



Balancing Act: A Holistic Exploration of Work-Family Conflict and its Impact on Physical and Psychological Well-being: A Comprehensive Systematic Review

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Abstract

Particularly in demanding sectors like academia, work-family conflict is becoming a significant source of worry. Teachers at universities frequently experience difficulty juggling their job and home obligations, making it difficult to achieve a work-life balance. It is crucial to comprehend the effects of work-family conflict while creating treatments and policies to help academic professionals/teachers. The purpose of this review is to examine the relationship between work-family conflict and its health related outcomes among university teachers. It specifically seeks to investigate the effects of work-family conflict on university teachers' total well-being, including their physical and psychological health. Pertinent material in databases including Google Scholar, Research Gate, Emerald Insight, Science Direct, and Medline, a thorough search approach was used. Keywords relating to academic professionals/ teachers, health outcomes, and work-family conflict were used in the search. A thorough screening procedure based on specified inclusion and exclusion criteria was applied to the selected studies. Utilizing the CASP criteria, the chosen studies' methodological quality was evaluated critically. According to the analysis, there is a strong link between work-family conflict and poor health outcomes for university teachers. Work-family conflict is linked to psychological health difficulties including stress, anxiety, and depression as well as physical health issues like cardiovascular problems and musculoskeletal ailments. The negative effects of work-family conflict on academic professionals/ teachers' overall well-being, including harm to their physical and mental health, is highlighted by this comprehensive study. To reduce work-family conflict among teachers, institutions should prioritize work-life balance and have supporting policies and practices in place. Academic employees will have higher levels of job satisfaction and general quality of life if their workplace is made healthier and more productive.

Keywords: Work-family conflict, Physical health outcomes, psychological health outcomes, University teachers, health outcomes

1. Introduction

When obligations and expectations from both work and family life become incompatible or conflicting, there may be work-family conflict (Antino et al., 2022). The particular situations that university teachers frequently experience add to work-family conflict (Yu & Leka, 2020). Due to the time-consuming and difficult nature of their work (Chen & Ramzan, 2024; Weziak-Bialowska et al., 2023), they are frequently required to engage in teaching, research, office work, and publication. Aside from that, academic employment sometimes includes lengthy workdays, erratic schedules, and a lot of stress (Akram, 2020).

Work-family conflict among university teachers can take many different forms (Lange, 2022). They could find it difficult to juggle their family commitments, such as raising children, taking care of the home, or supporting their spouses, with their teaching and research obligations (Frank, 2021; Ramzan et al., 2023). Conflicts between their desire to be present and involved in their family life and the need to perform well in their academic jobs, publish research, and satisfy institutional expectations can arise (Eynde et al., 2020). Therefore, work-family conflict may have a big influence on university teachers' health and wellbeing, affecting their physical health, psychological health, and interpersonal connections (Lawson et al., 2021).

For university teachers to be more productive, their general well-being and job happiness, and satisfaction must be understood and addressed (Al-Hammouri & Rababah, 2023; Li & Akram, 2023). It necessitates developing a culture that emphasizes both professional achievement and personal fulfillment, as well as fostering supportive work environments (Akram & Li, 2023), flexible policies (Akram, 2020; Akram & Yang, 2021), work-life balance programs, and supportive work environments (Yu & Leka, 2020; Ramzan et al., 2023).

1.1. Unique Challenges at University Level

When trying to balance work and family obligations, academic professionals/ teachers like university teachers face a variety of unique difficulties (Eynde et al., 2020). These difficulties are a result of the intricacy of their line of work and the various demands made of them (Yu & Leka, 2020). By emphasizing their distinctive qualities and relationships, a descriptive lens may be used to comprehend the complexity of these problems (Yu & Li, 2021).

First off, academic professionals/ teachers struggle with a heavy workload that consists of a variety of jobs such as teaching, research, office work, and scholarly publications (Bilodeau et al., 2022). The complex interaction of these tasks requires a large time and energy commitment, which reduces the resources available for taking care of domestic obligations (Hess & Pollmann-Schult, 2020; Ramzan et al., 2023).

Second, for academic professionals/ teachers looking for work-family balance, irregular and lengthy working hours provide a substantial barrier (Akram, 2020). The nature of academic work frequently requires involvement on the weekends, vacations, and even at the night (Shah et al., 2021). This unpredictability throws off typical family patterns, jeopardizes meaningful time with family members, and complicates attempts to balance personal and professional obligations (Eynde et al., 2020).

Additionally, the demands of research and obtaining funds add to the work-family conflict that academic workers deal with (Yu & Leka, 2020; Ramzan et al., 2023). Innovative research requires significant time commitments and mental effort, which puts pressure on family obligations and professional expectations (Akram et al., 2022).

The pursuit of tenure and career progression also creates particular difficulties (Bilodeau et al., 2020). The competitive nature of academic jobs frequently requires an unrelenting pursuit of professional achievement (Muazzam, 2022), which can manifest in

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excessive working hours and putting work before family responsibilities (Obrenovic et al., 2020). Care must be taken to maintain this delicate balance so that work-family disputes do not jeopardize one's career path (Ali et al., 2021).

The problems faced by academic professionals/ teachers are made more difficult by the high expectations set by academic institutions and professional standards (Akram et al., 2021, 2022; Yu & Leka, 2020). Work-family conflicts can be made worse by the need to manage classroom loads, create academic output, and satisfy service obligations (Eynde et al., 2020).

The inherent constraint of academic employment scheduling makes it more difficult to strike a balance between work and family obligations (Bilodeau et al., 2020). Due to the unpredictable nature of teaching schedules, committee meetings, and conferences, family arrangements must be carefully planned and coordinated to preserve harmony (Eynde et al., 2020).

Finally, yet importantly, academic professionals/ teachers always encounter the difficulty of work-related stress (Yu & Leka, 2020). Because of the demanding nature of their jobs, the high standards for output, grant acquisition, and publishing (Akram, 2020), they may experience increased stress in their personal life, making it difficult for them to detach from their jobs and devote themselves entirely to their families (Eynde et al., 2020).

It is necessary to take proactive actions and put plans into action to successfully navigate these particular problems (Yu & Leka, 2020). Setting up clear boundaries, asking for help from family and coworkers, and placing a high priority on self-care are necessary elements to creating a successful work-family balance (Akram, 2020). To lessen these difficulties and promote a more effective balance of work and family obligations, friendly work environments, adaptable policies, and a culture that emphasizes the well-being of academic professionals/ teachers may all be encouraged (Noor et al., 2021).

Academic professionals/ teachers must have a thorough awareness of the complex dynamics at work to balance work and family obligations (Eynde et al., 2020). Heavy workloads, erratic schedules, research needs, career aspirations, institutional demands, a lack of control over timetables, and work-related stress interact in a complex way that highlights the need for tailored treatments and support systems (Yu & Leka, 2020).

The goal of the project is to improve the well-being and general quality of life for academic workers by recognizing and addressing these difficulties. Through the creation of better work-family balance methods, policies, and practices, academic professionals/ teachers will be able to succeed in both their personal and professional life. This is the goal of the study. Institutions should develop a culture that appreciates the holistic requirements of its faculty by prioritizing the well-being of academic professionals/ teachers and fostering circumstances that enable work-family integration. This will increase employee happiness, productivity, and long-term career fulfillment.

2. Methodology

Synthesizing the available research on a particular subject requires a thorough and methodical technique known as a systematic literature review. A comprehensive literature review can offer important insights into this complicated topic when investigating the connection between work-family conflict and health-related outcomes (physical and psychological health) among university teachers.

2.1. Systematic Search

The systematic search in the context of the study on "Work-Family Conflict and Health Related Outcomes (Physical and Psychological Health)" among university teachers, several databases and search engines were utilized to retrieve relevant literature. Focusing on Google Scholar, Emerald Insight, Science Direct, Research Gate, and Medline as the selected databases. Additionally, search engines such as Microsoft Edge, Chrome, and Maxton were used to access these databases.

2.2. Review Question

The PICOT question for the systematic review on the relationship between work-family conflict (WFC) and the physical and psychological health outcomes among university teachers would be:

- Population (P): University teachers
- Intervention/Exposure (I): Work-family conflict
- Outcome (O): Physical and psychological health outcomes
- Time (T): Time duration of studies 2019 – 2023.

"Among university teachers, what is the relationship between work-family conflict (WFC) and physical and psychological health?" This research question aims to investigate the relationship between work-family conflict and the physical and psychological health outcomes of university teachers. The study seeks to understand the impact of work-family conflict on the physical and psychological well-being of this specific population.

2.3. Syntax generation

In this present study the syntax for the literature search includes based on the study title and interest including "Work-family conflict", "Physical health outcomes", "psychological health outcomes", "University teachers", "health outcomes". These syntax were generated from the keywords based on the Boolean algebra i.e. "and", "or", "with".

- Syntax 1: "Work-family conflict" and "Physical health outcomes".
- Syntax 2: "Work-family conflict" and "psychological health outcomes", "University teachers", "health outcomes".
- Syntax 3: "Work-family conflict" and "Physical health outcomes" and "University teachers and professor".
- Syntax 4: "Work-family conflict" and "psychological health outcomes", "University teachers".
- Syntax 5: "Work-family conflict" and "Physical health outcomes" or "psychological health outcomes"

3. Literature Search

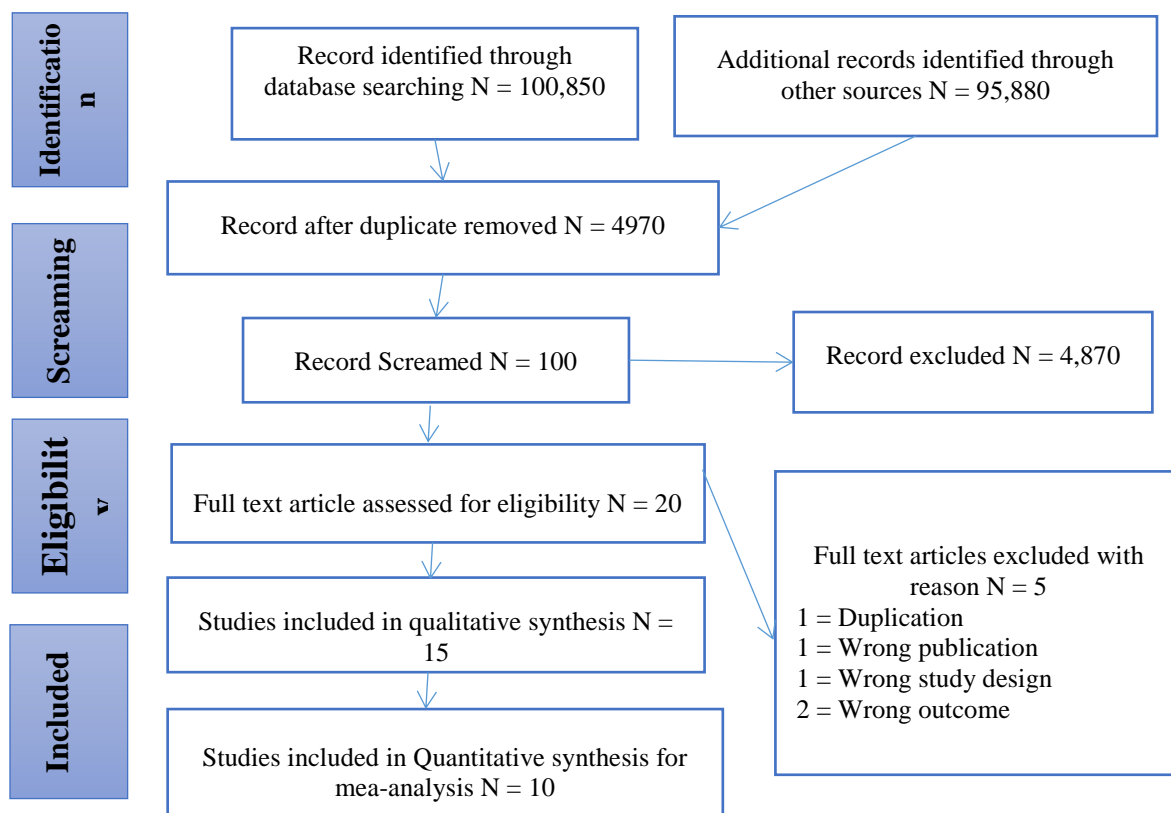
A literature search was based on identifying the potential studies from 2019 to 2023 based on the syntax generator from the keyword operational lines for this particular study. A literature search indicated the total amount of data present in the selected databases and identified the potential utilization of the context with respect to the development of potential literature review.

Table 1: Database Statistics

No	Database	Syntax	Year	No of Researches
1	Google Scholar	Syntax 1	2019	17,700
		Syntax 2	2020	
		Syntax 3	2021	
		Syntax 4	2022	
		Syntax 5	2023	
2	Research Gate	Syntax 1	2019	24,000
		Syntax 2	2020	
		Syntax 3	2021	
		Syntax 4	2022	
		Syntax 5	2023	
3	Emerald Insight	Syntax 1	2019	41,400
		Syntax 2	2020	
		Syntax 3	2021	
		Syntax 4	2022	
		Syntax 5	2023	
4	Science Direct	Syntax 1	2019	12,050
		Syntax 2	2020	
		Syntax 3	2021	
		Syntax 4	2022	
		Syntax 5	2023	
5	Medline	Syntax 1	2019	11,000
		Syntax 2	2020	
		Syntax 3	2021	
		Syntax 4	2022	
		Syntax 5	2023	

After scrutinizing data tally marking was necessary for every search from the database and engine. Data gathered based on the particular databases, which include the Google Scholar 27,600, Research Gate 23,300, Emerald Insight 17,200, Science Direct 11,750 and PubMed 21,000.

Figure 1: Select Primary study



3.1. Screening

A specified set of inclusion and exclusion criteria are used to screen the gathered literature. Papers are selected, their titles and abstracts are examined for relevance to the study issue, and papers that are not relevant are disregarded.

3.2. Choosing the Full Text

The full-text publications were examined to see whether they should be included in the review. Studies that fit the requirements and offer pertinent information on the link between work-family conflict and health outcomes among university teachers are chosen.

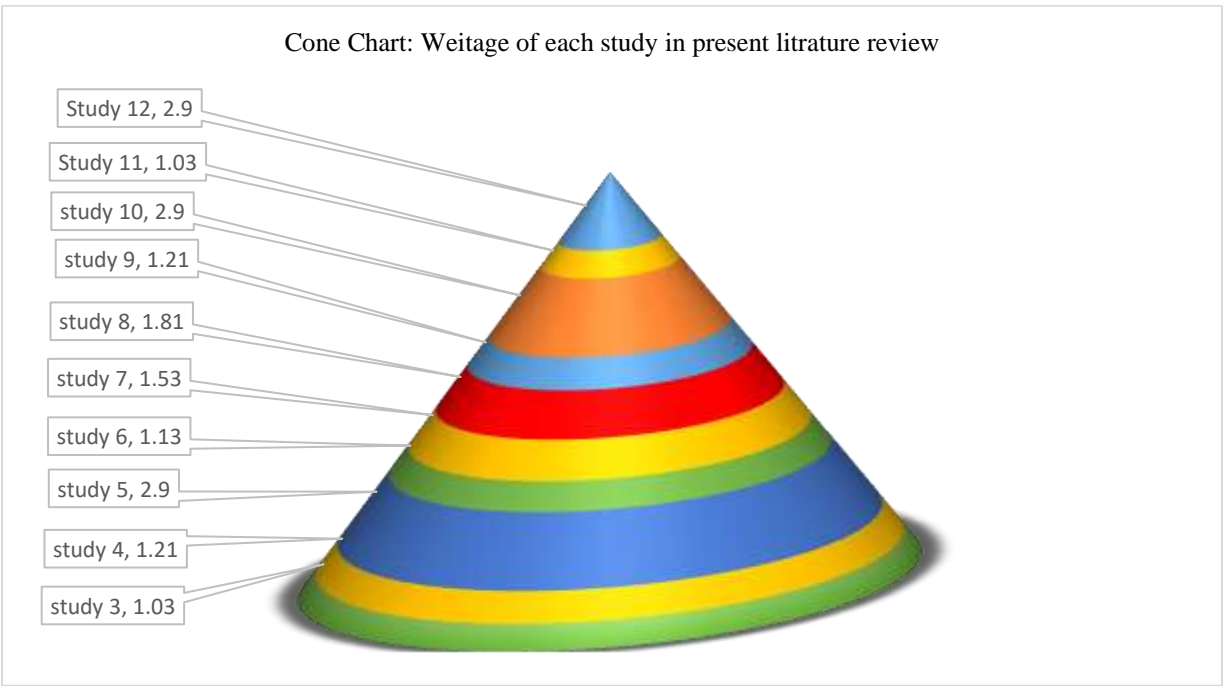
Table 2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria of the research

Sr #	Criteria	Discussion
1.	The article that was printed in a publication that underwent peer review	Inclusion
2.	English should be used to write the paper.	Inclusion
3.	When the entire manuscript has the preset keywords, or at the very least the title and abstract.	Inclusion
4.	Studies that provide information on workplace studies, performance, retirement, and motivation	Inclusion
5.	Duplicate papers found in the search documents	Exclusion
6.	Review articles, inaccessible papers, and meta-data	Exclusion
7.	Unoriginal or secondary research papers	Exclusion
8.	Before to 2019 published papers	Exclusion
9.	The article was printed in a publication that underwent peer review	Inclusion

The studies selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The selected criteria were 10. Detail of selected studies indicates.

Table 3: Selected Studies for SLR

No	Author	Research	Year
1	Akram, M. F.	Relationship of Work-Family Conflict with Job Demands, Social Support and Psychological Well-Being of University Female Teachers in Punjab. <i>Bulletin of Education and Research</i> , 42(1), 45-66	2020
2	Jerg-Bretzke, L., Limbrecht-Ecklundt, K., Walter, S., Spohrs, J., & Beschoner, P.	Correlations of the "work-family conflict" with occupational stress—A cross-sectional study among university employees. <i>Frontiers in psychiatry</i> , 11, 134.	2020
3	Borgmann, L. S., Rattay, P., & Lampert, T	Health-related consequences of work-family conflict from a European perspective: results of a scoping review. <i>Frontiers in public health</i> , 7, 189.	2019
4	Lambert, E. G., Keena, L. D., Morrow, W. J., Vickovic, S. G., Haynes, S. H., May, D., & Leone, M. C.	Effects of work-family conflict on Southern correctional staff burnout. <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i> , 49(1), 117-138	2022
5	Zhang, H., Tang, L., Ye, Z., Zou, P., Shao, J., Wu, M., ... & Mu, S.	The role of social support and emotional exhaustion in the association between work-family conflict and anxiety symptoms among female medical staff: a moderated mediation model. <i>BMC psychiatry</i> , 20(1), 1-9.	2020
6	Kuśnierz, C., Rogowska, A. M., Chilicka, K., Pavlova, I., & Ochnik, D.	Associations of Work-Family Conflict with Family-Specific, Work-Specific, and Well-Being-Related Variables in a Sample of Polish and Ukrainian Adults during the Second Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-Sectional Study. <i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i> , 19(17), 10954.	2022
7	Ghislieri, C., Molino, M., Dolce, V., Sanseverino, D., & Presutti, M.	Work-family conflict during the Covid-19 pandemic: teleworking of administrative and technical staff in healthcare. An Italian study. <i>La Medicina del lavoro</i> , 112(3), 229.	2021
8	Pien, L. C., Cheng, W. J., Chou, K. R., & Lin, L. C	Effect of work-family conflict, psychological job demand, and job control on the health status of nurses. <i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i> , 18(7), 3540	2021
9	Shagirbasha, S., Iqbal, J., Madhan, K., Chaudhary, S., & Dhall, R	Workplace isolation during COVID-19 and work-family conflict among academicians: interplay of psychological stress and organizational identification. <i>International Journal of Manpower</i>	2023
10	Tanimoto, A. S., Richter, A., & Lindfors, P.	How do Effort, Reward, and Their Combined Effects Predict Burnout, Self-rated Health, and Work-family Conflict Among Permanent and Fixed-term Faculty? <i>Annals of Work Exposures and Health</i> .	2023



3.3. Quality Assessment

A few carefully chosen journal articles, a standardized instrument like the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) checklist. Cross-sectional studies and systematic reviews are only two examples of the several study designs that may be evaluated for quality and validity using the CASP checklist's set of questions.

Using the proper quality assessment techniques, the included studies' quality and risk of bias are evaluated. To assess the dependability of the results, factors including research design, sample representativeness, and measurement validity are considered.

Table 1: Assessment of the literature quality matrix

Sr #	Author	Are the selection of studies described and appropriate	Is the literature covered all relevant studies	Does method all section described?	Was findings clearly described?	Quality rating
1	Akram (2020)	YES	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good
2	Jerg-Bretzke et al (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good
3	Borgmann et al (2019)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fair
4	Lambert et al (2022)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Good
5	Zhang et al (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good
6	Kuśnierz et al (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good
7	Ghislieri et al (2021)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	fair
8	Pien et al (2021)	NO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Good
9	Shagirbasha et al (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Fair
10	Tanimoto et al (2023)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Fair

3.4. Synthesis

Work-family conflict is a prevalent issue across different professions, and extensive research has shown its negative impact on various aspects of well-being. Studies have consistently demonstrated that increased work demands are associated with higher levels of work-family conflict, leading to decreased psychological well-being and increased occupational stress. Work-family conflict has been linked to a range of health outcomes, including mental health issues, cardiovascular diseases, and musculoskeletal ailments. It has also been identified as a significant factor contributing to burnout among correctional staff members.

The role of social support in mitigating the negative effects of work-family conflict on mental health has been emphasized. Studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic have shed light on the challenges faced by individuals in balancing work and family responsibilities, particularly in healthcare and academic settings. The importance of job control and organizational support in improving nurses' well-being and academic staff's ability to cope with work-family conflict has been highlighted. Furthermore, the combined effects of effort, reward, and work-family conflict have been found to affect burnout and self-rated health negatively.

Overall, the reviewed research underscores the need for implementing strategies and policies that promote work-life balance and provide support to individuals in managing their work and family obligations effectively. By addressing work-family conflict, organizations can enhance the well-being of their employees and create a healthier and more productive work environment.

Table 5: Research Matrix

Author, Date	Research Question	Methodology	Sample	Setting	Results
Akram, M. F. 2020	Examines the relationship between work-family conflict, job demands, social support, and psychological well-being among female university teachers in Punjab.	Utilizes a cross-sectional design and collects data through self-report questionnaires.	University female teachers in Punjab.	Punjab, Pakistan.	Findings suggest significant associations between work-family conflict, job demands, social support, and psychological well-being of female university teachers.
Jerg-Bretzke, L., Limbrecht-Ecklundt, K., Walter, S., Spohrs, J., & Beschoner, P. 2020	Investigates the correlations between work-family conflict and occupational stress among university employees.	Conducts a cross-sectional study and collects data through self-report questionnaires.	University employees.	Europe	The study finds positive correlations between work-family conflict and occupational stress among university employees.
Borgmann, L. S., Rattay, P., & Lampert, T 2019	Explores the health-related consequences of work-family conflict from a European perspective.	Conducts a scoping review of existing literature.	University employees.	Europe.	The scoping review identifies various health-related consequences of work-family conflict, including mental health issues, physical health problems, and decreased well-being among European populations.
Lambert, E. G., Keena, L. D., Morrow, W. J., Vickovic, S. G., Haynes, S. H., May, D., & Leone, M. C. 2022	Examines the effects of work-family conflict on burnout among correctional staff in the southern United States.	Utilizes a quantitative design and collects data through surveys. Sample: Correctional staff in the southern United States.	Correctional staff in the southern United States.	Southern United States.	The study finds a significant positive relationship between work-family conflict and burnout among correctional staff.
Zhang, H., Tang, L., Ye, Z., Zou, P., Shao, J., Wu, M., ... & Mu, S.2020	Investigates the association between work-family conflict, social support, emotional exhaustion, and anxiety symptoms among female medical staff.	Employs a moderated mediation model and collects data through self-report questionnaires.	Female medical staff	Europe	The study reveals a significant association between work-family conflict and anxiety symptoms, mediated by emotional exhaustion and moderated by social support among female medical staff.
Kuśnierz, C., Rogowska, A. M., Chilicka, K., Pavlova, I., & Ochnik, D. 2022	Examines the associations of work-family conflict with family-specific, work-specific, and well-being-related variables among Polish and Ukrainian adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Conducts a cross-sectional study and collects data through questionnaires.	Polish and Ukrainian adults.	USA	The study identifies associations between work-family conflict and various variables related to family, work, and well-being among Polish and Ukrainian adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Ghislieri, C., Molino, M., Dolce, V., Sanseverino, D., & Presutti, M. 2021	Explores work-family conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic among administrative and technical staff in healthcare.	Conducts a study in Italy and collects data through questionnaires.	Conducts a study in Italy and collects data through questionnaires.	Italy.	The study investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on work-family conflict among administrative and technical staff in healthcare settings in Italy.
Pien, L. C., Cheng, W. J., Chou, K. R., & Lin, L. C 2021	Examines the effects of work-family conflict, psychological job demands, and job control on the health status of nurses.	Utilizes a quantitative design and collects data through questionnaires.	Nurses	Europe	The study investigates the relationships between work-family conflict, psychological job demands, job control, and the health status of nurses.

Shagirbasha, S., Iqbal, J., Madhan, K., Chaudhary, S., & Dhall, R 2023	Explores the interplay between workplace isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, work-family conflict, psychological stress, and organizational identification among academicians.	Conducts a study and collects data through questionnaires.	Academicians.	Europe	The study examines the relationships between workplace isolation, work-family conflict, psychological stress, and organizational identification among academicians during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Tanimoto, A. S., Richter, A., & Lindfors, P. 2023	Investigates how effort, reward, and their combined effects predict burnout, self-rated health, and work-family conflict among permanent and fixed-term faculty.	Investigates how effort, reward, and their combined effects predict burnout, self-rated health, and work-family conflict among permanent and fixed-term faculty.	Permanent and fixed-term faculty	Turkey	The study examines the predictive effects of effort, reward, and their interaction on burnout, self-rated health, and work-family conflict among permanent and fixed-term faculty.

4. Discussion

University teachers frequently experience work-family conflict because of the demanding nature of their jobs, which frequently bleeds over into their personal life and causes conflicts and difficulties juggling work commitments with family obligations. Numerous research has examined the connection between work-family conflict (WFC) and the results of these people's physical and psychological health, illuminating the enormous influence this conflict may have on their well-being.

The association between WFC, job demands, social support, and psychological well-being of female university teachers in Punjab was the subject of research by Akram (2020). The results showed that high levels of work-family conflict were linked to higher workloads and less social support, which resulted in participants' psychological well-being being less high. This study emphasizes the need for treatments and support structures to reduce the harmful impacts of work-family conflict on the mental health of university professors.

The relationships between work-family conflict and occupational stress were also investigated by Jerg-Bretzke et al. (2020) in a cross-sectional study of university personnel. The findings showed a substantial positive relationship between work-family conflict and levels of occupational stress. These results show that university teachers who struggle to balance job and family obligations are more likely to feel greater levels of stress, which may have a negative impact on their general well-being.

A scoping review on the health effects of work-family conflict was carried out by Borgmann et al. (2019) from a European viewpoint. The review emphasized several detrimental health effects connected to work-family conflicts, such as elevated stress, burnout, and mental health problems. Work-family conflict is a substantial risk factor for poor health outcomes among university teachers, and the authors stressed how important it is to recognize and treat this risk.

Additionally, Lambert et al. (2022) investigated how burnout among Southern correctional personnel was impacted by work-family conflict. The study offers information about the effects of work-family conflict on occupational burnout, albeit it is not specifically about university teachers. The results showed that work-family conflict and burnout were positively correlated, indicating that people who experience high levels of work-family conflict are more vulnerable to burnout, which can have serious negative effects on their physical and mental health.

The studies by Zhang et al. (2020), Kunierz et al. (2022), Ghislieri et al. (2021), Pien et al. (2021), Shagirbasha et al. (2023), and Tanimoto et al. (2023) further highlight the significance of this issue in a broader context by shedding light on the relationship between work-family conflict and various health outcomes among various occupational groups.

In conclusion, the body of research repeatedly shows how work-family conflict negatively affects university teachers' physical and emotional health. According to the research reviewed, work-family conflict in this demographic is related to higher levels of stress, burnout, lower psychological well-being, and other detrimental health effects. Promoting the well-being of university teachers requires addressing work-family conflict and putting interventions into place to enhance work-life balance and support networks. Exploring particular tactics and interventions that can successfully reduce work-family conflict and improve these people's health outcomes calls for more research.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this comprehensive analysis of the literature is to determine whether there is a connection between work-family conflict and the physical and mental health of university teachers. To acquire pertinent material from databases including Google Scholar, Research Gate, Emerald Insight, Science Direct, and Medline, the study uses a scope search and a systematic review technique. The Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) checklist is used to evaluate the quality of the studies that have been chosen for the review. The results of this study will help to improve knowledge of the effects of work-family conflict on academic professionals/ teachers ' well-being and will guide the creation of initiatives to encourage work-life balance in a university context.

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