Work-Family Conflict, Anger and Verbal Aggression among Married Women with Paid Job: Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support

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Abstract

The present study aimed at investigating the relationship of work-family conflict with anger and verbal aggression with moderating role of perceived social support among married women with paid job. Total three hundred (n =300) married women affiliated with various organizations were conveniently recruited from Faisalabad and Lahore. Data were collected administering demographic information form, Work-Family Conflict (Haslam et al., 2015), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1988), Anger and Verbal Aggression, Subscales of Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) on the selected sample. Statistical analysis revealed majority women experiencing significant anger and verbal aggression. Work-family conflict has significant relationship with anger and verbal aggression and that relation was moderated by perceived social support from family, friends and significant others. The present findings have implications for family and society emphasizing on sufficient provision of social support for married women with paid job not only for the successful resolution of work-family conflict but also for managing their anger and verbal aggression to be functional within work-family spheres.

Key words: Work-Family Conflict, Social Support, Anger, Verbal Aggression, Married Women

Introduction

Work-family conflict ascends when two different settings intrude each other in a way that one puts negative influence another (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Work-family conflict is the function of incompatibility with regards to role pressures at both work and family. Nature of work-family conflict/balance can be also expounded taking into account the work/family border theory proposed by Clark (2001) whereby people keep crossing the borders between work and family. If an employee has difficulties in balancing work and home life, conflicts between both are likely to rise (Khan et al., 2023). But, on the other hands, it also depends upon people how they deal with two distinct environments in order to prevent a conflict (Carlson &Kacmar, 2000, as cited in Khan et al.,2023).

A large body of research explicated the nature of work-family conflict and its associated psychosocial challenges. Work-related stressors overflowed family lives of employees creating conflict as to work and family evidencing work-family conflict as a significant contributing factor to psychological distress among employees (Abdou et al., 2024). Work-family conflict negatively impacted psychological well-being and psychological safety of employees (Obrenovic et al., 2020). Work-family management is generally connected with gender by many and in support of this assumption, scientific literatures also highlighted women experiencing more work-family conflict than men (Khan et al., 2023).

Various work-related factors at work and home such as; working hours, overload, job rigidity, workplace discrimination, authoritarian style of management, child rearing, lack of support from family and husbands instigated work-family conflicts (Urooj et al., 2023). Married police women encountered more work-family conflict upsetting their emotional well-being (Abdullah et al., 2023). Work-family conflict was robustly associated with job satisfaction (Munawar & Sittar, 2020), with lower positive affect and job satisfaction but with higher negative affect and psychological distress (Kafetsios, 2007). Women facing work-family conflict and work-related stressors were more prone to develop depressive symptoms (Seto et al., 2004). Perception of both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict was inversely association with mental health of women with mediating role of perceived stress and negative affect (Zhou et al., 2018).

Conversely, protective factors minimized work-family conflict as evident by a study (Nurmayanti et al., 2024), wherein, family support worked out in response to work-to-family conflict via family-to-work conflict among female teachers. Support from family moderated the association of work-family

conflict with workplace incivility. However, work-to-family conflict reduced family satisfaction when they encountered workplace incivility (Razzaq et al., 2024). Congruency between work-family conflict and family support are integral in determining higher level of positive affect and safety (Fan et al., 2024). In the same study, researchers noted the significance of family support in the context of safety performance among employees with inevitable high work-family conflict. Social support has significant alliance with work-family conflict that further related with psychological well-being in female university teachers (Akram & Chaudhry, 2020). Support and discontentment at work and family may directly/indirectly constitute the perception of conflict (Clark, 2001, as cited in Wang, 2024). Strong social support system, familial and professional quality relationships are balancing for resolution of work-family conflict ensuring harmony within home and setting (Wang, 2024). Work-related dimensions directly affect work-family conflict that could be resolved with the use of specific emotional regulation strategies (Gonnelli et al., 2018).

Significant of the Study

Married women are virtually expected to ensure excellency in work despite doing paid job as household tasks are considered their prime responsibilities. Consequently, they keep struggling to sustain the balance between home and work life for which they need to allocate sufficient time so that they could produce quality work simultaneously in two different settings. Women with paid job are leading multitasking life, irrespective of marital status, but the scenario swiftly gets change as soon as they step in the circle of marriage. In South Asian societies, as men are responsible for managing financial needs of a family, for this reason, paid job usually becomes secondary option for married women. Still, house making is prime and foremost job for them, as a result, both workplace and home become major working domains for married women wherein they remain busy from dawn to dusk. No mater, going out for paid job is a passion or compulsion for women, but they equally strive to accomplish tasks at hand adhering with family values, social norms and roles they have to play being a daughter-in-law, wife and mother as well.

Balancing work and family tasks with the assurance of quality work deters the women in so far as that intensifies the conflict between work and family further impairing their psychological health, especially when they do not receive sufficient social support as they deserve. Adopting this perspective, the present study was designed to estimate the prevalence of anger and verbal aggression and as well as their relationship with work- family conflict treating perceived social support as a moderator. Linking to present research objectives, following hypotheses have been

postulated:

- Work-family conflict and perceived family support will have significant relationship with anger and verbal aggression among married women with paid job

- Perceived social support will moderate the relationship between work-family conflict and anger among married women with paid job

- Perceived social support will moderate the relationship between work-family conflict and verbal aggression among married women with paid job
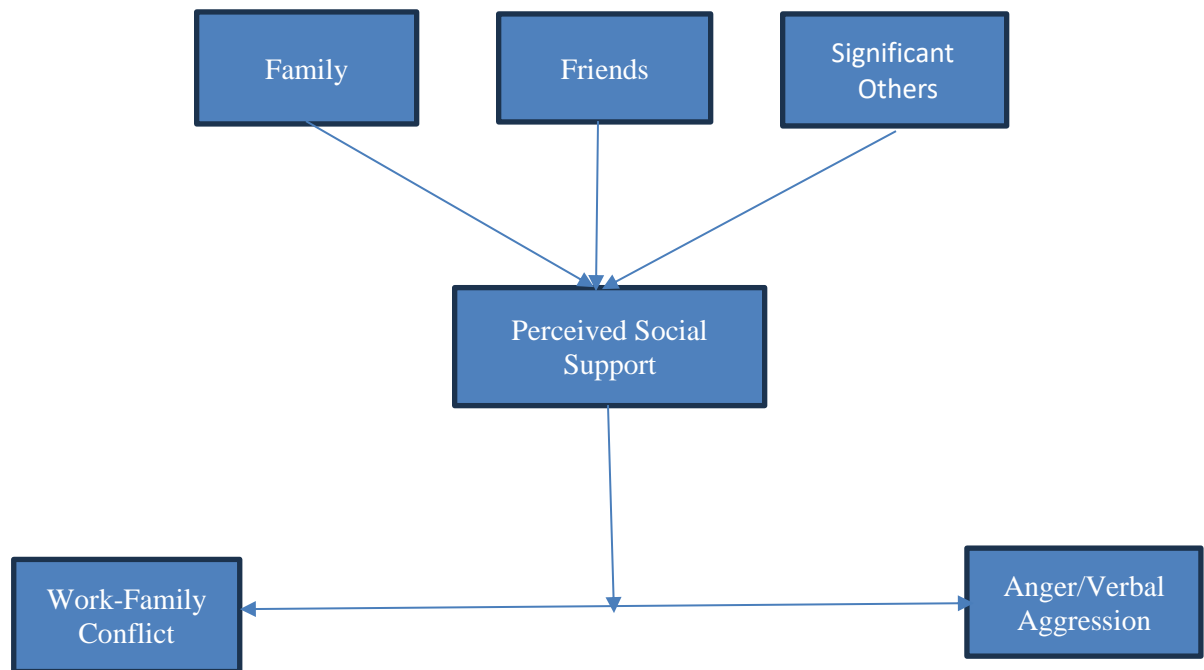

Figure1: Conceptual framework of the study

Method

Participants

The present sample comprised of three hundred women with paid jobs ($n = 300$) conveniently recruited from various organizations serving in Faisalabad and Lahore. Ages of the participants ranged from 25-55years ($M = 38.53$; $SD = 6.69$) who were married with at least one child. Minimum 1 year of affiliation with organization was basic inclusive criteria for sample recruitment. Women whose husbands were living out of station/country or unemployed, suffering from any physical or psychological chronic illness, mothers of special children, divorces and widow were excluded from

the present project in order to control the additional influences of significant stressors.

Measures

Demographic Information Form was administered to gain information with regards to demographic of the participants including age, educational level, socio-economic status, marital status, no. of children and family members, family system, current designation, department, organization and so on.

The measure of Work-Family Conflict (Haslam et al., 2015) was selected to estimate the work-family conflict among women with paid job. It consisted of 10 items which can be easily scored on 7-points likert scale from very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (7). Reliability of full scale is .80. Authors have reported robust psychometric properties of their developed scale (Haslam et al., 2015).

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) comprised of 12 items equally distributed among three subscales like Family (4- Items), Friends (4-items) and Significant Others (4-items). Items of all subscales are scored on 7-point likert scale from very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (7). Reliability for the subscales of Family (0.87), for Friends (0.85), for Significant others (0.91) and for full scale is (0.88) as reported by authors (Zimet et al., 1988).

Anger and Verbal Aggression, two subscales of Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) were selected for present purpose. The subscale of Anger comprised of 7 items, while Verbal Aggression consisted on 5 items, however, 5-point scoring key from extremely uncharacteristic of me (1) to extremely characteristic of me (5), was given to score the items of both subscales. Cronbach's alpha for anger is 0.83 and for verbal aggression is 0.72 (Buss & Perry, 1992).

Procedure

Data were collected from each participant in individual setting. Before data collection, they were given briefing about what basic purpose of the project was and how they could appropriately respond on each item included in the research instruments. The assurance regarding confidentiality of data and benefits associated with project were also briefed in order to have written consent for the present project. All participants individually signed the consent form and then filled up research instruments as they were instructed during briefing. Having completed data collection procedure, they all were thanked for the information they provided that later on was compiled to be statistically analyzed using SPSS, Version-23 and Amos-24.

Results

Table 1: Prevalence of anger and verbal aggression among research participants (*n* =300)

Prevalence	Anger		Verbal Aggression	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
Normal	121	40.33	106	35.33
Significant	179	59.66	194	64.66

Descriptive statistics (**Table: 1**) indicated approximately 59.55% women having significant, while 40.33% reported normal anger. Majority participants (64.66%) were also expressing verbal aggression in daily life, on the other hand, 35.33% were with normal level of verbal aggression.
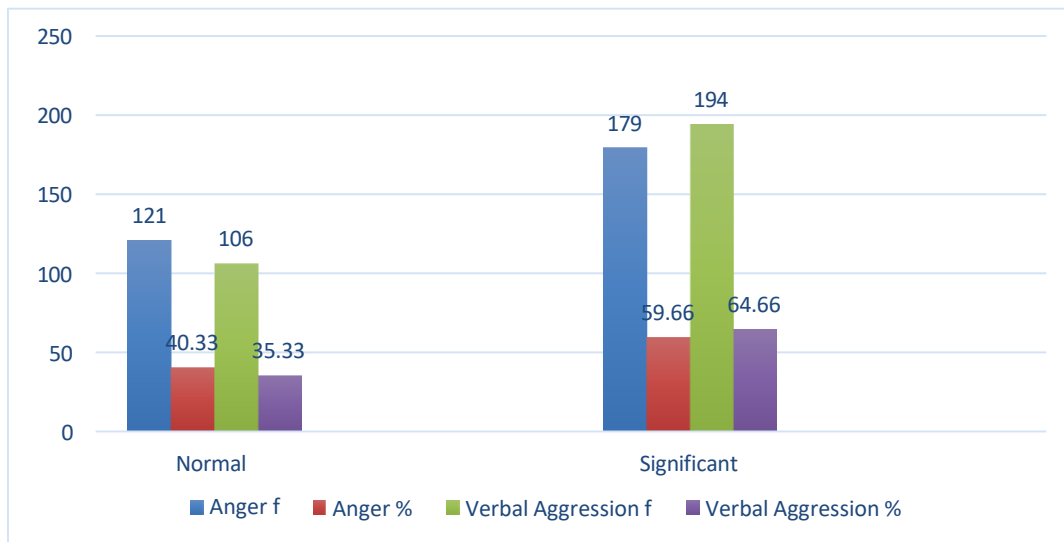

Figure:2: Prevalence of Anger and Verbal Aggression among Married Women with Paid Job

Table 2: Summary of bivariate analysis showing relationships among variables (*n* =300)

Variables	Anger	Verbal Aggression
Work Family Conflict	.448**	.424**
Family	-.530**	-.521**
Friends	-.467**	-.399**
Significant Others	-.435**	-.369**
Total Perceived Social Support	-.524**	-.472**

$P < .001$

Bivariate analysis (**Table: 2**) revealed significant association of Work-Family Conflict ($r = .448$, $p < .001$), Family ($r = -.530$, $p < .001$), Friends ($r = -.467$, $p < .001$), Significant others ($r = -.435$, $p < .001$) and total Perceived Social Support ($r = -.524$, $p < .001$) with anger among women with paid job. The variables of Work-Family Conflict ($r = .424$, $p < .001$), Family ($r = -.521$, $p < .001$), Friends ($r = -.399$, $p < .001$), Significant others ($r = -.369$, $p < .001$) and total Perceived Social Support ($r = -.472$, $p < .001$) have significant connection with Verbal Aggression among all participants.
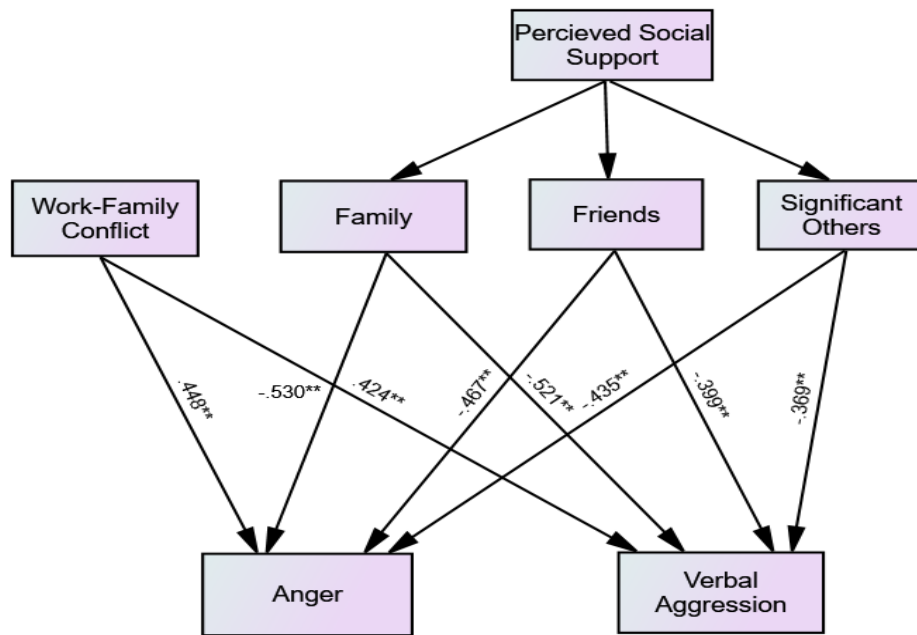

Figure 3. Model showing relationship of work-family conflict and perceived social support with anger and verbal aggression

Table 3: Moderation analysis, through Hayes Process, showing perceived social support as moderator between work-family conflict and anger

Models	β	SE	t	p	95% CI
Model 1					[LL - UL]
Constant	10.95	3.69	2.96	.003	[3.69, 18.21]
Work-Family Conflict	.483	.091	5.29	.000	[.303, .662]
Family	.083	.167	.500	.617	[.246, .414]
Work-Family Conflict x Family	-.015	.004	-3.44	.0007	[-.023, -.006]
	$R = .61$,	$R^2 = .38$,	$F = 61.07$		

Model 2

Constant	5.88	3.99	1.47	.141	[-1.97, 13.73]
Work-Family Conflict	.590	.101	5.80	.000	[.390, .790]]
Friends	.255	.189	1.34	.179	[-.117, .628]
Work-Family Conflict x Friends	-.018	.005	-3.69	.0003	[-.028, -.008]
	R = .61	R² =.37	F = 59.09		

Model 3

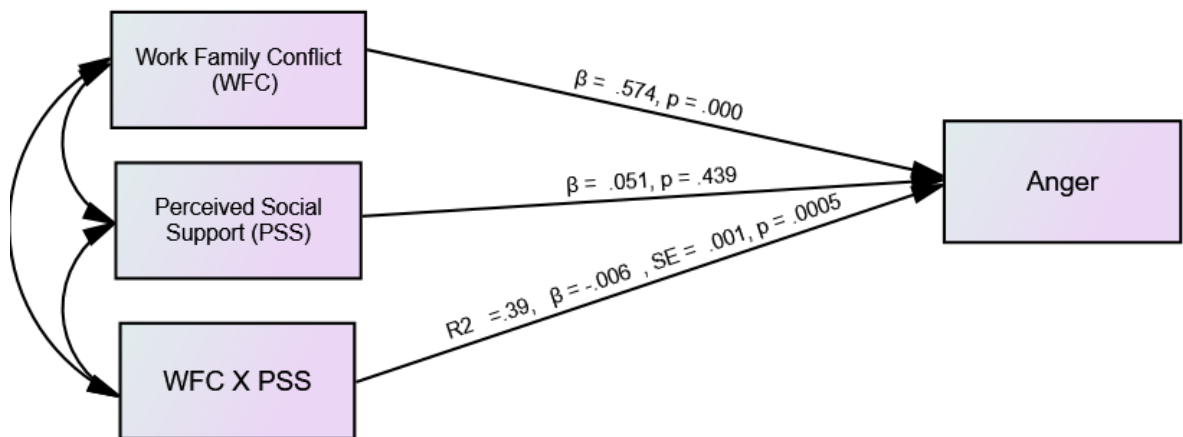|					
Constant	11.07	4.27	2.59	.010	[2.66, 19.49]
Work-Family Conflict	.460	.107	4.28	.000	[.249, .671]
Significant Others	-.007	.191	-.040	.967	[-.385, .369]
Work-Family Conflict x Significant others	-.010	.004	-2.16	.031	[-.020 -.001]
	R = .58	R² = .33	F = 50.04		

Dependent variable = Anger

Figure 4. Model showing moderating role of perceived social support (family, friends & significant others) in relationship between family conflict and anger

Moderation analysis was done through Hayes Process for SPSS, Version 4.2 (**Table:3**) that yielded perceived social support (family, friends and significant others) moderating the relationship between work-family conflict and anger among married women with paid job. Model summary depicted that support from family and work-

family conflict interactively accounted 38 % (R^2 = .38) variance, friends accounted 37% (R^2 =.37) and significant others produced 33% (R^2 = .33) variance in anger. Furthermore, family (β = -.015, p =.0007), friends (β = -.018, p =.0003) and significant others (β = -.010, p =.031), albeit not very strongly, but significantly moderated the relationship between work-family conflict and anger among married women with paid job.

In addition to this, Figure-4 also revealed 39% of variance (R^2 = .39) in outcome variable accounted for perceived social support that emerged as a significant moderator (β = -.006, p = .0005) in determining the association between work-family conflict and anger among participants. Overall results demonstrated that women experienced more anger owing to work-family conflict when they perceived to have insufficient support from family, friends and significant others.

Table 4: Moderation analysis showing perceived social support as moderator between work-family conflict and verbal aggression

Models	β	SE	t	p	95% CI
Model 1					[LL - UL]
Constant	12.24	2.64	4.62	.000	[7.03, 17.45]
Work-Family Conflict	.263	.065	4.01	.0001	[.134, .392]
Family	-.059	.120	-.495	.628	[-.296, .177]
Work-Family Conflict x Family	-.007	.003	-2.31	.021	[-.013, -.001]
	R = .59	R^2 = .34	F = 52.77		
Model 2					
Constant	5.20	2.93	1.77	.077	[-571, 10.97]
Work-Family Conflict	.408	.074	5.45	.000	[.260,-.555]
Friends	.227	.139	1.63	.103	[.046, .501]
Work-Family Conflict x Friends	-.012	.003	-3.51	.0005	[-.020 -.005]
	R = .55	R^2 =.30	F = 44.12		
Model 3					
Constant	8.13	3.12	2.60	.009	[-1.99, 14.27]
Work-Family Conflict	.332	.078	4.25	.000	[.178, .486]
Significant Others	.073	.139	.526	.598	[-.201, .349]
Work-Family Conflict x Significant others	-.008	.003	-2.28	.023	[-.015, -.001]
	R = .52	R^2 =.27	F = 37.86		

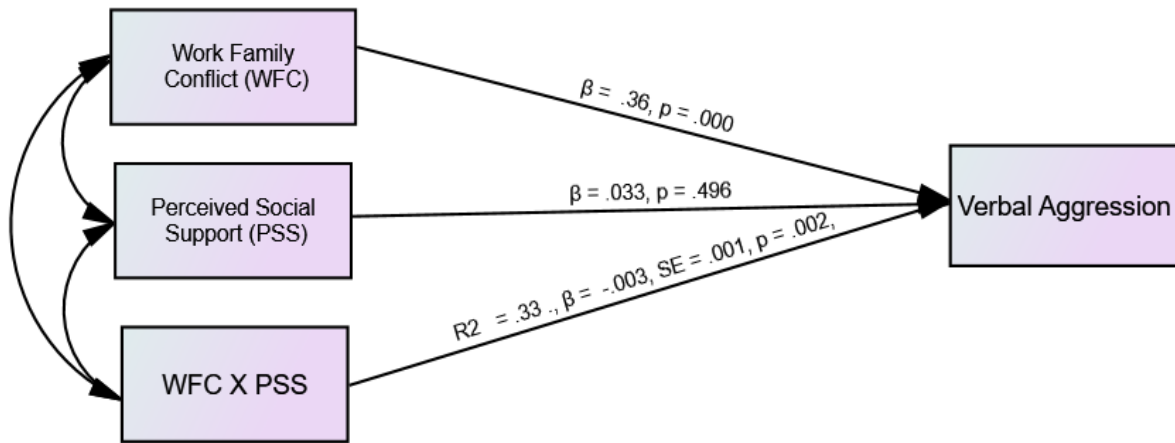Dependent variable = Verbal Aggression

Figure 5. Model showing moderating role of perceived social support (family, friends & significant others) in relationship between work-family conflict and verbal aggression

Summary of moderation analysis, through Hayes Process for SPSS Version-4.2 (**Table:4**), revealed perceived social support (family, friends and significant others) as a significant moderator explaining the relationship between work-family conflict and verbal aggression among participants. About 34% (R^2 = .34) variance in verbal aggression was attributed to family, 30% to friends (R^2 =.30) and 27% to significant others (R^2 =.27). Family (β =-.007, p = .021), friends (β = -.012, p = .0005) and significant others (β = -.008, p = .023), to some extent, have moderated the relationship between work-family conflict and verbal aggression.

Figure 5 also illustrated about 33 % of variance ((R^2 = .33) in verbal aggression accounted for perceived social support (β = -.003, p = .002) that moderated the relationship between work-family conflict and verbal aggression among participants. It infers that work-family conflict increased verbal aggression among women with paid job in case of perceiving insufficient social support from family, friends and significant others.

Discussions

The present research addressed psychological and work-related issues encountered by married women with paid jobs. In the context of first objective, findings (**Table:1**) depicted majority participants expressing anger and verbal aggression in daily routine. Previous scientific evidences also averred higher verbal aggression (Sadiq & Shafiq, 2020; Bukhari etal., 2017) and passive anger among women (Biaggo, 1989).

In cultural terms, women are perceived as a good mother, wife, sister and daughter, if they ensure timely completion of all tasks at hand. Sometimes, they silently deal with all at the expense of own emotional needs.

This self-silencing constitutes psychological distress in women (Fiza & Simon, 2024). As anger is related with decreased psychosocial functioning (Okuda et al., 2015), therefore, the decline in psychological health, with the passage of time, seemed to aggravate the level of anger and verbal aggression among participants. Besides, continuous thinking about negative experience at home and work might have accelerate the anger and verbal aggression This explanation can be well supported by a meta-analysis that revealed women having more propensity to ruminate than men (Johnsona, 2013). As job stress can directly affect the mental health of workers (Mensah, 2021) and stressful life events are allied with rumination (Michl et al., 2013), consequently, significant anger and verbal aggression among married women could be the function of family and work-related stressful experiences they had in daily routine.

The present findings further ascertained significant association of work-family conflict and perceived social support (family, friends & significant others) with anger and verbal aggression in married women with paid job (**Table: 2**). Married women are equally responsible for completing tasks at work and home as well. While balancing work and home related tasks, they get mentally exhausted resulting in negative emotions and behaviors as well. Previous studies also elaborated the contribution of work stress in poor health of workers (Thorsteinsson et al., 2014). Lower perceived social support was reported as another significant reason behind higher anger experiences (Diong et al., 2005). Researchers found out an inverse relationship of aggression with perceived social support, while support from families was specifically related with low verbal aggression and anger (Alradaydeh, & Alorani, 2017). In South Asian culture, family relations are considered foremost relations. As women are relationship oriented, for this reason, their psychological health is influenced by quality relationships. In the present study, women who perceived their families less supportive, expressed more anger and verbal aggression while paying dual responsibility both at home and work. It can be justified with the help of present findings which illustrated perceived social support (family, friends & significant others), not strongly but a significant moderator between work-family conflict and anger as well as verbal aggression (**Table: 3 & 4**). Previous researchers investigated familial and socio-cultural fences connecting psychological health of women with paid job. Women perceiving their families and societies more supportive seemed to be more confident, had decision making skills, interpersonal skills and communication skills as well (Afzal et al., 2024). On the other hand, women who do not have sufficient social support from their families, friends and significant others are less capable to resolve work-family conflict intensifying anger and verbal aggression as was observed in the present study that has shown women expressing more anger and verbal aggression when they had insufficient social support while encountering work-family conflict.

Conclusion

The present work directly addressed psychological and work-related issues experienced by married working women who were paying dual responsibilities at home and work resulting in work-family conflict predicting anger and verbal aggression. The relationship of work-family conflict with anger and verbal aggression was

strengthened when perceived social support intervened. Both work-family conflict and perceived social support (family, friends & significant others) interactively determined the level of anger and verbal aggression. In response to work-family conflict, women who perceived insufficient support from their family, friends and significant others reported more anger and verbal aggression.

Implications

Present findings have implications for working women, their families and societies as well. Timely support and cooperation received from family members, friends and other significant relations may assist in controlling anger and verbal aggression among women with paid job who encounter conflict as the function of imbalance work-family tasks. Balancing working and familial relationships have significant influence on job performance (Jia et al., 2024). Disturbed work performance may cultivate additional frustration that is devastating for family and social functioning as well. Functional support system will indeed help married women in managing daily routine tasks at both home and work besides alleviating their sufferings, if their emotions are well understood by those they rely on.

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