



Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict Among Married Male and Female Professionals

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The assumption that work and family are separate domains with little cross-impact has been increasingly questioned. Drawing on a sample of 423 male and 335 female accounting professionals, this study evaluates a model of the process by which work-related role stress and parental demands interact to influence job satisfaction and marital satisfaction and, ultimately, overall life satisfaction. Results indicate general support for the hypothesized model, revealing only minor sex differences. The relationship between parental demands and life satisfaction was mediated by satisfaction with childcare arrangements for women, but not men, with young children at home.

This study focuses upon the relationship between work and family domains and their impact on life satisfaction. Although both work and family have been studied separately, their interrelationship has only recently received prominent attention (Burke & Greenglass, 1987; Nieva, 1984). Over the past two decades, major social changes have occurred—both in the workplace and in the family—altering traditional work and family outcomes. Most dramatically, a diversity of life structures has replaced the once traditional separation of work and family. This diversity has resulted from redefined marital role arrangements accompanying an unprecedented increase in the number of dual-earner marriages (from 9.3 million in 1950 to over 13.4 million in 1960, and 28.8 million in 1987), as well as an increased variation in the timing of key life decisions (such as when to start a family and when to enter a career).

Given the contemporary diversity of life structures, the previous assumption that work and family are separate domains that have little impact on each other

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seems questionable. Accordingly, this article presents an exploratory model of the process by which work-related role stress and family demands interact to influence job satisfaction and marital satisfaction and, ultimately, life satisfaction. The model integrates and expands upon previous research on several related topics. Its purpose is to clarify the effects of work-related role stress and parental demands on work and family outcomes and, in turn, on overall life satisfaction. Previous research relevant to this purpose pertains to (a) the work-family interface and (b) sex differences in work-family interrelationships.

Work-Family Interface

Empirical studies looking directly at the conflict between work and family roles are limited (Burke, 1986). Moreover, the studies that are available have been generally based on a traditional dependent-independent variable model (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986). For example, Jackson, Zedeck, and Summers (1985) found that "emotional interference" resulting from strain produced by stressful work situations was significantly related to decreased quality of family life. By contrast, research has not been directed at the specific interaction between work and family factors. Notwithstanding their physical and temporal separation, work and family clearly converge. Recognizing this interplay, Renshaw (1975) has argued that stress in one domain is not caused by events in the other. Rather, it is a function of their interaction. Mounting research clearly documents the numerous ways in which work penetrates the home, as well as how family life influences experiences at work (Moen, 1982). For instance, Osherson (1980) has repeatedly found that while men use their work to come to terms with experiences in their family life, the family is often the domain in which work-related role stress is dissipated.

A documented consequence of conflict between work and family roles is impaired marital functioning. Conflicts between work and family roles have been shown to result in poor marital adjustment, inadequate role performance, decreased verbal communication, and other negative outcomes (see, e.g., Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Jones & Butler, 1980; Suchet & Barling, 1984 cited in Barling, 1986). These findings are consistent with Greenhaus and Parasuraman's (in press) observation that antecedent conditions in work and family domains may or may not be highly stressful when considered alone, but the stress produced by their joint occurrence is likely to produce strain. Explicit support for this observation is offered by Paradine et al. (1981). They investigated the role of off-the-job stressors in the job-stress worker-strain relationship. Their analysis indicated that both nonwork *and* work stress must be present to produce employee strain.

Sex Differences in Work-Family Interrelationships

As currently formulated, a large portion of the available research on work stress and family demands deals with the impact of supportive non-working wives on their husband's job performance (Kanter, 1977). The result is a gap in our understanding where dual-earner marriages and women's work stress are concerned. Much has been written about stress resulting from working women's multiple roles such as jobholders, wives, and mothers (see, e.g., Mannheim &

Schiffirin, 1984). The bulk of this literature includes studies of women's conflicting work and family roles that fail to employ male comparison groups.

It is unfortunate that few systematic comparisons of male/female work and family interrelationships have been conducted for men and women occupying the same or similar jobs (cf. Pleck, 1985). Evidence suggests that sex differences exist in both work-family role performance and work and family outcomes (Jick & Mitz, 1985). Cooper and Davidson (1982) found that female managers encounter more stress and marital problems than their male counterparts. Forgionne and Peeters (1982) have reported that the relationship between job satisfaction and number of dependents is different for men and women. Men with more dependents express greater job satisfaction than analogous women. Forgionne and Peeters (1982) offer no explanation for this finding, but Osherson and Dill (1983) suggest that men with children feel more self-actualized as fatherhood adds to their personal evaluation of having achieved success according to the traditional male "provider" role of our culture. This "feels actualized" factor also seems to summarize their attitude toward work because men derive job satisfaction from salaries and prestige, which indicate they are filling their provider role. No similar dynamic appears to operate for women (Rudd & McKenry, 1986). Research further reveals that men and women access different sources of social support. Etzion (1984) found that stress was buffered by work sources of support for men and family sources of support for women. Finally, women have been shown to perceive greater conflict than men between work and home maintenance roles (Herman & Gyllstrom, 1977).

These findings suggest the possibility that either work-family life models operate differently for men and women or that separate models apply. Support for either conclusion would provide a potential explanation for inconsistent findings regarding work and family life, as well as a means for reconciling competing sex-based perspectives on work-family conflict.

The Present Study

The purpose of the present study was to clarify the processes by which work-related role stress and parental demands interrelate and influence work and family outcomes. Building on a review of the relevant theory, a model was proposed that hypothesizes a pattern of relationships and underlying causal sequences among the study's focal variables (described below). Although causal relationships cannot be inferred directly from general statistical analyses, such analyses can lend support to a theory-generated model.

The proposed model is presented in Figure 1. Hypothesized relationships are indicated by solid lines. Broken lines are used to reflect alternate relationships that will also be tested. Within the work domain, work-related role stress is included as an antecedent and job satisfaction as an outcome. Within the family domain, parental demands are included as an antecedent and marital satisfaction is included as an outcome. It was hypothesized (H1) that the antecedent of each domain directly influences its within-domain outcome, as well as indirectly influencing the outcome in the other domain. This cross-domain influence is believed to occur indirectly through work-family conflict, rather than through the direct

influences of either parental demands or work-related role stress. Thus, it was predicted that work-related role stress would directly influence job satisfaction, as well as indirectly influence marital satisfaction through work-family conflict. Similarly, it was anticipated that parental demands would directly influence marital satisfaction, as well as indirectly influence job satisfaction through work-family conflict.

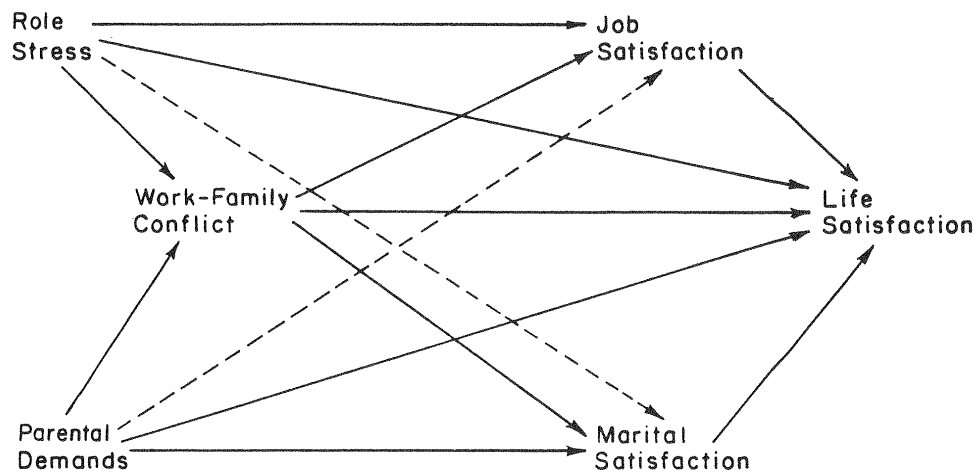
Further, work-related role stress and parental demands were hypothesized (H2) to influence life satisfaction indirectly through their within-domain outcomes, as well as through work-family conflict. Within this framework, life satisfaction is viewed as being composed of several aspects of satisfaction in general (e.g., job satisfaction and marital satisfaction). This view is consistent with the theoretical rationale of Rice, Near, and Hunt (1979). Lastly, it was hypothesized (H3) that work-related role stress and parental demands would have effects on job, life, and marital satisfaction that differ for men and women. Although different effects are hypothesized for men and women, the amplitude of these effects was not predicted since, as noted, neither theory nor previous research is clear in this regard.

Method

Subjects

The subject sample was comprised of public, government, and industrial accountants identified from a national survey of accounting professionals. This sample was considered particularly appropriate for testing the stated hypotheses given Nieva's (1985) suggestion that in-depth understanding of the work-family

Figure 1.
Proposed model and hypothesized relationships.



Note. Solid lines indicate hypothesized relationships. Broken lines indicate alternate influences.

interface will only come about by dealing with specific work situations (e.g., career professionals, blue-collar workers, operative employees). Participants in the survey were randomly selected from the membership lists of the National Association of Accountants, the American Association of Women Accountants, the Association of Government Accountants, and the American Society of Certified Public Accountants. In all, 1,821 accountants agreed to participate in the national survey, returned consent form, and were sent the research materials. Of these, 1,145 returned the materials, and all but 65 research packets were complete and usable, representing a participation rate of 63%

Only respondents who were married and employed full-time were included in this research. There were 423 men and 335 women who met these criteria. For the male sample, 17.7% had one or more children under the age of 6, 37.4% had one or more children between 6 and 18 but none under the age of 6, 10.6% had one or more children between 19 and 22 but none under 19, 19.7% had one or more children older than 22 but none under 22, and approximately 14.6% had no children. For the female sample, 9.4% had one or more children under the age of 6, and 18.8% had one or more children between 6 and 18 but none under the age of 6, 10.9% had one or more children between 19 and 22 but none under 19, 17.6% had one or more children older than 22 but none under 22, and 43.4% had no children.

Respondents were grouped by age into five categories. For the male sample, 14.5% were ages 20 to 29, 42.3% were ages 30 to 39, 24.0% were ages 40 to 49, 14.5% were ages 50 to 59, and 4.8% were 59 or older. For the female sample: 27.8% were ages 20 to 29, 40.0% were ages 30 to 39, 20.0% were ages 40 to 49, 11.3% were ages 50 to 59, and 0.9% were 59 or older.

Chi-square tests were computed to determine whether male and female respondents differed with respect to number of children and age. The test for number of children resulted in a chi-square of 91.05, which is significant at the .01 level. The test for age resulted in a chi-square of 28.23, which is also significant at the .01 level. These differences suggest the need to partial out the effects of both variables when making male-female comparisons.

Measures

Parental demands. To measure parental demands, subjects were placed into five groups depending on the ages and presence or absence of children: (a) no children, (b) one or more children older than the age of 22 but none under 22, (c) one or more children between 19 and 22 but none under the age of 19, (d) one or more children between 6 and 18 but none under 6 and (e) one or more children under 6. These groups formed a five-level ordinal scale indicating increasing parental demands.

Consistent with Lopata's (1966) model of family stages, this coding strategy was based on the assumption that the presence or absence of children and the age of children are important determinants of parental demands (cf. Osherson & Dill, 1983). Parenting undeniably introduces new demands and responsibilities into a marriage. Indeed, parenting has been called a "chronic emergency" (Guttmann, 1975). Age of children is a related issue. Younger children are more dependent on their parents than are older children. In particular, the preschool years require

a great commitment of parental time and energy. Consequently, families with infants or preschoolers are more likely to experience difficulties meshing work and family responsibilities than families with school-aged or older children. Overall, as children grow older, parental demands are likely to differ by type, if not level (Moen, 1982).

Work-related role stress. Measures of work-related role ambiguity and role conflict were combined to gauge different stress levels (cf. Schneider & Bowen, 1985). The mean score for each measure was averaged to form a work-related role stress index. Following the logic of House and Rizzo (1972), this index was intended to reflect the level of role stress that individuals experience on their jobs as a result of role ambiguity and role conflict. The index was scaled so that high scores reflect high levels of role stress.

Role ambiguity and role conflict were assessed using six and eight items, respectively, from measures developed by Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970). These measures were chosen because of their established psychometric properties (Rosenkrantz, Luthans, & Hennessey, 1983). Each measure was scored using a 7-point rating scale ranging from "very rarely (0-14% of the time)" to "continually (86-100% of the time)," and by averaging across relevant items. The two measures correlated ($r = .45$) at the .01 level of significance.

Work-family conflict. An 8-item scale adapted from a measure developed by Burke, Weir, and DuWors (1980) was used to gauge the extent that subjects' current job demands impacted on their home and family life. The items assessed the perceived effects of current job demands on mental and physical states at home, participation in home duties, vacations, and social activities, and the respondent's relationship with his/her spouse. Five response categories, ranging from "strong negative impact" to "strong positive impact" were used to rate each item. The mean response was used in the present analysis with low scores indicating more work-family conflict.

Job satisfaction. Overall job satisfaction was measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, Short Form (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Only the 20 items that were related to general job satisfaction (e.g., "working conditions") were used for this study. Subjects responded to each item using a 5-point rating scale ranging from "not satisfied" to "extremely satisfied." The mean response was used for the present study with higher scores associated with greater job satisfaction.

Life satisfaction. Quinn and Shepard's (1974) Quality of Life Scale were used to measure overall life satisfaction. It consists of two equally weighted components. The first is based on two overall satisfaction questions ("Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days?" "In general, how satisfying do you find the ways you are spending your life these days?") The second component is based on eight more specific moods or affects measured by bi-polar items (e.g., boring-interesting, enjoyable-miserable). Scores on both components were standardized and then averaged to produce an overall life satisfaction index with higher scores reflecting increasing levels of perceived life satisfaction.

Marital satisfaction. Locke and Wallace's (1959) Marital Adjustment Scale (Short Form) was used to assess general marital satisfaction. Subjects rated their

marriage on 15 items focusing upon diverse aspects of marital life such as communication, sexual compatibility, affection, and value differences. Responses to the items were averaged such that high scores reflect the presence of extensive marital problems. This scale has been cited as the most widely used and validated measure of marital satisfaction (L'Abate & Goodrich, 1980).

Measure reliabilities. Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate the internal consistency reliability of the study's measures. Since work-related role stress was a composite variable, the reliabilities of its subcomponents are given. The reliability estimates were: role ambiguity, $\alpha = .87$; role conflict, $\alpha = .82$; work-family conflict, $\alpha = .92$; marital satisfaction, $\alpha = .77$; job satisfaction, $\alpha = .92$; and life satisfaction, $\alpha = .78$.

Data Analysis

The hypothesized model was evaluated using multiple regression procedures. Partial regression coefficients were employed to analyze the predicted relationships among work and family variables and between work and family domains. Such first-order coefficients control for the possible confounding effects of variables that may be correlated with an independent variable and may also be directly related to a dependent variable. For example, to examine the direct effect of work-family conflict on marital satisfaction and to control for any associated confounding effects, work-related role stress and parental demands were entered in the first step of a regression equation. The resulting partial coefficient consequently reflects the influence work-family conflict has on marital satisfaction over and above the effects work-related role stress and parental demands have on marital satisfaction.

The relative importance of variables within a subgroup is traditionally determined by comparing standardized partial regression coefficients. To determine the relative importance of a variable between subgroups, however, unstandardized partial regression coefficients must be contrasted. To this end, Hotchkiss's (1976) technique for comparisons between subgroups was employed. Scores for each of the variables in the hypothesized model were standardized for both men and women based on total group means and standard deviations. Then, unstandardized partial regression coefficients were computed by sex on the transformed scores. The resulting coefficients are called standardized path-regression coefficients (q).

Hotchkiss's technique provides two advantages over more traditional procedures. First, it permits comparisons between independent variables and between subgroups with only one sequence of coefficients being reported. Standardized coefficients and regression coefficients need not be reported to fully interpret a hypothesized model for more than one subgroup. Second, it permits simultaneous comparisons between independent variables within and between subgroups, as when one wishes to compare the magnitudes of coefficients associated with two or more independent variables between subgroups. In the present study, tests of significance were calculated separately on the standardized path-regression coefficients for men and women. Since multiple tests were being performed, the Bonferroni technique was used to decrease the probability of family-wise Type I errors (Bielby & Kleugel, 1977). The Bonferroni technique adjusts the signifi-

cance level for a group of null hypotheses so that the significance level may be stated in terms of a critical value for each individual null hypothesis (i.e., comparison). The result is a more conservative test. Since 13 tests of significance were performed for both men and women, the α level for each test was $.10/13$, or $.0076$. The $.10$ numerator was used due to the exploratory nature of the research. Although the hypothesized model posits causal relationships and the accompanying analyses are similar to those used in path analysis, they are not purported to represent a complete causal map.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the non-standardized male and female variable scores. As reported in Table 2, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to compare group means for the identified variables. This method seemed the most appropriate as a statistical control for differences in age and number of children between the two groups. There were no significant differences between women and men on work-related role stress, work-family conflict, job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and life satisfaction. Women, however, had a significantly lower parental demands score than men, $F(1,741) = 56.50, p < .001$.

Zero-order correlations among the variables in the model are displayed in Table 3. Separate correlation matrices were computed for men and women. The overall pattern of relationships within each matrix was similar for the two groups. Correlations in both matrices are clearly meaningful within the conceptual framework of the study and provide support for the suggested linkages between the consequences of work-related role stress and parental demands when viewed as simple associations.

The results of the regression analyses for men and women are presented in Figure 2. Standardized path-regression coefficients are shown along each hypothesized path. Effects for women are given in parentheses. Solid lines indicate significant (adjusted $\alpha = .0076$) relationships. Dotted lines indicate non-significant relationships.

Hypothesis 1, concerning the cross-domain relationships between parental demands with job satisfaction and work-related role stress with marital satisfaction, was partially supported. Work-related role stress was directly related to both job satisfaction (men, $q = -.58$; women, $q = -.56$) and work-family conflict (men,

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Men and Women

Variable	<i>n</i> ^a	Men		<i>n</i> ^a	Women	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Work-related role stress	418	2.70	0.87	331	2.70	0.92
Parental demands	417	4.00 ^b	1.35	330	2.00 ^b	1.43
Work-family conflict ^c	423	3.14	0.80	333	2.96	0.77
Job satisfaction	423	3.37	0.62	335	3.40	0.64
Marital satisfaction	423	7.27	1.67	335	7.21	1.78
Life satisfaction	421	0.01	0.91	330	0.01	0.92

^aStatistics computed only for those subjects with no missing data for individual variables. ^bMedian value. ^cHigh scores indicate a positive effect of job on homelife; low scores indicate work-family conflict.

Table 2
Analyses of Covariance: Work-Related Role Stress, Parental Demands, Work-Family Conflict, Job Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction, and Life Satisfaction by Sex

Source	Work-Related Role Stress			Parental Demands			Work-Family Conflict			Job Satisfaction			Marital Satisfaction			Life Satisfaction								
	df	SS	MS	F	df	SS	MS	F	df	SS	MS	F	df	SS	MS	F	df	SS	MS	F				
Covariates																								
Age	1	9.71	9.71	12.59***	1	130.64	130.64	82.58***	1	9.07	9.07	15.03***	1	1.34	1.34	3.39	1	15.08	15.08	5.10*	1	6.51	6.51	7.84**
No. of Children	1	1.07	1.07	1.39	1	298.34	298.34	188.58***	1	1.51	1.51	2.50	1	.04	.04	.10	1	12.09	12.09	4.09*	1	.00	.00	.00
Main Effect																								
Sex	1	1.06	1.06	1.38	1	89.38	89.38	56.50***	1	2.29	2.29	3.80	1	.42	.42	1.07	1	1.49	1.49	.51	1	.39	.39	.47
Error	743	593.36	.80		741	1,172.26	1.58		750	474.40			752	296.06	.39		752	2,220.30	2.95		745	618.32		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3
Zero-Order Correlations

	Work-related role stress	Parental demands	Work- Family conflict ^a	Job satisfaction	Marital satisfaction	Life satisfaction
<i>Men</i>						
Work-related role stress	—					
Parental demands	.07	—				
Work-family conflict ^a	-.36**	-.09	—			
Job satisfaction	-.61**	-.07	.29**	—		
Marital satisfaction	-.21**	-.08	.33**	.15**	—	
Life satisfaction	-.41**	-.05	.46**	.51**	.40**	—
<i>Women</i>						
Work-related role stress	—					
Parental demands	-.05	—				
Work-family conflict ^a	-.45*	.08	—			
Job satisfaction	-.58*	-.03	.27*	—		
Marital satisfaction	-.13*	-.08	.20*	.12	—	
Life satisfaction	-.44*	-.06	.42*	.46*	.45*	—

Note. Decimal points omitted for correlations. Men: $n = 411$, $r \geq \pm .15$, $p < .01$; women: $n = 321$, $r \geq \pm .12$, $p \leq .05$, two-tailed.

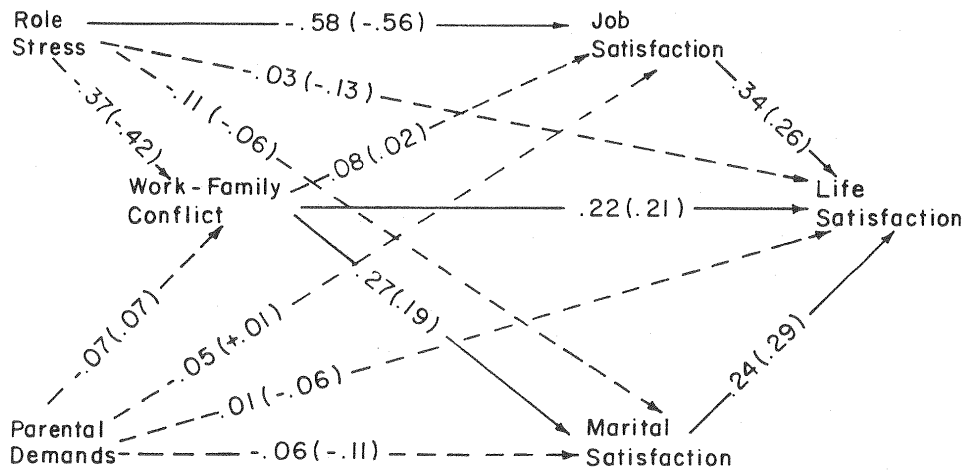
^aHigh scores indicate a positive effect of job on homelife; low scores indicate work-family conflict.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$.

$q = -.37$; women, $q = -.42$), as well as indirectly related to marital satisfaction through work-family conflict (men, $q = .27$; women, $q = .19$). No direct relationship between either work-related role stress or parental demands and marital satisfaction was found for either men or women. Likewise, parental demands did not directly relate to job satisfaction nor did it indirectly relate to job satisfaction through work-family conflict for either subgroup.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that work-related role stress and parental demands would influence life satisfaction indirectly through their within-domain outcomes, as well as through work-family conflict. This hypothesis was partially supported for both subgroups by the finding that work-related role stress was indirectly related to life satisfaction for men and women. This relationship occurred in three ways. First, work-related role stress had an indirect effect on life satisfaction and through job satisfaction (men, $q = .34$; women, $q = .26$). Second, work-related role stress was indirectly related to life satisfaction through work-life conflict (men, $q = .22$; women, $q = .21$). Third, the relationship between work-related role stress and work-family conflict extended to marital satisfaction (men, $q = .27$ and women, $q = .19$), which in turn related to life satisfaction

Figure 2. Summary of results for men and women. (Values given are standardized path-regression coefficients; effects for women are given in parentheses.)



Note. The Bonferroni technique is a two-tailed test of statistical significance. Solid lines indicate significant (adjusted $\alpha = .0076$) relationships. Dotted lines indicate non-significant relationships.

(men, $q = .24$; women, $q = .29$). These results indicate that, for both men and women, as work-related role stress increases, life satisfaction decreases because subsequent increases in work-family conflict and decreases in marital satisfaction and job satisfaction. In contrast, the hypothesized indirect relationships between parental demands and life satisfaction were not supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that work-related role stress and parental demands would have different direct effects on job, life, and marital satisfaction for men and women. Work-related role stress was significantly related to job satisfaction for both men ($q = -.58$) and women ($q = -.56$). As indicated, however, the magnitude of these effects was roughly equivalent. Work-related role stress was unrelated for either men and women to life and marital satisfaction. Similarly, family demands appeared unrelated to job, life, or marital satisfaction for either subgroup.

Since there is no relationship between parental demands and any of the satisfaction variables, satisfaction with childcare arrangement was explored as a possible mediator. It was selected in light of increasing evidence linking parental anxieties resulting from childcare problems with both marital and job disaffection (Chapman, 1987). Parents with young children were asked to indicate their childcare arrangements (e.g., in-home care by mother or father, in someone else's home, day care center). Parents who answered this item also indicated how satisfied they were with the arrangements on a 4-point scale varying from very

dissatisfied (= 1) to very satisfied (= 4). The potential psychometric weakness of this single-item measure is acknowledged.

Because the childcare satisfaction variable was available only for the 233 male and 88 female respondents with young children at home, separate analyses were conducted in which childcare satisfaction was added to each of the three separate parental demand-satisfaction variable regression equations for men and women. The results of this analysis (not shown) indicate that the initially non-significant effect of parental demands of life satisfaction increased to significance for women ($q = -.54, p < .01$), but not men ($q = -.12, ns.$). Female ($M = 3.38, SD = .67$) respondents were less satisfied with childcare arrangements than male ($M = 3.66, SD = .56$) respondents ($t = 3.52, p < .001$), and childcare satisfaction bore virtually no direct relationship to life satisfaction for either men ($r = .11, p > .10$) or women ($r = .02, p > .50$). No other relationships involving parental demands and satisfaction reached significance for men or women with the inclusion of childcare satisfaction as a mediator.

A test for the equality of coefficients (Specht & Warren, 1976) for the original hypothesized model confirms that no coefficient (q) is statistically different between subgroups. Thus, the hypothesized model is not conditioned by sex. This result is confirmed by means of the generalized multiple correlation coefficient (Rm^2), which is used to assess the model's goodness of fit. In the present context, Rm^2 is employed to summarize multiple correlation coefficients over all equations for both subgroups and to compare the relative strength of the standardized path-regression coefficients across subgroups. For men, Rm^2 is .72; whereas it is .71 for women. Thus, the hypothesized model captures similar amounts of covariation in the data for males and females.

Discussion and Summary

As indicated, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported. Work-related role stress was related to its within-domain outcome (job satisfaction) as previously documented by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964). More importantly, for both men and women, work-family conflict served as a link between work-related role stress and marital satisfaction. This finding offers generalized support for the notion that stress produced within the work role may have dysfunctional consequences for one's nonwork life (Bartolome & Evans, 1980; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986). Contrary to prediction, parental demands were neither directly related to marital satisfaction or indirectly related to job satisfaction through work-family conflict. This result is difficult to explain given that the existing body of related knowledge is so inadequate. An examination of the dynamics behind parental demands represents a significant area for additional inquiry. Perhaps other factors such as division of household duties, family size, time spent on home maintenance, or presence of domestic help would assess parental demands that are more important or salient to the present sample (Hertz, 1986; Kimball, 1987).

For both men and women, the indirect relationship between work-related role stress and marital satisfaction, as influenced through work-family conflict, was more important than the direct relationship between parental demands and mari-

tal satisfaction. It appears that work exerts a powerful influence on the quality of individuals' marriages. Work may be central to individuals' lives as it can be financially, socially, and emotionally rewarding. Since it is such an integral part of an individual's life, work would be expected to have wide-ranging effects. The fact that people spend a large proportion of their waking hours involved in work may be another contributing factor to these effects. It could be that high-involvement in work discourages high involvement in one's marriage. Then, too, it is possible that work-related role stress leading to work-family conflict may make it difficult to interact in a nurturant manner with one's spouse (Greenhaus, Bedeian, & Mossholder, 1987). Career success requires a great investment in work. Thus, work-related role stress could be expected to weigh heavily in influencing various aspects of one's life.

For the most part, Hypothesis 2 was supported. Work-related role stress influenced life satisfaction indirectly through job satisfaction, as well as through work-family conflict. Although parental demands were not related to life satisfaction, marital satisfaction directly influenced life satisfaction. Thus, this suggests that both marital dissatisfaction and job dissatisfaction as prompted by work-related role stress can detract from one's overall quality of life. It further highlights the need for more research on the determinants of life satisfaction under different circumstances. Consistent with these results, Cooke and Rousseau (1984) also found a link between work expectations and inter-role conflict and job dissatisfaction, but not life satisfaction.

A major interest in this study (H_3) concerned sex differences in the hypothesized model. No statistically significant sex differences were found in the model as originally constructed. Work-related role stress was associated with job dissatisfaction for both males and females. It had no direct effect on marital satisfaction or life satisfaction for either group. It is possible that inclusion of other important factors such as forced versus chosen employment, spouse's attitude toward one's employment, or the potential mitigating effects of spouse's social and emotional support could have yielded different results (Bhagat, 1983). Moreover, though other studies have found a sex difference in job satisfaction, recent research suggests that this difference disappears when variables such as job status, pay, tenure, age, and education are held constant (Sausser & York, 1978; Smith & Plant, 1982; Vance, Shaffer, & McCauley, 1983). Likewise, the reported results may have occurred because the focal sample, married accountants in full-time employment, are more homogeneous than samples in other studies. This homogeneity, however, is at least partially offset by the focal sample's wide geographical dispersion, making such an explanation less plausible. Therefore, the finding of few sex differences overall may indicate that previous findings of sex differences in marital satisfaction and job satisfaction may have been due to other variables or, as Nelson and Quick (1985) suggest, both sexes may be equally subject to the consequences of stress.

The finding that the parental demands variable did not relate to any other variable in the hypothesized model may suggest that its underlying measure is flawed. Other studies (e.g., Cooke & Rousseau, 1984) have used similar measures of parental demands and found them to be related to other variables, such

as inter-role conflict and physical strain. We conducted parallel analyses using cluster analysis and an alternate proxy measure (i.e., "number of absences from work due to child illness") and found the same results. Our findings are thus consistent and not method specific. At the same time, the parental demands variable as measured may not play an important part in the lives of the subjects studied. As previously noted, perhaps other measures such as division of household duties, family size, time spent on home maintenance, or presence of domestic help would assess parental demands that are more important or salient to the focal sample.

In a similar vein, another potential reason why parental demands did not relate to other variables in the hypothesized model could be the career stage of the subject sample. Mounting evidence suggests that people face different issues at different career stages. The resolution of these issues can variously affect job attitudes and behavior (Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Slocum & Cron, 1985).

The notion that the inclusion of other important variables may have yielded different results is supported by the emergence of satisfaction with childcare arrangements as an explanatory variable for female respondents with young children at home. This finding intimates that it is not the mere presence of children at home, but rather satisfaction with childcare arrangements that has an important impact on female life satisfaction. The fact that a similar effect does not emerge for men suggests that men and women experience parental demands differently. It has been argued that working mothers experience their roles *simultaneously*, while working fathers fulfill their roles (i.e., parent, self, worker, and spouse) in a *sequential* manner (Hall, 1972). As a result, it is quite likely that working mothers are more strongly affected by parental demands than their male counterparts. Available research lends support to this interpretation. Evidence, for example, indicates that working wives and husbands do not equally share household duties or child care responsibilities (Berk & Berk, 1979; Crosby, 1984). Additionally, working women typically retain their role as supporter of their spouse's job (Gutek & Stevens, 1979). For instance, working wives are expected to support their husband's job activities (e.g., social commitments or travel demands), but the reverse is not always true.

Why, in the present study, satisfaction with childcare arrangements had a mediating effect on the relationship between parental demands and life satisfaction for women only and no impact on the association between parental demands and either job satisfaction or marital satisfaction is unclear. It could perhaps be argued, at least for the present sample, childcare considerations are only important to women. Before accepting this argument, however, examination of other factors influencing family dynamics should be undertaken to expand our understanding of the work and nonwork consequences of parental demands for both men and women.

A few additional concerns should be mentioned. As previously intimated, the generalizability of the reported results may be limited, because accountants may differ from other career professionals. Evidence, however, suggests that if such differences do exist, they are insubstantial (Bedeian, Mossholder, Touliatos, & Barkman, 1986). Second, given the use of self-report data, it is acknowledged

that common method variance may have accounted for some of the observed relationships among focal variables. This concern, however, was purposely addressed by incorporating both objective (parental demands) and subjective variables in the data collection effort and by using multiple item measures with different directions in wording, reverse scoring, and various response formats. Finally, it is admittedly impossible to establish causality in a cross-sectional study. Relationships in the hypothesized model may be in opposite directions than is proposed or, perhaps, even reciprocal.

In summary, the reported results reveal that the domain of work and family variously influence life satisfaction through such outcomes as job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and parental demands and the linking variable impact of work-family conflict. Future attempts to understand the work-family interface almost certainly stand to profit from an acknowledgement of their mutual interconnection and joint impact on life satisfaction. The fact that the hypothesized model did not operate in a substantially different manner for men and women suggests that future research should focus less on sex differences and more on factors mediating work-family conflict.

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