Incivility, Role-Conflict, and Emotional Exhaustion in Teaching Profession: The Moderating Role of Gender

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of incivility and role conflict on emotional exhaustion of teaching staff. Incivility was determined in terms of discouretous and neglecting behavior of family memebrs at home while immediate supervisors at workplace. Role-conflict refers to the interferences of family members during office hours. The study further examined the moderating role of gender in each proposed effect. For empirical analysis, primary data were collected from regular teachers of public sector universities of AJ&K through mailed questionnaires. To examine the proposed direct effects, Structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied in AMOS 24. Feasible measurement model was identified and selected with the help of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The study further applied PROCESS macro of Hayes (2013) in SPSS 24 to examine the moderating role of gender. The results show a positive effect of family incivility, family-workplace conflict, and supervisors' incivility on emotional exhaustion of respondents. Interestingly, the moderating role of gender was not observed for all three cases. On the basis of these findings, different policy implications were presented and discussed.

1. Introduction

Incivility refers to the discourteous, unsociable, or rude behavior, not necessarily intended to harm the others. Ideally, polite and courteous interposal treatments, based on sense of mutual respect and cooperation, are expected in communities. In practice, these positive attitudes and behaviors are, however, largely missing. The lacking of such positive elements trigger the emergence of incivility, with negative repercussions (Peters, 2015). Uncivil actions and

behaviors may emanate from family, workplace, or any other societal element. Family incivility was defined by Lim and Tai (2014) as "low-intensity deviant behaviors with ambiguous intent that violate the norms of mutual respect in the family". The similar definition for workplace incivility was offered by Andersson and Pearson (1999), specifying it as the breach of official norms and an obstruction for the promotion of mutual respect and cooperation. Such events and situations lead to the emergence of depression, irritation, and avoidance, which then hurt the entire system. The incivility is painful and dangerous, as it create stress and emotional disorder among the victims, while inducing then to reduce work efforts, show less commitments, and negatively influence their organizational citizenship behavior (De Clercq, Inam Ul Haq, Azeem, & Raja, 2018).

For majority of the individuals in this era, family and job are two important and critical aspects of life. Balancing the two domains is very much necessary for better performance, survival, and progression of the individuals (Palmer, Rose, Sanders, & Randle, 2012; Soomro, Breitenecker, & Shah, 2018). This desired balance and compatibility in roles is, however, too difficult, stressful, and challenging. The conflicts arise when demands of one segment interfere with the requirements of other part (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). This may be due to interference of family at job or of job demands in family life. Similarly, the time spent at one place can affect the availability at other place, thereby fetching a source of conflict at two places. Moreover, the effects of stress triggered at one place could transmit and reflect to other places. These all conflicting issues severely disrupt the comfort level of individuals facing such issues, which then negatively impact their well-being (Sonnentag, Unger, & Nagel, 2013). The individuals observing such conflicts may feel themselves helpless and emotionally exhausted, while finding it difficult to discharge their responsibilities and commitments effectively (Karatepe, 2013). Exhaustion associated with mistreatment at workplace is much damaging and painful, and its impact could transmit to multiple people and places, simultaneously (Sanz-Vergel, Rodríguez-Muñoz, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2012; Liang, 2015).

At workplace, the supervisors and colleagues can be the prime instigators of uncivil actions and behaviors (Reio, 2011). Employees generally consider the supervisors more relevant to their matters, and perceive any mistreatment from their side as a danger signal (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). The behavior and dealings of supervisors, therefore, matter much in the employees related job outcomes. The constructive and supportive attitude of supervisors could be helpful in developing a conducive working environment, while benefiting the individuals and organizations (Taylor, Bedeian, Cole, & Zhang, 2015). The perceptions and experiences of impolite and abusive behavior at workplace, on the other side, adversely affect the health and morale of employees, while fetching a source of psychological distress (Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008; Abubakar, 2018). Incivility is, therefore, much damaging for individuals and organizations. Many studies across the world reported negative consequences of incivility and role-conflicts for emotional well-being of individual victims, and then mediation of emotional exhaustion to transmit the impact on job related outcomes (Karatepe, 2013; Hur, Kim, & Park, 2015; Huang & Lin, 2019).

This study also examined the effect of incivility and role-conflict on emotional exhaustion of teaching staff in higher education sector of AJ&K. The study further incorporated the moderating role of gender to examine the existence of any differential mechanism. The study is expected to contribute in at least four ways. First, the incivility is determined in terms of both family and workplace dimensions. The behavioral problems of family members and immediate supervisors at job were addressed, simultaneously. Second, the issues of unnecessary family interferences during official hours were also examined, with its associated outcome in terms of emotional fatigue. Third is the moderating role of gender to develop an understanding of emotional reaction patterns of male and female staff, who faced any sort of unpleasant event or interaction. Fourth, the study is organized in a culture with relatively distinct norms and values, more trend of joint family system, and higher traditions of mutual respect and cooperation. Findings of the study are also expected to be helpful in understanding the consequences of intentional or unintentional impolite dealings, and developing a suitable mechanism to avoid such issues for betterment of individuals, institutions, and the entire system.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development
In emotion-centered model, Spector and Fox (2002) proposed the nature, causes, and implications of emotions for individuals and organizations. The individuals in daily life are normally required to carry out multiple personal and official tasks, for which they have to develop wide-ranging interactions. Such interactions may sometimes be pleasant but certainly not all the times. Regarding personal life, the unpleasant events could be a plausible source of producing

emotional strain, which then put its impact on workplace of the individual victims (Lim & Tai, 2014). This can also work in reverse direction, when negative events at job place could create emotional stress, and then transmit to family life. The perception of ignorance, disrespect, or mistreatment at workplace could be a source of emotional distractions, while carrying significant repercussions for individuals and masses (Kane & Montgomery, 1998; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000). The unpleasant events, interactions, and experiences thus carry damaging spillover and crossover effects (Staines, 1980; Westman, 2001). In addition, the conflicting job demands can also trigger the emotional exhaustion (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001), as demands and interventions of one place affect the commitments at other place(s). Considering such problematic, conflicting, and damaging aspects of personal and official life, the theoretical model of this study was sketched and is shown in Figure 1. The model further specified the moderating role of gender in each effect.
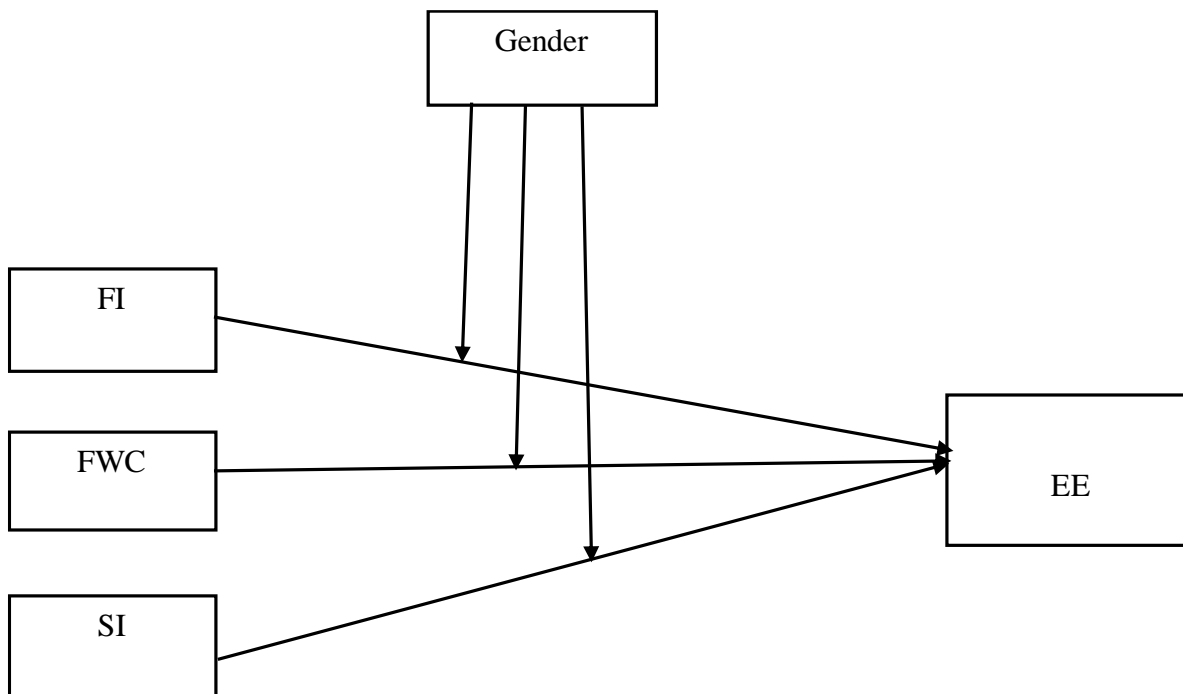
Figure 1. Conceptual Model

2.1 Incivility and Emotional Exhaustion

Incivility refers to the discourteous, rude, and low-intensity deviant behaviors, violating the standards of reciprocal respect at workplace or in the family (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Lim & Tai, 2014). Even interpersonal interactions at workplace can be the instigators of such sentimental events (Totterdell, Hershcovis, Niven, Reich, & Stride, 2012). The intentions behind such behaviors may not necessarily be negative, but its impact can generally be damaging and harmful. Incivility incidents could be the source of producing emotional disorder and psychological distress among the victims (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Abubakar 2018; Viotti, Essenmacher, Hamblin, & Arnetz, 2018; Alola, Avci, & Ozturen, 2018; Anasori, Bayighomog, & Tanova, 2020). The research evidences also indicated that the incivility create emotional disorder, which then affect the performance, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior of employees (Hur et al., 2015; Cho, Bonn, Han, & Lee, 2016; De Clercq et al., 2018). In addition to incivility, the conflicting roles in family and at workplace also create emotional fatigue among the individuals, facing such issues (Chen et al., 2018). At workplace, the higher expectations and demands could be a source of producing emotional disorder, which may induce the victims in uncivil actions and behaviors (Koon & Pun, 2018). Such actions may severely disrupt the work life, family life, or both. These research evidences motivated us to examine the phenomenon of incivility, role-conflict, and associated emotional exhaustion in teaching profession, for which it is hypothesized that:

H_1: Family incivility positively affect the emotional exhaustion of teachers.

H_2: Family-workplace conflict positively affect the emotional exhaustion of teachers.

H_3: Supervisors incivility positively affect the emotional exhaustion of teachers.

2.2 Moderating Mechanism of Gender

The uncivil behaviors and hectic life events, no doubt, put negative effect on health, performance, and efficiency of individuals and ultimately organizations. Such actions, events, and life imbalances create anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion among the victims (Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010; Karatepe, 2013; Geldart et al., 2018; Alola, Olugbade, Avci, & Ozturen, 2019). Based on certain individual and personality characteristics, some people can absorb and manage the unpleasant and stressful shocks effectively, while putting nominal impact on their emotional feelings, health, and performance. One such factor, widely reported in existing literature is the psychological hardiness of the individuals (Kobasa, Maddi, & Courington, 1981; Servellen, Topf, & Leake, 1994; Azeem, 2010; Raman, Sambasivan, & Kumar, 2016). Hardy people can respond more positively and less disruptively to the unpleasant events and interactions. Their resilience ability enable them to survive and excel, even in stressful and challenging environment. In parallel to hardiness, the shock absorbent capacity may also differ across male and female genders. Generally, it is argued that males could manage the life pressures and stress more positively and less disruptively as compared to females. The existing research, however, reported some mixed evidences. Benishek and Lopez (1997), Mache, Bernburg, Groneberg, Klapp, and Danzer (2016), Abubakar (2018) observed the moderating role of gender, as female employees were more prone to work-life imbalance, job stress, and psychological distress in comparison to the male staff. Only male participants indicated the protective effect of hardiness. Contrary to these findings, Cortina et al. (2001), Lim et al. (2008), Reio (2011), Allen et al. (2012), didn't find any differential and moderating mechanism of gender regarding incivility, role conflicts, and associated outcomes. These contradictory evidences induced us to examine the moderating role of gender in targeted segment, for which we hypothesize:

H_4: The positive effect of family incivility on emotional exhaustion is moderated by the gender, such that it remained lower for male as compared to female teachers.

H_5: The positive effect of family-workplace conflict on emotional exhaustion is moderated by the gender, such that it remained lower for male as compared to female teachers.

H_6: The positive effect of supervisors' incivility on emotional exhaustion is moderated by the gender, such that it remained lower for male as compared to female teachers.

3. Methodology

3.1 Population and Sample

The accessible population of this study is comprised of teachers serving in public sector universities of AJ&K. This study followed Soomro et al. (2018) and only focused public sector universities, due to similarity of rules, governance system, and exposure to similar environment and threats. This approach enabled us to overcome the issues of outliers. For detailed analysis, a sample of permanent teachers was selected from five public sector universities of the State, recognized by HEC. The criteria for inclusion in the sample was defined in advance, e.g. only regular teachers, free from key administrative engagements, minimum service, not on long leave of any kind, maximum limit for a single department, etc. To meet these specified criterion, the purposive sampling approach was applied to finalize the sample. The study also used unique coding system for each university and for selected participants, as earlier Mckay, Arnold, Fratzl, and Thomas (2008), Taylor et al. (2015) did. This approach helped to maintain confidentiality, fairness, and to seek more unbiased responses.

3.2 Measures

The study applied standard available measures to seek responses of all the variables. The prior formal permission was sought from the concerned researchers. To gather responses on family incivility, 7-items scale of Cortina et al. (2001) was applied. The modified version of this scale by Lim and Tai (2014) was also followed. The sample items were, "Made demeaning or degrading comments about you", "Ignored or excluded you from social activities". The study used 5-items scale of Netemeyer et al. (1996) to seek responses on family-work conflict. The sample items of this scale were, "Things you wanted to do at work didn't get finish because of the demands of family or spouse/partner", "Family-related strain interfered with your ability to perform job-related duties". Incivility of supervisors was determined with the help

of scale introduced by Martin and Hine (2005). Instead of 17-items, this study used 14-items, as the items related to colleagues' incivility were skipped. The sample items were, "Spoke to you in an aggressive tone of voice", "Didn't consult you in reference to a decision you should have been involved in". For all mentioned measures, the study used 5-point Likert scale with anchors (1 = never, 2 = once or twice. 3 =sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = many times). The emotional exhaustion was, however, determined with the help of some different anchors (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). OLBI instrument was adopted, having four positively word and similar number of negatively worded items. This was expected to be much helpful in establishing the consistency and attention in responses. OLBI instrument was adopted from the studies of Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou, and Kantas (2003), Demerouti, Mostert, and Bakker (2010). The sample items were, "After working, I have enough energy for my leisure activities", "After my work, I usually feel worn out and weary". For determining the gender of respondents, a dichotomous scale was used (1=male, 2=female).

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis
To seek responses, the questionnaires were mailed to the sample teachers in separate sealed envelopes. This approach is popular among the researchers, for being helpful to reduce the interference of researchers, overcome the issues of common-method biases, and facilitating the respondents to provide fair and unbiased opinion (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009; Hur et al., 2015; Yang, Huang, Tang, Yang, & Wu, 2019). A self-addressed envelope with required postage tickets was provided to each respondent with the questionnaire set. The purpose was to ensure the respondents ease in sending the questionnaires back to researchers. The confidentiality of responses was also assured to the teachers, while requesting them to fill each questionnaire set. These all measures and systematic follow up helped to secure a good response rate of around 80%.

Prior to examining the hypothesized effects, the researchers observed basic data characteristics with the help of summary statistics. Correlation analysis was then applied to observe the association among variables. In the meantime, reliability of measures was also assured. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was then applied to examine the hypothesized direct effects. This two stages approach of Anderson and Gerbing (1988) is much common among the researchers in social and behavioral sciences, as it enable to address different multifaceted research problems and issues (Hox & Bechger, 1998; Tarka, 2017). Many researchers applied this data analysis approach in past (Adams & Webster, 2013; Medina-Garrido, Biedma-Ferrer, & Ramos-Rodríguez, 2017; Abubakar, 2018; Alola et al., 2019). This study initially applied confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to choose the appropriate model. Some widely used fit indices with specified threshold levels were identified and used to determine the model fitness ($\chi2/df \leq 3.00$; RMSEA≤ 0.06, IFI/TLI/CFI ≥ 0.90). Koon and Pun (2018), Fatima, Majeed, and Jahanzeb (2020), De Clercq, Inam Ul Haq, and Azeem (2020) also used similar fit indices. For moderation of gender, the study applied PROCESS macro of Hayes (2013) in SPSS.

4. Results
SPSS 24 was used to examine the basic characteristics of collected data, determine the correlation among variables, and to establish the reliability of measures. The results are summarized in table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics, Correlation, and Reliability Analysis

	Mean	SD	CR	FI	FWC	SI	EE
FI	1.78	.86	0.87	----			
FWC	2.07	.84	0.83	0.535[***]	----		
SI	1.66	.68	0.92	0.442[***]	0.285[***]	----	
EE	2.76	.84	0.89	0.294[***]	0.322[***]	0.157[**]	----

(Note: *** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05)

In the model, family incivility (FI), family-workplace conflict (FWC), and supervisors' incivility (SI) were the independent variables, while emotional exhaustion (EE) was the dependent variable. Table 1 reported the mean and standard deviation values of all independent and dependent variables, where larger mean value depict the intention of respondents towards agreement side. The statistics pertaining to FI (mean= 1.78, S.D = 0.86) indicated the lesser

incidences of incivility for the respondents. The indicators of FWC (mean= 2.07, S.D = 0.84) portrayed a similarity in direction but appeared to be more problematic as compared to FI. Statistics of SI (mean = 1.66, S.D = 0.69), again, specified a direction and position closer to FI. This is a positive and encouraging sign, as it revealed a lesser issue of supervisors' discourteous behavior in the higher education sector of the territory. Balanced statistics of EE (mean = 2.76, S.D = 0.84) were noted. This scale was, however, comprised of both positive and negative worded items. The statistics of gender, not reported in the table, also remained almost balanced with (41.7%) representation of female and (58.3%) of male respondents.

Table 1 further showed that composite reliability (CR) of all the measure was greater than 0.70, hence the reliability of measures was endorsed. The correlation analysis, reported in table 1, specified a positive and significant correlation of FI with FWC ($r = 0.535$, $p < .001$), SI ($r = 0.442$, $p < .001$), and EE ($r = 0.294$, $p < .001$). The results further indicated a significant positive correlation of FWC with SI ($r = 0.285$, $p < .001$) and EE ($r = 0.322$, $p < .001$). Similar situation was observed for SI to EE correlation ($r = 0.157$, $p < .01$). The indices reported above confirmed to the normal distribution of data, without having any distortion or outliers. In the next step, model fitness was determined and its results are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Measurement Model

Measurement Model	χ^2	Df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	IFI	TLI	CFI
4-Factor Model (original)	1613.83	521	3.10	.07	.85	.83	.85
4-Factor Model (revised)	1079.80	512	2.11	.05	.92	.91	.92

The original 4-factor model indicated the values of some indices, not meeting the specified threshold levels (χ^2/df = 3.10, RMSEA= 0.07, IFI = 0.85, TLI = 0.83, and CFI = 0.85). These indices and model fitness were improved with help of modification analysis. Certain items were correlated, and consequently desired fit indices were secured in the revised model (χ^2/df = 2.11, RMSEA= 0.05, IFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, and CFI = 0. 92). These revised statistics were confirming the threshold levels specified in methodology section. After securing model fitness, hypothesized direct effects were examined in SEM and its results are in table 3.

Table 3. Direct Effects

Direct Path	β	p	Result
FI → EE	0.11	*	Accepted
FWC→ EE	0.28	***	Accepted
SI → EE	0.14	**	Accepted

*(Note: *** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05)*

The data analysis results supported all three hypothesized direct effects, i.e. a positive and significant effect of family incivility (FI), family-workplace conflict (FWC), and supervisors' incivility (SI) was observed for emotional exhaustion (EE). The effect remained stronger in case of FWC ($\beta = .28$, $p < .001$), followed by SI ($\beta = .14$, $p < .01$), and FI ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$). These results showed a relatively lesser impact of unpleasant events at home to the exhaustion of employees at workplace. In contract, the family interventions during office hours and the unpleasant interactions at workplace were more relevant for emotional disorder of the victims. For further investigation, the study examined the moderating mechanism of gender in each hypothesized direct effect. Moderation was analyzed by applying the model of Hayes (2013), and its results are in table 4.

Table 4. Moderation of Gender

DV: EE	β	*P*	95% CI	
FI x Gender	-0.03	0.78	-0.221	0.168
FWC x Gender	-0.03	0.65	-0.233	0.147
SI x Gender	0.02	0.90	-0.221	0.251

(Note: p >.05, hence, no moderation)

For determining the moderating mechanism, the study assessed three interaction terms, all of which remained insignificant; i.e. FI x Gender (β = -.03, p >.05), FWC x Gender (β = -.03, p >.05), and SI x Gender (β = .02, p >.05). The results reported in table 4 clearly indicated that the effect of family incivility, family-workplace conflict, and supervisors' incivility didn't significantly differ for male and female respondents. Each effect remained positive and significant for both the genders.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of family incivility, family-workplace conflict, and supervisors' incivility on emotional exhaustion of teachers in public sector universities of AJ&K. It is generally believed that the rude and discourteous dealings, either in family or at workplace, embrace adverse outcomes for individuals, organizations, and the communities. It can produce and enhance the stress, anxiety, emotional fatigue, and psychological distress among the individuals who are the victims of such unpleasant actions and interactions. The effects can gradually transmit to numerous associated people and places through spillover and crossover mechanism. This study also examined the effect of these disrupting elements and events of individuals' life on their emotional feelings. As hypothesized, the study found a positive and significant impact of each independent variable, i.e. family incivility, family-workplace conflict, and supervisors' incivility on dependent variable, i.e. emotional exhaustion. The study further attempted to explore the moderating role of gender in each proposed direct effect. The empirical results, however, didn't support for moderation of gender in either case. On the basis of findings, the study concluded that incivility and conflicts in different domains are chronic issues which trigger emotional exhaustion among the victims. Moreover, these issues elevate the exhausted feelings of both male and female sufferers, without having any noticeable exception for any gender.

The study offered some policy implications and interventions to cope with the issue. Considering the negative consequences of incivility, it is suggested to confine such issues at workplace. Strict measures should be taken to deal with the originators of such uncivil concerns, as earlier Blanco-Donoso et al. (2019) suggested. Efforts should also be made to reduce the impact of outer elements, beyond the jurisdictions of the organizations. The friendly and conducive working environment can be helpful to absorb such effects to a larger extent. Seminars may also be arranged to create awareness on harmful aspects of incivility and the mechanism of its management. As Bai, Lin, and Wang (2016) suggested, such awareness could be helpful to minimize the probabilities of deviant work behaviors. Similarly, the customized training programs on emotional intelligence and relevant to handling of unpleasant events can be helpful to deal with the stated issues. Earlier, Milam, Spitzmueller, and Penney (2009), Bibi, Karim, and Siraj ud Din (2013), Liu, Zhou, and Che (2019) also made almost similar suggestions. These measures can be helpful in modeling positive attitudes and sustaining the efficiency and productivity of individuals and organizations. The effective implementation of such measures can also be helpful in societal and national development.

In parallel to many strengths of the study, its limitations should also be considered for meaningful interpretation and inferences. These areas may be addressed in future research for more conclusive evidences and valuable contributions. Due to time and resource constraints, the study took a sample of teachers from specified universities of one region only. In future, the study should be strengthened with a broader sample from all over the country for comprehensive and wide-ranging results that can be generalized confidently. Similarly, the study only focused emotional exhaustion of direct respondents, without examining the spillover and crossover effects. The future studies may address this aspect by collecting the responses of peers in the organizations and partners at home. Regarding conflicting tasks, the study only

addressed the aspect of family interference with work. This can be extended by examining the domain of work interference with family, i.e. work-family conflict. Numerous such extensions are possible in this area to generate more interesting and comprehensive implications. The impact can further be determined in terms of performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, etc. Similarly, the moderating mechanism of education, family system, earnings, etc. may also be determined. Addressing these aspects can bring valuable theoretical, contextual, and practical implications.

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