being. Higher levels of stress were associated with lower levels of psychological well-being, indicating that psychological strain undermines positive emotional functioning, life satisfaction, and overall mental health. Consequently, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

To examine the mediating mechanism proposed in the conceptual model, the indirect effect of Family–Work Multitasking on Psychological Well-Being through Stress was assessed. The mediation analysis revealed that the indirect effect was statistically significant, confirming that stress mediates the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being. Because both the direct effect (Family–Work Multitasking → Psychological Well-Being) and the indirect effect (through Stress) were statistically significant, the findings indicate partial mediation. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported.

Overall, empirical evidence that family–work multitasking directly affects both stress and psychological well-being, and indirectly through stress. These findings are consistent with the proposed theoretical framework, suggesting that the psychological impact of multitasking is explained not only by its direct effect on well-being but also by the increased stress experienced by working women.

DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being among working women, and to investigate the mediating role of stress. The findings provide empirical evidence that family–work multitasking significantly influences both stress and psychological well-being, with stress acting as a significant mediator. These results contribute to the growing literature on

women's occupational well-being by explaining the psychological mechanism through which multitasking affects mental health.

The first hypothesis proposed that family–work multitasking positively influences stress among working women. The findings support this hypothesis, indicating that women who simultaneously manage professional responsibilities and family obligations experience higher levels of psychological stress. This finding is consistent with Role Theory, which argues that individuals occupying multiple social roles are more likely to experience role overload and competing demands. As women attempt to fulfill organizational responsibilities while simultaneously meeting household and caregiving obligations, the continuous switching between roles increases cognitive effort, emotional strain, and time pressure. Consequently, the accumulation of multiple responsibilities contributes to elevated stress levels.

The second hypothesis examined the direct relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being. The results indicate a significant negative relationship, suggesting that excessive multitasking adversely affects women's psychological well-being. Although multitasking is often perceived as an indicator of efficiency and productivity, prolonged engagement in multiple simultaneous responsibilities may reduce opportunities for rest, emotional recovery, and personal fulfillment. Over time, this may reduce life satisfaction, emotional balance, and overall psychological functioning.

The third hypothesis proposed that stress negatively influences psychological well-being. The findings strongly support this relationship, demonstrating that increased stress significantly reduces women's psychological well-being. Persistent stress may impair emotional regulation, decrease resilience, reduce optimism, and negatively influence interpersonal relationships. These findings reinforce the importance of stress management as a key component of employee well-being initiatives.

The mediation analysis demonstrated that stress significantly mediates the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being. This finding suggests that multitasking affects psychological well-being not only through a direct pathway but also indirectly by increasing stress. The identification of partial mediation indicates that, while stress accounts for a substantial portion of the relationship, other psychological and organizational factors may also contribute to multitasking's influence on well-being. Variables such as organizational support, family support, resilience, emotional intelligence, psychological capital, flexible work arrangements, and coping strategies may further explain this relationship and warrant investigation in future research.

Overall, the findings support the integration of Role Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory. Role Theory explains how multiple responsibilities generate competing demands, whereas Conservation of Resources Theory explains how the continuous expenditure of cognitive and emotional resources increases stress and, in turn, reduces psychological well-being. The consistency between the theoretical framework and empirical findings strengthens the explanatory power of the proposed model.

6.1 Theoretical Implications

The present study makes several important theoretical contributions to organizational behaviour, occupational psychology, and work–family research.

First, the study extends existing literature by examining family–work multitasking as a distinct construct rather than relying solely on traditional concepts such as work–family conflict or role overload. This broader perspective provides a more realistic representation of the multiple responsibilities experienced by contemporary working women.

Second, the study contributes to the understanding of stress as a psychological mechanism linking multitasking and psychological well-being. By demonstrating the mediating role of stress, the research provides empirical support for the Conservation of Resources Theory and explains how depletion of personal resources influences psychological functioning.

Third, the integration of Role Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory offers a comprehensive conceptual framework that explains both the origin of multiple role demands and the psychological processes through which these demands influence employee well-being.

6.2 Practical Implications

The findings have important implications for organizations, human resource managers, policymakers, and working women.

Organizations should implement family-supportive human resource practices such as flexible working hours, hybrid work arrangements where feasible, employee assistance programs, counseling services, and stress management training. Such initiatives can help employees better manage competing work and family responsibilities.

Managers should recognize that multitasking is not always associated with improved productivity. Excessive multitasking may reduce employee well-being, increase stress, and ultimately affect work performance. Providing realistic workloads, encouraging reasonable boundaries between work and personal life, and promoting supportive supervision may contribute to healthier work environments.

Policymakers may consider strengthening family-friendly workplace policies, including parental leave, childcare support, and flexible scheduling, particularly in sectors with a high proportion of female employees. Such measures may contribute to improved workforce participation while safeguarding employee well-being.

Working women may also benefit from interventions that strengthen stress management, time management, resilience, and adaptive coping strategies, enabling them to manage multiple responsibilities more effectively.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between family–work multitasking, stress, and psychological well-being among working women. The findings demonstrate that family–work multitasking significantly increases stress and reduces psychological well-being. Furthermore, stress partially mediates the relationship between family–work multitasking and psychological well-being, indicating that psychological strain represents an important mechanism through which multitasking influences women's mental health.

The study highlights the importance of balancing occupational and family responsibilities to promote psychological well-being. As women's participation in the workforce continues to increase, organizations must recognize the psychological demands of managing multiple roles and develop supportive workplace practices that promote healthier, more sustainable employment experiences.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the present study has several limitations.

First, the study employed a cross-sectional research design, limiting the ability to establish causal relationships among the variables.

Second, data were collected via self-report questionnaires, which may be subject to common method and social desirability biases.

Third, convenience sampling was adopted, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to all working women.

Fourth, the study focused exclusively on working women and therefore does not permit comparisons with male employees or dual-earner couples.

Finally, although stress was examined as a mediator, other potentially important mediators or moderators, such as organizational support, family support, psychological capital, resilience, coping strategies, and emotional intelligence, were not included in the model.

6.5 Future Research Directions

Future studies may employ longitudinal research designs to better understand the long-term effects of family–work multitasking on psychological well-being.

Researchers may also compare different occupational sectors, age groups, marital statuses, and organizational settings to identify contextual differences in the proposed relationships.

Future investigations should examine additional mediating variables such as burnout, work–family conflict, emotional exhaustion, and psychological capital, as well as moderating variables including organizational support, supervisor support, family support, flexible work arrangements, and resilience.

Comparative studies involving male employees, dual-earner couples, entrepreneurs, and employees from different cultural contexts would further enhance understanding of work–family dynamics and psychological well-being.

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