

Relationship between Personality Traits and Work Life Balance with a Mediating Role of Work Family Conflict

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Abstract

This study explores the nexus between personality traits and work-life balance, with a focus on the intermediary role of work-family conflict. The research, quantitative in nature, employs a correlational design, using instruments such as the Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) and Work and Family Conflict Scales (WAFCS) to assess a sample of 200 salespersons in Gujranwala, Pakistan. Key personality traits examined include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience. Results reveal a significant negative correlation between several personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) and work-family conflict, and a positive correlation between extraversion and emotional stability with work-life balance. Openness to experience, however, does not significantly predict work-life balance outcomes. Work-family conflict is found to have a substantial negative impact on work-life balance and serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between certain personality traits and work-life balance.

The study underscores the critical influence of personality traits on the work-life balance equation and the mediating role of work-family conflict. It suggests that a better understanding of these relationships can aid organizations in tailoring interventions and support systems to individual employee needs, enhancing both personal well-being and organizational productivity. study's implications extend to the realm of human resource policies and practices, emphasizing the importance of considering personality dimensions in work-life balance initiatives. However, the research's correlational nature and its focus on a specific professional group in a singular geographic locale highlight the need for further, more diverse studies to broaden the generalizability of these findings.

Keywords: Personality Traits, Work-Life Balance, Work-Family Conflict, Mediating Role, Salespersons

Introduction

Personality Traits

An individual's temperament can be influenced by both their genetic makeup and their environmental experiences. According to Psychology Association, 2014 “Personality traits are a reflection of how individuals typically think, feel, and act”. The foundation of trait psychology lies in the notion that people exhibit distinct variations in their positions along a core set of trait dimensions that remain relatively consistent over time and in various contexts. When we engage with the people in our surroundings, we quickly notice the striking diversity among them. For instance, some individuals are highly talkative, while others tend to be reserved. Certain people lead active lives, contrasting with those who prefer a more sedentary lifestyle. Additionally, some individuals frequently experience worry, whereas others rarely display signs of anxiety.

Work life balance

Work life balance involves attaining contentment and effective performance in both personal and professional life, while minimizing conflicts among different roles.¹ The state of equilibrium in which an individual equally values

the responsibilities of their profession and their personal life is known as work life balance.²

The concept of work life balance incorporates psychological elements encompassing several aspects introduced five dimensions of work-life balance: satisfaction with work, satisfaction with family life, performance at work, performance in family life, and the conflict between roles. In conclusion, while there are differing viewpoints on work-life balance within the literature, they all converge on a shared definition — the effective coordination and handling of multiple roles.

Work Family Conflict

According to the definition of work-family conflict, “It is a clash of roles in which the role demands from the work and family domains are inconsistent in some regards. Work family conflict arises when expectations and standards of work come into conflict with expectations and standards of home. Obviously, when people invest a lot of their interest in one area of life and ignore the other, their performance in other areas of life may suffer.³ A basic principle of work-family conflict is that the needs and desires of the family (such as going to the market for shopping and buying grocery, picking a child from the school to drop him for basketball practice or music class) frequently clash with those of the workplace (such as giving extra time to work, travelling for a work). Role conflict arises when a person's various roles, such as work and family, become inconsistent with one another.⁴

Literature Review

Previous research findings indicated that when examining individual variations, two key dimensions were explored: the influence of work on personal life and the influence of personal life on work. Personality traits are believed to play an important role in how much individuals' experience works interfering with their family life. Specifically, specific negative personality traits such as negative emotions and neuroticism are associated with a heightened experience of work inference with family. Conversely, certain positive personality traits like self-confidence, positive emotions, and conscientiousness seem to act as a protective factor, reducing the extent to

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which individuals encounter conflicts between their work and family domains. Additionally, gender disparities have been observed in the context of work interference with family. Research indicates that women generally encounter higher rates of work interference with family compared to men. However, within couples where both partners are employed, men experience more work interference with family than their female counterparts. This is since men often work longer hours, and research has established a positive connection between extended work hours and an increased likelihood of work interfering with family life. Just as in the case of work interference with family (WIF), specific personality-based factors such as positive emotions, self-confidence, and conscientiousness seem to act as safeguards against experiencing family interference with work (FIW). Conversely, other personality traits such as negative emotions and neuroticism appear to increase an individual's susceptibility to experiencing family interference with work.⁵

In terms of gender differences, women tend to encounter higher levels of family interference with work (FIW) compared to men. This is partly attributed to the fact that women typically invest more time in family-related responsibilities, and a greater commitment to family activities is linked to a higher likelihood of experiencing family interference with work. Establishing a robust support system both within the workplace and within one's family environment is crucial for mitigating conflicts between work and family life.

⁶A research study was carried out with the underlying assumption that individuals' perception of work-family conflict (W-F conflict) is shaped by their unique personality traits. In this study, the authors utilized the Big Five personality dimensions as the independent variables while examining W-F conflict. They put forth a hypothesis that suggested extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness would have a positive predictive relationship with W-F conflict, whereas neuroticism would exhibit a negative predictive relationship. To gather data, a self-administered questionnaire was employed. The study involved 205 IT/ITES (Information Technology/Information Technology Enabled Services) employees based in

Chennai city. Its primary objective was to investigate whether an individual's personality traits serve as factors influencing work and personal life. The study has unveiled some significant results. The results indicate that personality dimensions such as extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and agreeableness are predictive factors for work and family conflicts. Interestingly, the hypothesis suggesting a negative association between neuroticism and work family conflict was not sustained, which contradicts existing literature predictions. Work-family conflict has emerged as a pressing concern in society, with adverse consequences for individuals' well-being, including heightened stress levels, mental instability, emotional exhaustion, and decreased life satisfaction. To mitigate these health-related issues, it is crucial for society to advocate for the significance of achieving a balance between one's professional and family responsibilities, while also emphasizing the importance of nurturing personal interests.

Another study was conducted on Chinese Frontline power grid employees. They may be less pleased with their jobs because of the constant pressures they face, such as airborne work and demanding jobs. The purpose of the research was to better understand the connection between personality factors and work and family support and job fulfillment among frontline power grid employees. Information was collected from two power distribution agencies located in Guangdong Province, China, involving a total of 535 employees working on the frontlines of the power grid. Work-family support is a form of social assistance that primarily centers on support originating from both the workplace and family spheres, as well as their interconnected dynamics. To date, numerous studies have indicated that personality traits serve as consistent indicators of social support and can even influence social conflicts. In terms of the underlying mechanism, Pierce (1997) and his associates propose three principal avenues: individuals tend to choose and shape their social surroundings to align with their personality traits. Personality traits can trigger supportive or unsupportive responses from others; and personality traits can alter how individuals assess the social support they receive. Within the context of the Five-Factor Model, individuals who score high in

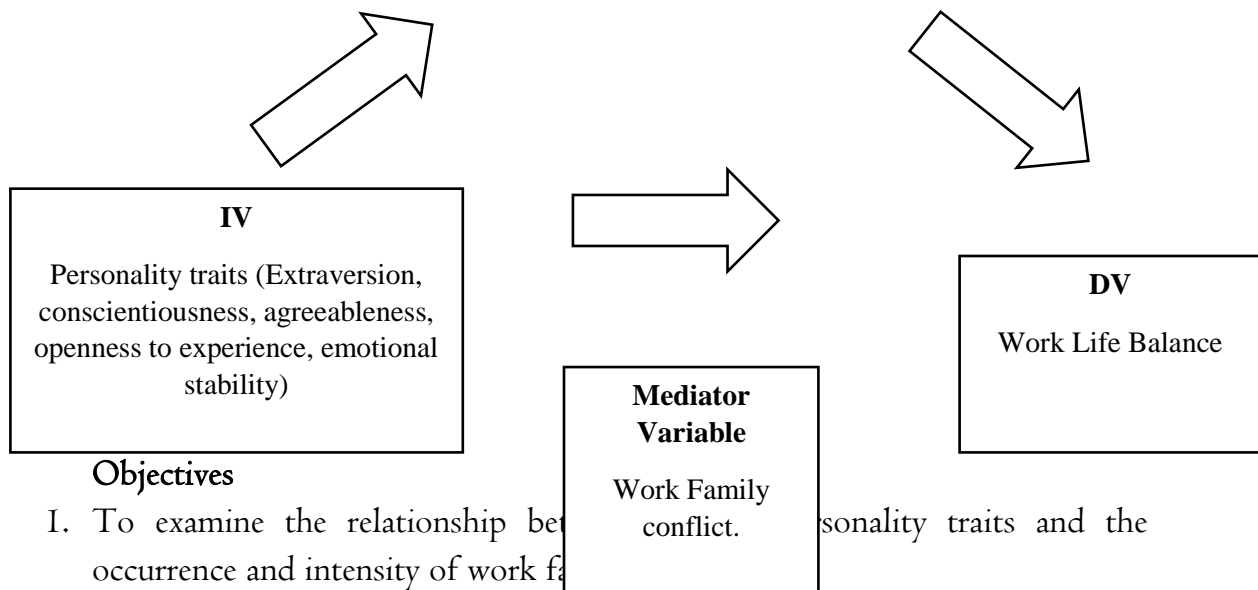
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conscientiousness typically exhibit a robust work ethic and consistently uphold their commitments. As a result of these characteristics, their interpersonal relationships are likely to be more stable and reliable, thanks to their dependable nature.⁷

Study Design

It includes correlational research design methods to determine the relationship between personality traits and work life balance with a mediating role of work family conflict. The research is quantitative in nature.

Research Model



Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between personality traits and the occurrence and intensity of work family conflict.
2. To investigate the influence of personality traits on an individual's ability to achieve and maintain a satisfactory work-life balance.
3. To explore the mediating effects of work family conflict on the relationship between personality traits and work-life balance.
4. Examine the strength and significance of the mediating role of work family conflict in the relationship between personality traits and work life balance.

Hypothesis

1. There will be significant negative correlation between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and work family conflict.

2. There is a significant negative relationship between work family conflict and work life balance.
3. Extraversion and emotional stability are significantly positively related to work life balance.
4. There is a significant positive relationship between openness to experience and work life balance.
5. Work family conflict will act as mediator between personality traits and work life balance.

Sample

This research includes 200 participants, 100 are men and 100 are women participants. The population includes salespersons. The sampling technique of the research was non-probability purposive sampling. Data was collected from Gujranwala city, Pakistan. 97% of individuals belongs to middle class family. 48% of individuals were unmarried, 51% were married. 75% individuals were living in urban area and 25% belongs to rural area. The sampling technique of the research is non-probability purposive sampling. Data was collected from Gujranwala city, Pakistan.

Procedure

The research wants to explore the relationship between personality traits, work-family conflict, and work life balance. For conducting this research, a correlational research design method was used. Research data is collected from selected populations. The targeted population is salespeople. Sample size includes approximately 200 individuals. 100 were men individuals and 100 were women. Participants were informed about the objectives of research and informed consent was obtained. The informed consent process includes a thorough explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and about its benefits. Participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions and were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary. This ensured that participants had a clear understanding of the research and willingly agreed to participate. Data is collected by asking the population to fill in survey questionnaires. A validated scale for measuring personality traits, work-family conflict and work life balance is chosen. Participants took 5-10 minutes to

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complete the questionnaire form. The research has considered proper ethical rules and guidelines. This research will ensure participant's privacy, informed consent, and confidentiality of collected data. Then data is analyzed by using statistical analysis by finding correlation and regression between the variables. Then after interpretation, results and conclusions are drawn.

Results

For achieving the objectives of the study, the research data was run through the number of statistical analyses. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the characteristics of the sample also measurements used in study. The instruments' internal consistencies were analysed by reliability analysis. By using correlation, the relationship between research variables was examined. Independent samples t-test was used to compare the means of the sample. All the above statistics were computed by using SPSS software. For determining the mediation effect of work-family conflict between the relationship of personality traits and work life balance, Andrew Hayes' Process Macro in SPSS was used.

Table I

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variables	F	%
Gender		
Male	100	50
Female	100	50
Socio-economic status		
Lower	4	2
Middle	195	97.5
Higher	1	.5
Class		
Higher		

Social Status			
	Unmarried	96	48
	Married	103	51.5
	Divorced	1	.5
Area			
	Rural	49	24.5
	Urban	151	75.5

Note. f= frequency of the characteristics

Table 1 indicates the characteristics of the sample that include frequency and percentage of gender, socio-economic status, social status, and area. Sample consist of 100 men and 100 women, 50% respectively. 97% of individuals belongs to middle class family. 48% of individuals were unmarried, 51% were married. 75% individuals were living in urban area and 25% belongs to rural area.

Role of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict as a Mediator

In current study, work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict (subscales of work family conflict) were taken as a mediator that could possibly mediates the association between personality traits and work family conflict. For this purpose, PROCESS MACRO of Andrew Hayes was used to compute the mediation. Followings are the findings of current study investigating the mediating effect.

Table 2

Work-to-family conflict and family to work conflict as a mediator between personality trait and work life balance (N=200)

Mediators		Personality trait (extraversion)		
		Effect	R2	F
Work-to-family conflict,	Total b	.414***	.06	13.7
	Direct b	.156*	.58	92.01
	Indirect b	.158		
family-to-work conflict				

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95% CI [.05, .25]

***p<.000, *p<.05

Table shows mediating role of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict for the effect of personality traits (Extraversion) on work life balance. Extraversion has significant negative impact on work-to-family conflict (b= -.2494, p< .05), non-significant impact on family-to-work conflict (b=-.11, p > .05). Extraversion has significant positive impact on work life balance (b= .958, p < .05), hence this is a direct effect. Mediators work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict has significant negative impact on work life balance (b= -.4554, -.4034, p< .05) respectively. The result revealed significant indirect effect of impact of extraversion on work life balance (b= .158, p< .05). further, effect of extraversion on work life balance in the presence of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict was also found significant (b= .1562, P< .05) Hence, mediator partially mediate the relationship between extraversion and work life balance.

Table 3

Work-to-family conflict and family to work conflict as a mediator between personality trait and work life balance (N=200)

Mediators	Personality trait (agreeableness)			
	Effect	R2	F	
Work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict	Total B	.534***	.11	21.10
	Direct B	.153*	.58	91.86
	Indirect B	.239		
	95% CI	[.14, .336]		

***P< .000, *p<.05

Table shows mediating role of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict for the effect of personality traits (Agreeableness) on work life balance. Agreeableness has significant negative impact on work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict (b= -.2581, p< .05) and (b= -.3136, p< .05) respectively. Agreeableness has significant positive impact on work

life balance ($b = .0963, p < .05$), hence this is a direct effect. Mediators work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict has significant negative impact on work life balance ($b = -.661, p < .05$) and ($b = -.3788, p < .05$) respectively. The result revealed significant indirect impact of agreeableness on work life balance ($b = .2391, p < .05$). Further, effect of agreeableness on work life balance in the presence of mediator work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict was also found significant ($b = .1536, P = .05$) Hence, mediator fully mediates the relationship between agreeableness and work life balance.

Table 4

Work-to-family conflict and family to work conflict as a mediator between personality trait and work life balance (N=200)

Mediators		Personality trait (continuousness)		
		Effect	R2	F
Work-to-family conflict,	Total B	.28	.015	3.19
	Direct B	-.016	.57	88.36
	Indirect B	.29		
family-to-work conflict		95% CI [.14, .33]		

Table shows mediating role of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict for the effect of personality traits (Conscientiousness) on work life balance. Conscientiousness has significant negative impact on work-to-family conflict ($b = -.1711, p < .05$) and non-significant relationship with family-to-work conflict ($b = -.1267, p < .05$) Conscientiousness has significant positive impact on work life balance ($b = .1259, p < .05$), hence this is a direct effect. Mediators work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict has significant negative impact on work life balance ($b = -.4808, p < .05$) and ($b = -.4029, p < .05$) respectively. The result revealed significant indirect impact of conscientiousness on work life balance ($b = .1333, p < .05$). Further, effect of conscientiousness on work life balance in the presence of mediator work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict was not significant ($b = -.01, p >$

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.05) Hence, mediator fully mediates the relationship between conscientiousness and work life balance.

Table 5

Work-to-family conflict and family to work conflict as a mediator between personality trait and work life balance (N=200)

Mediators	Personality trait (Emotional Stability)		
	Effect	R2	F
Total B	.51***	.08	18.52
Work-to-family Direct B	.02	.57	88.87
conflict, family- Indirect B	.48		
to- work	95% CI [.17,		
conflict	.38]		

***p< .000, p<.05

Table shows mediating role of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict for the effect of personality traits (Conscientiousness) on work life balance. Conscientiousness has significant negative impact on work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict (b= -.2831, p< .05) and (b= -.3609, p< .05) respectively. Conscientiousness has significant positive impact on work life balance (b= .2925, p < .05), hence this is a direct effect. Mediators work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict has significant negative impact on work life balance (b= -.4777, p< .05) and (b= -.3985, p< .05) respectively. The result revealed non-significant indirect impact of conscientiousness on work life balance (b= .2788, p> .05). Further, effect of conscientiousness on work life balance in the presence of mediator work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict was found non- significant (b= .1536, P = .05) Hence, mediator fully mediates the relationship between conscientiousness and work life balance.

Table 6

Work-to-family conflict and family to work conflict as a mediator between personality trait and work life balance (N=200)

Mediators	Personality Trait (openness to experience)		
	Effect	R2	F

Work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict	Total B	-.01	.00	.006
	Direct B	-.01	.57	88.83
	Indirect B	.0005		
	95% CI	[-.09, .10]		

Table shows mediating role of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict for the effect of personality traits (openness to experience) on work life balance. Openness to experience has non-significant impact on work-to-family conflict ($b = -.0084, P > .05$) and family-to-work conflict ($b = .0088, p > .05$) and work life balance ($b = -.0058, p > .05$). Mediators work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict has significant negative impact on work life balance ($b = -.4798, p < .05$) and ($b = -.4024, p < .05$) respectively. The result revealed non-significant indirect impact of openness to experience on work life balance ($b = -.0035, p > .05$). Further, effect of openness to experience on work life balance in the presence of mediator work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict was also found non-significant ($b = -.01, p > .05$) Hence, mediator does not mediate the relationship between openness to experience and work life balance.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality traits and work life balance, with a mediating role of work family conflict. By examining the relationship between personality traits, work family conflict, and work-life balance, the study aims to provide practical insights for achieving healthier work-life integration and managing work family conflicts effectively. Ten item personality inventory scale (TIPI), work and family conflict scales (WAFCS), and work life balance scale were used for this purpose as self-reported measures. The TIPI was used to measure the personality traits (extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience), WAFCS was used to measure conflict between work and family and work life balance scale was used to measure balance between work and personal life among salespersons.

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The empirical research was conducted on a sample of 200 participants. For determining the reliability of the scales, alpha coefficient was calculated for each of the scale as well as for their subscales. The personality traits were estimated by using ten item personality inventory scale having alpha coefficient of .71. The work and family conflict scale (WAFCS) were used to measure conflict between work and family having an alpha coefficient of .81 for work-to-family conflict and .86 for family-to-work conflict. The alpha coefficient for work life balance was .97 for work life balance scale. The study aims to investigate and compare the work life balance among males and females. There were 50% males and 50% females in the sample. The ages of the participants range from 18 to 40 years. 97% of individuals belongs to middle class family. 48% of individuals were unmarried, 51% were married. 75% individuals were living in urban area and 25% belongs to rural area. According to the findings, there is no significant gender difference among the variables such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict, and work life balance. But there was significant gender difference for openness to experience trait. This difference occur may be because of the specific “salespersons” populations as this is tough and challenging profession for both men and women.

Hypothesis I, there will be significant negative correlation between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and work family conflict is supported by the findings of the research and literature review. Research findings also indicates that extraversion is significantly negatively related with work-to-family conflict, non-significant relationship with family-to-work conflict, agreeableness has significant negative relationship with work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. Conscientiousness is also significantly negatively related to work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. According to the literature review, the findings unmistakably reveal that conscientiousness exhibits a noteworthy and negative association with all categories of work-life conflict.⁸ Another study revealed that individuals who score high in conscientiousness typically exhibit a robust work ethic and

consistently uphold their commitments. As a result of these characteristics, their interpersonal relationships are likely to be more stable and reliable, so they face less work and family conflict. Another study revealed that four of the big five personality traits - extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, and conscientiousness - are positively correlated with work engagement due to their association with reduced conflicts between family and work.

Hypothesis 2, there is a significant negative relationship between work family conflict and work life balance is supported by research findings. Both subscales work-to-family conflict ($r = -.672, p = .000$) and family-to-work conflict ($r = -.631, p = .000$) has significant negative relationship with work life balance. According to the literature, the research findings indicated that Work-family conflict had an adverse and substantial impact on both the equilibrium between work and personal life and job performance. Essentially, a higher level of work-family conflict was associated with reduced work life balance and lower job performance. Conversely, work life balance had a positive impact on employee performance, suggesting that a better balance between work and personal life contributed to improved job performance. Furthermore, the study revealed that work-family conflict negatively and significantly influenced employee performance through its impact on work life balance.⁹ Another study finding suggest that employees who reported heightened levels of conflict between their work and family responsibilities also indicated a diminished sense of balance between their professional and personal lives. Furthermore, the study showed that WFC serves as a mediator between work from home and WLB, signifying that the influence of remote work on work-life balance is mediated by work-family conflict.¹⁰

Hypothesis 3, extraversion, and emotional stability are significantly positively related to work life balance is supported by the research finding. The study findings indicate that extraversion and emotional stability are significantly positively related to work life balance with ($r = .254, p = .000$) and ($r = .293, p = .000$) respectively. According to the literature, the findings revealed that among the Big Five personality traits, openness to experience had the most

significant impact on the work-life balance. Following openness, extroversion and agreeableness were also found to have a noteworthy influence on the work-life balance of their selected population. The aim of that study was to investigate the impact of personality traits on work-life balance, with a specific focus on working mothers.¹¹

Hypothesis 4, There is a significant positive relationship between openness to experience and work life balance does not support these study findings. Research findings indicates that there is non-significant relationship between openness to experience and work life balance ($r = -.006$, $p = .935$). But according to another research finding the personality traits, openness to experience had the most significant impact on the work-life balance on their population of working mothers. (11) The findings of the current study are not in favor of this hypothesis may be because of the unique dynamics of sales environment, high-pressure goals, characterized by long hours, and high prioritization of specific sales metrics. So, in this context, personality traits like openness to experience may have less direct impact on work life balance. The specific characteristics of the salesperson in our sample may also have played a role. This finding suggests the need for further research to explore this relationship in greater detail.

Hypothesis 5 was work family conflict will act as mediator between personality traits and work life balance. According to the findings, there was a mediating relationship between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability and work life balance. Whereas there was no mediating relationship between openness to experience and work life balance. According to the previous literature, the study has shown that WFC serves as a mediator between work from home and WLB, signifying that the influence of remote work on work-life balance is mediated by work-family conflict.¹²

Implications

- This research is crucial for enhancing individual well-being by understanding the factors that influence work-life balance and developing coping strategies.

- It has implications for organizational outcomes, providing valuable insights that can guide the development of practices and policies, ultimately fostering supportive work environments and enhancing overall productivity.
- It also suggests that organizations should consider implementing targeted interventions to support employees in managing work-family conflict and achieving better work-life balance. These interventions could be tailored to employees' specific personality traits, helping them cope with challenges more effectively.
- The findings of this research suggest the adoption of flexible work arrangements, as certain personality traits may make individuals more adaptable and productive in such settings. Companies may consider offering flexible schedules, remote work options, or compressed workweeks.
- The findings allow the understanding of the interplay between personality traits, work family conflict, and work-life balance also contributes to improving family dynamics and filling the existing research gap in this area.
- Individuals who are aware of the relationship between their personality traits, work-family conflict, and work-life balance may make more informed decisions regarding their career choices and how they balance work and family responsibilities, leading to improved family well-being.

Conclusion

The study design of current research is correlation research. Therefore, the study could not reveal the underlying causes or mechanisms that drive the relationships between personality traits, work family conflict and work life balance. Future research could explore these causal links in more detail. The generalizability of the findings may be limited to the specific sample selected in this study. Therefore, future research can expand the study to different populations, industries, or geographic locations to assess the generalizability of the results. Personality traits are multifaceted, and your research may have focused on a limited set of traits. Future studies can explore a broader range of personality traits and their interactions.

This study finds the mean difference in gender characteristics of the sample. However, future research can include other psychometric characteristics such

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as region, socio-economic status, cultural background to explore these variables deeply and to get more detailed information and results. Quantitative research may not capture the full complexity of individuals' experiences. Qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups, can provide deeper insights into how personality traits, work-family conflict, and work-life balance intersect in people's lives. So future research can include qualified research method for these variables.

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