

# **A Comprehensive Study on Role Strain and Work-Family Conflict among Women Employed in Non-Governmental Organizations in Coimbatore District**

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## **Abstract**

The increasing participation of women in the workforce, particularly in the non-profit sector, has brought renewed attention to the challenges they face in balancing personal and professional roles. This study analyses the extent and nature of role strain and work-family conflict experienced by women employed in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Coimbatore district. Using a Descriptive research the study examines how overlapping responsibilities at work and home contribute to psychological stress, emotional exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction. Data collected through questionnaires reveal that many women struggle to meet the simultaneous demands of their professional duties and family obligations. The findings highlight the role of organizational policies, support systems, and societal expectations in shaping these experiences. The study concludes by recommending gender-sensitive strategies such as flexible working arrangements, employee wellness programs, and awareness initiatives to mitigate role conflict and enhance overall well-being.

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**Keywords:** Role strain, work-family conflict, work-life balance, occupational stress, organizational support, dual role management.

## **Introduction**

In India, approximately women make up nearly 50% of India's population and play an important role in society and the economy the status of women in India has evolved from reverence in ancient times to facing deep-rooted social inequalities. Reformers and women leaders have fought against practices like Sati, child marriage, and gender discrimination. While legal rights have improved, societal norms continue to restrict women's freedom and opportunities. Women often bear unequal burdens at home and face discrimination in education, employment, and decision-making. Despite progress, the struggle for true gender equality in India continues.

The government's reservation policy for women in employment promotes empowerment, financial independence, and gender equality. Reservation for women in jobs empowers them financially and promotes gender equality by

opening doors in male-dominated fields. It boosts their confidence, independence, and role in decision-making. Despite challenges in balancing work and home, women's employment drives social and economic progress.

According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report Female employment in India, especially in rural areas, has seen notable growth, contributing to women's empowerment and economic inclusion. The labour force participation rate rose to 32.8% in 2021-22, with Tamil Nadu leading at 44%. However, many women still lack job security and benefits, highlighting the need for better workplace policies and support systems.

Role strain is the stress from managing conflicting demands within a single role, while role conflict arises from clashing expectations of multiple roles. Working women often face both, as they balance job responsibilities with traditional family roles. Work-family conflict occurs when the demands

of work and family roles clash, making it difficult to manage both. It can be time-based, strain-based, or behaviour-based, causing stress, burnout, and lower job satisfaction. Women face more pressure due to traditional gender roles and dual responsibilities at home and work.

Women often navigate multiple roles throughout their lives, balancing personal, family, and professional responsibilities. At different stages, they may act as daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, and caregivers, while also pursuing careers or contributing to their communities. Each of these roles brings its own set of expectations and demands, which can become overwhelming when they overlap. This leads to role strain, a form of stress that occurs when the demands of various roles become difficult to manage simultaneously. For instance, a woman might be expected to meet deadlines at work while also caring for her children or supporting elderly family members at home. The pressure to perform well in all areas can cause fatigue, anxiety, and feelings of guilt, especially if one area receives less attention.

This research study explores the unique role strain and family conflict experienced by women in NGOs, where emotional demands and unpredictable schedules intensify work-life challenges. It highlights the gap between gender equality goals and the lived realities of female NGO workers, aiming to inform supportive policies for better well-being, retention, and leadership opportunities. Working women often juggle multiple responsibilities, striving to balance personal and professional roles. For married women and mothers, these challenges intensify due to added family commitments, caregiving duties, and household responsibilities. The constant pressure to meet expectations in both domains frequently results in elevated stress levels and work-family conflict.

## Review of Literature

Pileri, J et Al., (2024) the study investigates the role of work-family interface dimensions as mediators in the relationship between workload and interpersonal strain. In addition, we examined the moderating effect of gender. 319 Italian employees working in the commercial sector participants completed a self-report questionnaire. Findings of the research states that Work-family interface dimensions totally mediated the relationship between workload and interpersonal strain. Moderating influence of gender was found. Gender moderated the relationship between workload this study suggests to organizations that moderate workload and family-friendly policies can act as a protective factor against interpersonal strain. The limitations of the study are the use of self-report measures and the cross-sectional design. Originality/value: This research attempted to fill the gap in interpersonal strain and relationships with the work-family interface.

Kim, J. Y et al., (2023) this study explores the moderating effects of marriage satisfaction and organizational gender discrimination climate in the relationship between work-family conflict of married working women in Korea. A cross-sectional study was conducted using the data of the 8th Korean Longitudinal Survey of Women and Families. This research findings states that work-family conflict had a significant effect on depressive symptoms of married working women. In the dynamics between work-family conflict and depressive symptoms, no significant moderating effect of marriage satisfaction was found. The result of this study suggests that Nursing strategies in the workplace or community are needed so that married working women can

cope positively and actively between work-family conflicts and maintain healthy mental health and gender role awareness education should be prioritized to improve awareness of gender discrimination in the workplace. Also the researcher suggests that nursing interventions such as linking local or government support and information delivery should be provided so that married working women can be consulted about situations related to work-family conflicts or gender discrimination climate.

Al-Alawi, A. I et al., (2021) The main objective of this paper is to investigate the effects of work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and work-life balance on female teachers in the public education sector in Saudi Arabia as well as to analyze the impact of job satisfaction as a moderator for the independent variables. His paper is based on quantitative research methods that included a survey of employees. The constructs of work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and work-life balance were formed using the bivariate and correlation analysis done in SPSS the results of this research showed that there is a positive and highly significant impact on employee performance by work-life balance and job satisfaction, whereas there is a positive but not significant effect when it comes to work-family conflict. However, findings of the study states family-work conflict revealed a significant negative impact on employee performance.

Zheng, J., & Wu, G. (2018) this research focused on examining whether and how work-family conflict affects professional commitment among Chinese project professionals. Research hypotheses were developed to explore the relationship between work-family conflict, professional commitment to the project and the mediating effects of perceived organizational support. The researcher adopted simple random sampling and Data were collected from 327 project managers or professionals working in construction enterprises in China through distributing survey questionnaires data were analyzed using structural equation modeling, applying the bootstrapping method. Results showed that there were three dimensions of work-family conflict: time-based conflict, strain-based conflict and behavior-based conflict. Findings of the research extend a better understanding of work-family conflict and professional commitment in the project setting and verify the importance of social support in balancing work and family and improving employee mobility.

Ajala, E. M. (2017) this research study looks at the correlation between work-family-conflict, family-work-conflict and job performance of working mothers. The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised all working mothers in public hospital (nurses) and Local Government (clerical staff) in Ekiti State of Nigeria. Purposive and random sampling techniques were used to select three hundred respondents. The major instrument used for this study was a questionnaire tagged "Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict and Job Performance Questionnaire. Findings showed that work-family-conflict was more predominant with working mother than the family-work-conflict. From the result It was then recommended that Industrial Social Workers should educate working mothers on how to balance their work and family responsibilities in order to have sense of belongingness in both domains and perform efficiently and effectively in the workplace.

## Research Methodology

In this research study the researcher adopted descriptive research design. The study aims to describe the extent of role strain and work-family conflict, identify the contributing factors, and analyse their impact on women's well-being. A descriptive research design is suitable for understanding the existing conditions, behaviours, and relationships among variables without manipulating them. It allows for a systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data.

Several research studies have examined the role strain and work family conflict of women working on various professional sectors. Additionally, some research has addressed the occupational challenges faced by women in Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs). However there remains the significant a significant gap in addressing the combined impact of role strain and work-family conflict of women working in Non-Governmental Organisation. This study aims to fill this gap by providing deeper understanding of specific key factors contributing to these challenges and their border implications.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To study the demographic details of women working in Non-Governmental Organisation
2. To analyse the role strain because of juggling with multiple role played by women employed in NGO sector
3. To study how often the work interfering with family commitments and the family role interfering with professional responsibilities
4. To provide evidence based suggestion to cope with role strain and work-family conflict of women working in NGO sector

## Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>A:** There is a significant relationship between role strain and work-family conflict among women employed in non-governmental organizations.

**H<sub>1</sub>B:** The Work-Family conflict will vary based on demographic factor such as years of experience and family type

## Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

### Inclusion Criteria

In this research study, the researcher includes women working in entry level and mid-level position in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) focusing different sectors at Coimbatore District.

### Exclusion Criteria

As in this research, the researcher excluded certain categories to ensure of role strain and work-family conflict. This helps in obtaining more relevant and effective results by concentrating on women directly engaged in NGO fieldwork

- Male employees working in Non-governmental organisation are excluded
- Women working in other sectors excluded

- Women employees working in Managerial position and also women employees of NGO working apart from Coimbatore district excluded
- The women employees of NGO sector such as trust, registered funding agencies, alumni association, Self-help groups, recreational clubs are excluded as to assure the challenges of women having more field level work

## Sampling Method

The researcher used purposive sampling to select participants from NGOs in Coimbatore, which has 208 registered NGOs. NGOs such as funding agencies, trusts, care homes, and similar types were excluded. From the filtered list, 15 NGOs with at least five women fieldworkers each were chosen. Data was collected from these women using a structured questionnaire.

## Description of Tool Used

The study utilized a semi-structured questionnaire comprising closed-ended questions measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The tool included three sections: the first gathered demographic information such as age, marital status, years of experience, number of dependents, and family type. The second section focused on role strain, using a self-structured scale developed to assess the challenges women face in managing multiple roles. The third section measured work-family conflict, adapted from Malarvizhi J.'s 2015 study on women police in Madurai, and addressed two dimensions: Family Interfering with Work (FIW) and Work Interfering with Family (WIF). The consistent use of the Likert scale across sections ensured reliability in capturing the experiences of women working in NGOs.

## Operational Definition

**Role Strain:** The stress and pressure women face in managing both work and family responsibilities. In this study, it refers to the difficulties women in NGOs experience while balancing their jobs and home life.

**Work-Family Conflict (WFC):** When work and family demands clash, making it hard for women to fulfil both roles. This can lead to stress, job dissatisfaction, and struggles in personal life.

**Women Employees in NGOs:** Women working in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in areas like education, healthcare, and social work where works in position of socially responsible job, who balance professional duties with family responsibilities.

**Work Interfering with Family (WIF):** When job demands like long hours and stress reduce the time and energy women can give to their families.

**Family Interfering with Work (FIW):** When family duties, like childcare and household tasks, disrupt women's ability to focus on their jobs

## Analysis and Interpretation

**Table 1:** Demographic details

Variable	Category	Respondents	Percentage
Age	20 to 30	44	66.7
	30 to 40	16	24.2
	40 to 50	5	7.6
	above 50	1	1.5
Marital status	Unmarried	39	59.1
	Married	26	39.4
	Widowed	1	1.5
Family structure	Nuclear family	45	68.2
	Joint family	18	27.3
	Extended family	2	3
	Single parenting	1	1.5
Education	Post graduate	40	60.6
	under graduate	25	37.9
	diploma	1	1.5
Income level	Below 15000	23	34.8
	15001 to 25000	23	34.8
	25001 to 35000	15	22.7
	35001 & above	5	7.6
Years of experience	Less than 2 years	35	53
	2 to 5 years	19	28.8
	5 to 10 years	7	10.6
	above 10 years	5	7.6
Child status	yes	26	39.4
	no	40	60.6

**Table 2:** Correlation of role strain and work family conflict

Correlations			
		Role strain	Work-family conflict
Role strain	Pearson Correlation	1	.359**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	66	66
Work –Family Conflict	Pearson Correlation	.359**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	66	66

\*\*correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-Tailed)

**Table 2 Hypothesis**

**H<sub>1A</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between role strain and work-family conflict among women employed in non-governmental organizations.

The Pearson correlation analysis shows a significant positive relationship between role strain and work-family conflict ( $r=0.359$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). Since the  $p$ -value is less than 0.05, the correlation is statistically significant. This indicates that as role strain increases, work-family conflict also tends to increase among women working in the NGO sector.

Since the  $p$ -value is significant the alternative hypothesis  $H_{1A}$  is accepted. This confirms that role strain plays a crucial role in influencing work-family conflict among women in the NGO sector.

## Two-way ANOVA

**Table 3:** Mean variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: Work-Family Conflict						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1.309 <sup>a</sup>	6	.218	.929	.481	.086
Intercept	67.537	1	67.537	287.794	.000	.830
marital	.208	1	.208	.884	.351	.015
famstr	.565	2	.282	1.204	.307	.039
marital * famstr	.746	2	.373	1.589	.213	.051

Error	13.846	59	.235			
Total	467.969	66				
Corrected Total	15.154	65				

a. R Squared = .086 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)

### Table 3

#### Hypothesis

**H1B:** The Work-Family conflict will vary based on demographic factor such as years of experience and family type. The two-way ANOVA analysis was conducted to examine whether work-family conflict varies based on years of experience and family type among women working in NGOs. The two-way ANOVA results indicate that marital status, family structure, and their interaction do not have a significant effect on work-family conflict among women working in NGOs, as all p-values exceed 0.05. The result explains only 8.6% of the variance in work-family conflict, with marital status ( $p=0.351$ ), family structure ( $p=0.307$ ), and their interaction ( $p=0.213$ ) all showing no statistically significant impact.

Since the P value is insignificant the hypothesis H1B is rejected. This explains that factors as experience and family type has not much impact on Work-family conflict

#### Discussion

This study looked at how role strain influences work-family conflict among women working in NGOs. It found that most women face a moderate level of conflict, where work often affects their family life and vice versa. Role strain was shown to significantly increase this conflict, making it more difficult for women to balance their responsibilities. However, personal factors like years of experience and family type did not have a strong impact, suggesting that job-related stress plays a bigger role than personal background.

To help reduce these challenges, NGOs should offer flexible working hours, supportive leave policies, and better workplace support. Family support—especially from spouses and other household members—is also important in helping women manage both work and home responsibilities. Sharing household duties and providing emotional support can help ease stress. By taking these steps, organizations can create a more supportive work environment and improve the well-being of women in the NGO sector.

#### Suggestions

This study shows that women working in NGOs face many challenges in managing both their jobs and family responsibilities. These challenges are especially difficult for married women, who often have to take care of their families while also meeting work demands. However, support from family members—like understanding spouses and help from others in the household—can make things easier. Women who live in joint or extended families often experience less stress because responsibilities are shared.

The study also highlights how important it is for organizations to support their women employees. Flexible work hours, special leave policies, and benefits like childcare support and maternity leave can help women balance their work and home life better. In addition to this, emotional and mental support in the workplace is needed, because constantly juggling roles can cause stress and burnout. Society also plays an important role. It's important to move away from old ideas that women must only take care of the home. Encouraging equal sharing of household work and including women in family decisions can help them feel more balanced and supported. Women can

also manage better by planning their day, setting priorities, and keeping clear boundaries between work and family time. While the government already offers some support like maternity benefits and crèche services, there should be more policies focused on helping working mothers. Making these services easier to access and letting more women know about them can make a big difference.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Future research can expand by comparing the work-family conflict and role strain experienced by women in NGOs with those working in other sectors such as corporate, healthcare, or government organizations. This would help identify sector-specific challenges and tailor effective solutions. Studies can also explore how workplace policies like flexible schedules, maternity benefits, and employee assistance programs help in reducing work-family conflict among women in NGOs. Additionally, the role of spousal support, extended family involvement, and societal attitudes in enabling women to balance their dual responsibilities deserves further investigation. Lastly, future research should examine the mental health impact of role strain and work-family conflict, focusing on stress, burnout, and the coping mechanisms used by women in the NGO sector to maintain their intrapersonal well-being

#### Conclusion

This study highlights the challenges of work-family conflict and role strain faced by women working in NGOs. The findings reveal that most women experience moderate levels of conflict, with role strain playing a significant role. While demographic factors like years of experience and family type did not show a major impact, the need for organizational and family support remains crucial. Implementing flexible work policies, supportive work environments, and shared family responsibilities can help women balance their roles more effectively. Ensuring emotional, social, and institutional support will enhance their well-being and productivity. This research emphasizes the importance of addressing work-life balance issues for sustainable workforce participation.

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