

# THE EFFECT OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT ON TURNOVER INTENTION FOR WHITE-COLLAR WORKERS: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB STRESS AND BURNOUT

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## Abstract

White-collar workers are a large workforce group that has an impact on organizational performance, as they possess knowledge, skills, and educational backgrounds that are valuable resources for their organizations. The aim of this study is to examine the interplay between work-family conflict and turnover intentions, along with the mediating effects of job stress and burnout within that association. The study collected empirical data from 400 white-collar workers in private organizations in Thailand. The result supported the hypothesized model, where direct effect and indirect effect were tested. The findings of the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis revealed an association between work-family conflict and turnover intentions, job stress, and burnout, respectively. What's more, the results indicate that job stress and burnout were associated with turnover intentions. According to the mediation analysis results, job stress appeared to partially mediate the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions. Correspondingly, burnout was found to partially mediate the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions. The findings have theoretical implications which indicate that this framework also supports the majority of white-collar workers in most industries, not only in specific professions. This approach can be beneficial for retaining talented employees within an organization.

Keywords: White-collar worker, work-family conflict, job stress, burnout, turnover intention

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

White-collar workers, alternatively referred to as salaried workers or office workers (Hyman & Price, 2016), as well as workers who are employed by organizations and hold a college degree or higher educational qualification. Primarily, white-collar workers constitute a group of highly skilled professionals who are assigned tasks emphasizing the practical application of information, skills, and talents (Mills & Collar, 1951). These tasks often pertain to innovation, research, design, marketing, and other knowledge-based activities (Dögüs, 2019). Additionally, the term “white-collar workers” includes employees with specialized expertise within the organization, such as those in consulting, accounting and finance, lecturers and teachers, or computer programming roles. Employers typically expect white-collar workers to continuously enhance their knowledge and skills, even beyond regular working hours (Investopedia, 2022). Furthermore, white-collar workers often possess not only functional skills but also soft and managerial skills, which significantly contribute to the advancement of organizational success. Consequently, white-collar workers frequently assume critical roles within the organization, particularly those involving management-level tasks, as well as responsibilities for driving and stimulating overall organizational productivity through the performance of other workers (Okazaki, 2020).

As a result, it becomes imperative for businesses to devise effective strategies to retain white-collar professionals and deter them from contemplating to leave the organization. The departure of white-collar workers can have adverse implications for an organization, leading to the loss of key talents crucial for driving the organization forward efficiently, both in the short and long term. Nonetheless, past research has uncovered several factors influencing the turnover intentions of white-collar workers. The term “turnover intention” denotes an employee’s decision to leave their current job in favor of a new opportunity (Liu et al., 2018; Paredes-Aguirre et al., 2022; Raza et al., 2018; Rhee et al., 2020). The departure of one employee may have a negative psychological impact on other colleagues, which, in turn, can affect organizational management (Shin et al., 2021). Previous studies have identified various causes of turnover intentions among white-collar workers, including job satisfaction (Dodanwala & Santoso, 2022; Li et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2018; Scanlan & Still, 2019), job stress (Lee & Jang, 2020; Li et al., 2021; Salama et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2022), and burnout (Rajendran et al., 2020; Ran et al., 2020; Scanlan & Still, 2019). These factors are significant contributors to the decision-making process that lead white-collar workers to consider leaving their current employment. Moreover, the factor of work-family conflict also serves as one of the reasons leading to all kinds of employees’ decisions to leave an organization. Work-family conflict refers to circumstances where an employee’s family life is negatively affected by the demands and responsibilities arising from their job position (Aboobaker et al., 2020; Karakose et al., 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2023; Yildiz et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2020). However, past studies have demonstrated that the impact of work-family conflict on turnover intentions may vary depending on gender (Rombaut & Guerry, 2021) and the employee’s position or rank within the organization (DiRenzo et al., 2011). Furthermore, previous literature has consistently demonstrated that work-family conflict exerts a positive influence on turnover intentions, particularly among samples characterized by the attributes of white-collar workers. Ribeiro et al. (2023) conducted a study with a sample of employees drawn from diverse Portuguese organizations, with 41.9% of respondents possessing undergraduate degrees, which substantiates these findings by revealing a positive impact of work-family conflict on low levels of engagement and high levels of turnover intentions. Similarly, research encompassing IT specialists in information and communication technology (ICT) companies in Malaysia, revealed a positive relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions, encompassing dimensions such as time, psychological strain, and behavioral aspects (Lee et

al., 2023). This pattern extends to banker positions in the banking sector in India, spanning both private and public institutions, where work-family conflict was found to positively correlate with turnover intentions, while work-family enrichment demonstrated a negative association with turnover intentions, depending upon the degree of favorable spillover between the work and family roles experienced by employees (Aboobaker & Edward, 2020). Moreover, a study within the education industry of Turkey demonstrated a positive linkage between work-family conflict and the decision to leave among teachers in private high schools, attributable to the strains imposed by work-related responsibilities on their family life (DÜLGER, 2023). Lastly, in a comparative research study examining the association between work-family conflicts and turnover intentions within the context of the hotel industry, encompassing both white-collar (comprising managers, receptionists, and sales and marketing officers) and blue-collar (comprising housekeepers, porters, and technicians) employees in both China and the United States, it was observed that work-family conflict demonstrated a positive impact on turnover intentions among hotel employees in both countries (Chen et al., 2018). Thus, it can be concluded that work-family conflict has a positive impact to turnover intentions among white-collar workers. Interestingly, earlier research indicated intriguing connections between work-family conflict and other factors, such as job stress (Jamadin et al., 2015; Mack & Rhineberger-Dunn, 2019; Viegas & Henriques, 2021) and burnout (Chen et al., 2018; Lambert et al., 2019). These connections suggest that work-family conflict might positively affect job stress and burnout, both of which can have a positive influence on turnover intentions. Consequently, exploring the mediating role of job stress and burnout between work-family conflict and turnover intentions in the white-collar workforce is crucial. Such a study would facilitate organizations in accurately predicting the turnover intentions of this workforce segment, thereby enabling them to develop effective strategies to address challenges arising from work-related and family-related factors with greater efficacy.

In Thailand, data has been collected from the Total Remuneration Survey (TRS) report conducted by Mercer, which shows that the average voluntary turnover rate of the workforce in Thailand for the year 2021 is approximately 9.4% across all industries and is expected to increase in the future (Marketingoops, 2022). Moreover, the statistics also indicate that factors such as exhaustion and burnout from work, as well as the pressure of job responsibilities and the burden of family and personal life responsibilities, are significant causes that lead to the decisions of workers in Thailand to resign from their jobs. This phenomenon may have an impact on the short- and long-term operations and development of organizations within the country.

The findings of this study can be employed as significant insights for private sector organizations in effectively managing white-collar employee groups, which is the main driving factor for organizational success. Such insights serve to proactively mitigate the likelihood of these employees making decisions to leave, thereby preventing potential issues related to knowledge management and knowledge transfer and potentially reducing recruitment and selection costs as well as expenses associated with employee training and knowledge enhancement. Furthermore, the efficient management of white-collar employees contributes to an organization's ability to pursue its objectives effectively, ultimately impacting the overall economic landscape of Thailand. Hence, the objectives of this study are:

- (1) To explore the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions among white-collar workers in Thailand.
- (2) To examine the mediating effect of job stress on work-family conflict and turnover intentions among white-collar workers.
- (3) To examine the mediating effect of burnout between work-family conflict and turnover intentions among white-collar workers.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Background**

#### **2.1.1 Role Theory**

The theoretical foundation for this study is role theory, which was developed by Robert H. Merton (Merton, 1957). According to Merton, a “role” is “a position that differs in each society of an individual, including activities related to that position in the society of the individual.” In addition, a social role is a component of role theory that influences societal norms, behaviors, and individual qualities as well as social standing (Biddle & Thomas, 1966; Goode, 1960; Major, 2003). However, according to role theory, each social group has specific expectations and responsibilities, and individuals may run into conflict when these roles compete for their time and attention or clash (Biddle & Thomas, 1966; Goode, 1960). This conflict may lead to role conflict, which Merton (1957) distinguished as intrapersonal role conflict, where an individual must manage competing roles within a single social position, such as work and family roles, and interpersonal role conflict, where an individual must manage expectations from roles in different social positions.

Role theory can affect white-collar employees when there is a conflict between their work and family roles. An employee may experience conflict between their work role and their family role, and they might struggle to fulfil their responsibilities in family life while maintaining their responsibilities at work. Thus, role theory has been widely used for further development in research, especially the fundamental concept of work-family conflict (Kahn et al., 1964; Kossek & Lee, 2017; Michel et al., 2010; Ribeiro et al., 2023).

As previously indicated, Role Theory was used as a foundation for this study, as it has an effect on the conceptual framework that illustrates the many roles played by white-collar workers through the concept of work-family conflict, which influences turnover intentions.

### **2.2 Hypotheses Development**

#### **2.2.1 Work-Family Conflict and Turnover Intention**

Work-Family Conflict (WF) refers to a situation where an individual experiences a conflict between their occupational responsibilities and their familial obligations regarding time, energy, and behavior (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The concept consists of two perspectives: work-to-family, which represents the situation where job demand requires resources from an individual that interfere with their family role, and family-to-work, which represents a situation where family difficulties interfere with the work role of an individual affecting performance in their work (Frone et al., 1992; Mansour & Tremblay, 2018; Netemeyer et al., 1996). The consequences of such conflicts are likely to lead to individuals being unable to perform their work efficiently and may even reach the extent of leaving their current job, particularly when work responsibilities affect their family roles (Nohe & Sonntag, 2014). Previous research has highlighted the importance of WF which affects TI, especially in high-pressure jobs, in terms of workload and time dimensions, for instance, in the hospitality industry (Blomme et al., 2010), the education industry (Karakose et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2020) and particularly the medical or healthcare industry (Yildiz et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2020). Nevertheless, past research has demonstrated that WF may not invariably result in TI, as it depends on several individual factors. These factors include the disparity in job positions within an organization and even gender, which influences the role an employee plays within their family (DiRenzo et al., 2011; Rombaut & Guerry, 2021). This indicates that the literature possesses gaps which require further investigation regarding whether WF has a direct positive impact on TI and what other factors may mediate the relationship between the two variables. Based on the previous

study, the hypothesis can be developed to show that the correlation between WF and TI for the white-collar worker is the same as for workers in other industries, as mentioned above.

**Hypothesis 1:** Work-family conflict (WF) is positively related to turnover intentions (TI).

### 2.2.2 Work-Family Conflict and Job Stress

In the situation where individuals experience role conflict based on the concept of WF, it is possible that this WF may result in other factors related to work as well. Literature shows that WF and job stress (JS) have a positive association, whereby as WF increases, JS also increases (Jamadin et al., 2015; Mack & Rhineberger-Dunn, 2019; Viegas & Henriques, 2021). However, this relationship may vary depending on the position assigned to each individual. If an individual is assigned to a position with high levels of responsibility, there is a higher chance that the relationship between WF and JS will also be high (Mack & Rhineberger-Dunn, 2019). As shown in previous research, WF can lead to feelings of stress, with the impact of work responsibilities affecting the individual's role in their family or personal life (Chen et al., 2018). Therefore, a hypothesis can be developed based on the relationship between WF, JS, and job BO.

**Hypothesis 2:** Work-family conflict (WF) is positively related to job stress (JS).

### 2.2.3 Work-Family Conflict and Burnout

WF can be counted as one of the stressors for burnout (BO) when the domains of work and home spill into one another. Because of the pressure from work responsibilities, individuals may experience high levels of emotional exhaustion on the job (Lambert et al., 2019). Moreover, according to role theory, whenever an individual experiences a situation where they are pressured to handle two or more roles with incompatible expectations. The situation will more likely lead to a feeling of exhaustion (Dall'Ora et al., 2020). This implies that if employees in an organization suffer from the pressure of both job demand and family responsibilities, they will eventually feel fatigued. However, compared to family-to-work conflict, which also has a similar relationship with BO, work-to-family conflict may have a greater impact on feelings of exhaustion in individuals (Chen et al., 2018). The following hypothesis was developed based on previous studies which have indicated that WF and BO are correlate.

**Hypothesis 3:** Work-family conflict (WF) is positively related to burnout (BO).

### 2.2.4 Job Stress and Turnover Intentions

Job stress (JS) is defined as "a person's psychological or physiological reaction to environmental factors that lead to physical and mental stress" (Beehr & Franz, 1987). Additionally, employee stress levels are influenced by demographic factors such as gender, age, organizational tenure, and position in the organization (Dodanwala & Santoso, 2022). According to role theory, individuals have certain expectations placed on them based on their job titles, duties, and responsibilities. These expectations can include specific job duties, performance goals, and behavioral norms. Individuals may suffer from JS when they feel that they are unable to fulfil these expectations or carry out their role effectively (Kahn et al., 1964). Moreover, JS also refers to the negative emotional, mental, and physical responses that employees experience due to job demands and pressures, which lead to poor performance or even burnout (BO) (Giao et al., 2020). Therefore, when an individual is subjected to high job demands that are not congruent with their level of control or available resources, it can lead to work-related stress. Hence, the level of turnover intentions (TI) in each individual is more likely to increase significantly. In conclusion, according to previous studies, JS can be used as a predictor for TI (Lee & Jang, 2020; Salama et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2022). The hypothesis was developed accordingly from the studies.

**Hypothesis 4:** Job stress (JS) is positively related to turnover intentions (TI).

### **2.2.5 Burnout and Turnover Intentions**

Burnout (BO) was defined by WHO (2019) as “a syndrome thought to come from persistent professional stress that has not been effectively controlled”, which can be characterised as a feeling of exhaustion as well as an increasing feeling of negativism from the job that might reduce efficiency. According to role theory, individuals often develop job roles, responsibilities, or positions for work. When there is a conflict between job roles and personal roles, or when the job role cannot coexist with the individual’s personal life, it can lead to emotional distress, which can result in emotional fatigue and burnout (Turner, 1990). Previous studies suggest that BO is often caused by job demands, such as excessive workload, that have an impact on an individual’s personal life (Rajendran et al., 2020). However, when individuals experience BO, they tend to be more likely to make the decision to leave their job (Rajendran et al., 2020; Ran et al., 2020; Scanlan & Still, 2019). It can therefore be concluded that BO and TI are correlated. Thus, the following hypothesis is suggested accordingly:

**Hypothesis 5:** Burnout (BO) is positively related to turnover intentions (TI).

### **2.2.6 Mediating Role of Job Stress**

JS is one of the important factors that can play a mediating role between various factors. Previous studies have shown that JS has a mediating effect in the relationship between WF and an individual’s job performance or service quality (Mansour & Tremblay, 2018). This implies that employees will experience less stress and be able to operate more effectively if there is no conflict between their personal and professional lives. In addition, JS also functions as a mediator between the relationship of employees’ decisions to leave and their work environment. Koon and Yen-Hwa (2019) found that a good work environment can help alleviate stress levels, which in turn reduces employees’ intentions to leave. While Dodanwala and Santoso (2022) found that job satisfaction directly contributes to reducing stress levels, which will lessen employees’ turnover intentions. Based on these findings, it can be hypothesised that JS is a mediator between WF and TI.

**Hypothesis 6:** Job stress (JS) mediates the relationship between work-family conflict (WF) and turnover intentions (TI).

### **2.2.7 The Mediating Role of Burnout**

Based on role theory, WF suggests that the excessive demands of job roles and family roles are incompatible. This conflict, may lead individuals to feel emotional exhaustion and burnout from the job (Barriga Medina et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2018; Hou et al., 2022; Lambert et al., 2019; Zheng et al., 2021). Meanwhile, previous studies have also revealed a direct link between BO and TI (Rajendran et al., 2020; Ran et al., 2020; Scanlan & Still, 2019). Linking the associations mentioned above, this study suggests that BO is likely to mediate the relationship between WF and TI. Thus, the following hypothesis is suggested accordingly.

**Hypothesis 7:** Burnout (BO) mediates the relationship between work-family conflict (WF) and turnover intentions (TI).

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Data Collection**

The survey was distributed among white-collar employees in Thailand. As the original language of the questionnaire was English, the survey was translated into Thai to prevent any misunderstanding or unclear interpretation of its meaning. A sampling frame was used to selectively choose respondents from a pool of workers working within private sector organizations in Thailand, encompassing both the manufacturing and service industries. Specifically,

this includes companies or entities with authorized capital exceeding 100 million Thai Baht and a substantial workforce of over 200 individuals. This criterion was applied to a pool of over 10,000 organizations within the country (DBD, 2022). Given that large-scale organizations often exhibit clearly delineated roles and responsibilities, it is noteworthy that the departure of a group of workers from such sizable entities tends to have a more significant impact on the overall economic landscape. This ripple effect is attributed to the substantial scale of their hiring practices. Furthermore, a multi-stage sampling method was employed to select the group of data providers. This process commences with the utilization of the area sampling method, which divides the population based on provinces categorized as “main cities”. These provinces are characterized by urban prosperity, substantial tourist inflow, and a positive impact on the overall economy, as asserted by the Parliamentary Budget Office. The designated main cities include Bangkok, the Metropolitan Region, Phuket, Chonburi, Krabi, Chiang Mai, Surat Thani, Songkhla, Phang Nga, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Rayong, Phetchaburi, Kanchanaburi, Nakhon Ratchasima, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Khon Kaen, and Saraburi (PBO, 2022).

Subsequently, a simple random sampling method was chosen for the selection of respondents. This selection approach is justified by the presence of large-scale private sector organizations within the main cities. Consequently, white-collar workers in the sample were randomly selected from the above-mentioned provinces, ensuring an equitable opportunity for selection among them.

Due to the unavailability of information regarding the total population of white-collar workers, the statistical calculation was based on Cochran (1965) in order to provide a suitable sample size. As a result, the required sample size for this study was determined to be a minimum of 385 participants. From the 414 questionnaires received back from those surveyed, the valid response number was 400 participants, accounting for 96.6% of the total sample. The details of respondents’ ages ranged from 20 to 60 years. Most of the respondents were female at 53%, while male respondents accounted for 45% of the sample, with 2% not specified. Regarding educational background, 61% of respondents held a bachelor’s degree, and 30% held a master’s degree, while 9% were non-degree holders. Additionally, 55% of respondents worked in the production industry, while 45% worked in the service industry.

## **3.2 Measurement**

### **Measurement Scale**

In this study, the measurement scales of the work-family conflict scale were used from the study of Haslam et al. (2015). Sample items included (work-to-family: e.g., “My work has a negative impact on my family life”; family-to-work: e.g., “My family has a negative impact on my day-to-day work duties”). Furthermore, the scale of job stress, burnout, and turnover intentions was taken from the study of Shin et al. (2021), as it was one of the most recent and updated studies. Sample items included (job stress: e.g., “I have felt uncomfortable because of the strictness of the relationship with my boss”; burnout: e.g., “After the day’s work is over, I am exhausted mentally and physically”; turnover intentions: e.g., “I’m seriously considering quitting my job at the present time”). Lastly, a five-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), was utilized as a measuring instrument to create the primary content in each questionnaire.

### **3.3 Common Method Variance**

The variables utilized in the investigation were acquired from a singular source. Hence, it is imperative to acknowledge that the presence of common method bias has the potential to compromise the overall validity of the study. The degree of Common Method Variance (CMV)

was assessed with Harman’s single-factor technique (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The outcome indicates that 27.63 percent of the variation is seen, a value that falls below the threshold of 50 percent. Therefore, the presence of common method variance did not appear to be a concern in this study (Afsar et al., 2020).

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Measurement Model

An investigation into the construct validity of all the variables was conducted prior to testing the hypotheses. The distinctiveness of the research variables was tested by conducting Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using AMOS 21 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2000), and evaluating the results using various fit indices such as chi-square statistics, RMSEA, RMR, GFI, TLI, and CFI. The fit indicators, supported the constructs of work-family conflict (WF), job stress (JS), burnout (BO), and turnover intentions (TI), with the following values being calculated respectively:  $\chi^2 = 280.136$ ,  $df = 103$ ,  $\chi^2 / df = 2.719$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.066$ ,  $RMR = .065$ ,  $GFI = 0.900$ ,  $TLI = .900$ , and  $CFI = .917$ . It was determined that these indices fell within acceptable ranges, according to the criteria of Schumacker and Lomax (2004).

Furthermore, in order to detect the presence of multicollinearity, variance inflation factors (VIFs) were generated for the independent variables. The maximum allowable VIF value is 4, according to Hair et al.(2010). The VIFs values in this study, were all lower than 4, ranging from 1.330 to 2.293, as shown in Table 1, indicating the non-appearance of multi-collinearity.

**Table 1** Multi-Collinearity Diagnostics

Constructs	JS	BO	TI	WF
JS1	1.338	1.338	1.338	1.338
JS2	1.464	1.464	1.464	1.464
JS3	1.257	1.257	1.257	1.257
JS4	1.328	1.328	1.328	1.328
JS5	1.324	1.324	1.324	1.324
BO1		1.156		
BO2		1.554		
BO3		1.530		
BO4		1.391		
TI1			1.753	
TI2			2.235	
TI3			1.716	
WF1				2.095
WF2				2.293
WF3				2.139
WF4				1.330
WF5				1.389

The dependability of the construct is presented in Table 2. In order to establish construct reliability, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest that it is essential to determine both composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha$ ), as well as factor loadings. The values of  $\alpha$  and CR are greater than 0.70, establishing construct reliability (Hair et al., 2014).

To achieve convergent validity, each component must lie above the minimum value of 0.5 for average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2014), which was true of all constructs except for JS, which was below the advised threshold. However, Fornell and Larcker (1981)

asserted that the average variance retrieved may provide a more cautious assessment of the validity of the measurement model, as well as “on the basis of  $p_n$  (composite reliability) alone. It may therefore be concluded that the convergent validity of the construct is adequate, even though more than 50% of the variance is due to error”. Thus, the convergent validity of the measuring items is adequate as the composite reliability of the four constructs was significantly higher than the advised level.

In this study, each item’s loading was above the minimum of 0.5, except for two items (WF4, WF5), which were excluded from the study as a result of inadequate factor loading (0.258, 0.471) (Hulland, 1999). The results are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2** Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading ( $\lambda$ )*	Cronbach’s Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job Stress (JS)			0.712	0.809	0.461
	I have had conflicting requests from two or more people at work	0.719			
	I have felt uncomfortable because of the strictness of the relationship with my boss	0.745			
	There is a possibility that my promotion opportunities will be reduced or lost compared to my performance	0.610			
	I am sometimes asked to demonstrate abilities (foreign language ability, human relations) that I do not have	0.605			
	Even if I am treated unfairly, our union (if any) is unlikely to be of any help	0.702			
Burnout (BO)			0.700	0.815	0.527
	I feel very irritable at work	0.591			
	After the day’s work is over, I am exhausted mentally and physically	0.780			
	I feel that the job is hard work	0.744			
	I feel that everything is messed up at work	0.772			
Turnover Intention (TI)			0.813	0.888	0.727

**Table 2** (Continued)

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading ( $\lambda$ )*	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work-Family-Conflict (WF)	I'm seriously considering quitting my job right now	0.866	0.776	0.850	0.536
	I have thought of moving to a new company	0.883			
	I have also searched for job openings from other companies	0.806			
	My work prevents me spending sufficient quality time with my family	0.765			
	There is no time left at the end of the day to do the things I'd like to do at home	0.844			
	My family misses out because of my work commitments	0.789			
	My work has a negative impact on my family life	0.258			
	Working often makes me irritable or short tempered at home	0.471			

As shown in Table 3, discriminant validity was proven. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations or HTMT is used for attaining full discriminant validity which was proven when the HTMT value being under 0.9, according to Henseler et al. (2015). All constructions had HTMT values below 0.9, indicating discriminant validity. The findings demonstrate that the measurement model has the capacity to assess the variables under consideration within the model.

**Table 3** Discriminant Validity: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT)

Constructs	HTMT Ratio			
	Job Stress (JS)	Burnout (BO)	Turnover Intentions (TI)	Work-Family-Conflict (WF)
Job Stress (JS)				
Burnout (JS)	0.574			
Turnover intentions (TI)	0.575	0.596		
Work-family conflict (WF)	0.417	0.609	0.449	

## 4.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Table 4 displays the correlation coefficients of each variable. The coefficients, which move in the anticipated direction, complete all the direct paths in the model. The sample correlation coefficients revealed a significant relationship between WF and JS ( $r = 0.320$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), burnout ( $r = 0.467$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), and TI ( $r = 0.369$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). Additionally, the data show a strong correlation ( $r = 0.440$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ) between JS and TI, and between BO and TI ( $r = 0.445$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). BO and JS had a strong correlation ( $r = 0.406$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ).

**Table 4** Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

No.	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Work-family conflict	3.367	.9144	1			
2	Turnover intention	3.475	.9276	0.369**	1		
3	Job stress	3.032	.7436	0.320**	0.440**	1	
4	Burnout	3.523	.7232	0.467**	0.445**	0.406**	1

## 4.3 Hypothesis Testing

The SPSS PROCESS macro, developed by Hayes (2012), is a commonly used method for assessing the direct and indirect impacts on a variable (Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2020), and was utilized to examine the hypotheses in this study. In accordance with this paradigm, the criteria variable and the predictor are said to be directly related, while the predictor and criteria are associated indirectly through a mediator. BO and JS were two mediators whose impacts were quantified in the study.

The results presented in Table 5 show that all the hypothesised paths were significant. The findings demonstrated that the direct effects of all five hypotheses were significant. WF was positively and significantly related to TI ( $\beta = 0.162$ ,  $t = 3.304$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), thus supporting H1. WF was also positively and significantly associated with JS ( $\beta = 0.260$ ,  $t = 6.739$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), therefore, supporting H2. In addition, WF was positively and significantly related to BO ( $\beta = 0.297$ ,  $t = 8.415$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H3. Furthermore, the relationship between JS and TI was significantly associated ( $\beta = 0.356$ ;  $t = 6.114$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H4. Lastly, the relationship between BO and TI had a considerable association ( $\beta = 0.326$ ;  $t = 5.081$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), sustaining H5.

**Table 5** Estimation on the Basis of the Structural Model

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardized Beta	SE	t-value	p-value	Outcome	
H1:	WF→TI	0.162**	0.049	3.304	0.001	Supported	
H2:	WF→JS	0.260***	0.039	6.739	0.000	Supported	
H3:	WF→BO	0.297***	0.035	8.415	0.000	Supported	
H4:	JS→TI	0.356***	0.058	6.114	0.000	Supported	
H5:	BO→TI	0.326***	0.064	5.081	0.000	Supported	
Bootstrap Results for Indirect Effect							
Mediating Effects	Effect	SE	p-value	LLCI (95%)	ULCI (95%)	Degree of Mediation	
H6	WF→JS→TI	0.093***	0.021	0.000	0.053	0.136	Partial
H7	WF→BO→TI	0.097***	0.025	0.000	0.052	0.151	Partial

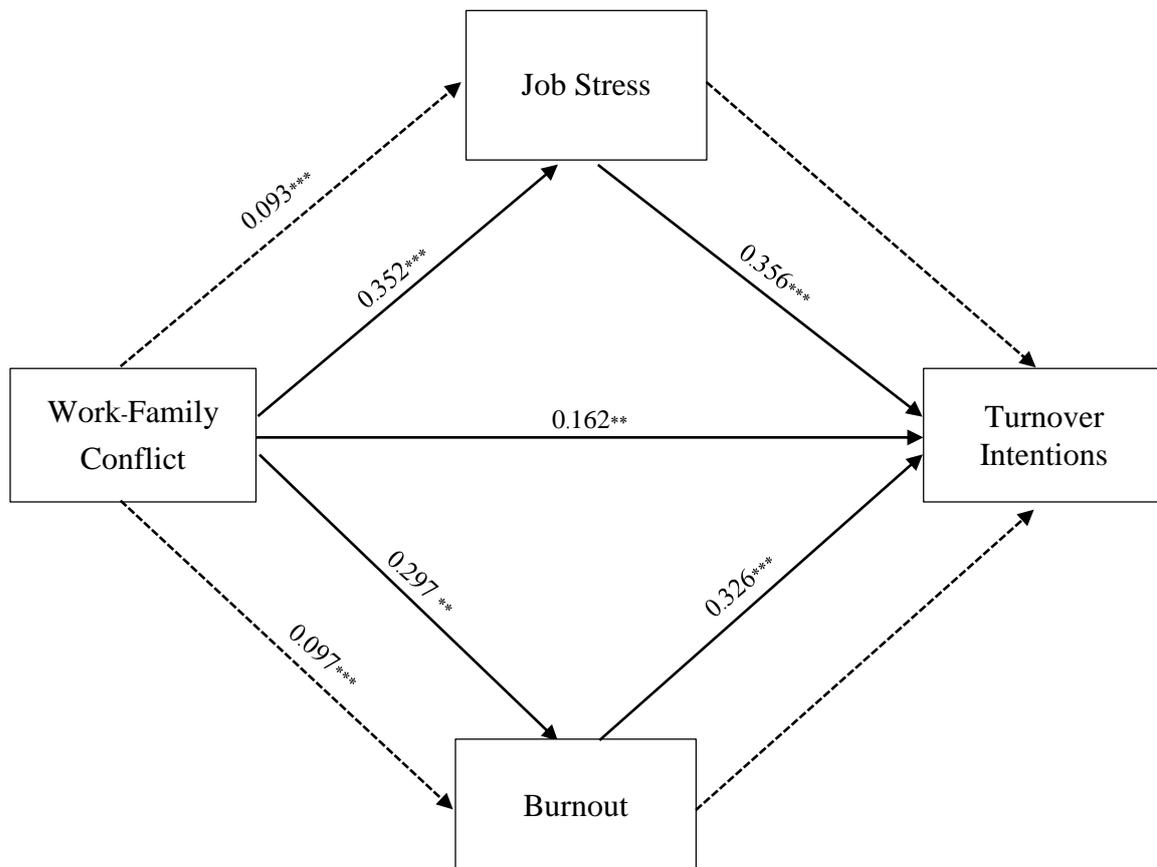
Note. (s):  $p^{**} < 0.01$ ,  $p^{***} < 0.001$ ;

WF=Work-family conflict, JS=Job stress, BO=Burnout, TI= Turnover intention

Additionally, the results show that the two indirect effect hypotheses were substantially different from zero at  $p < 0.001$ . It can be seen from Table 5 that the results of H6 ( $\beta = 0.093$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , CI [0.053, 0.136]) supported the hypothesis that JS mediates the relationship between WF and TI. Furthermore, the results of H7 ( $\beta = 0.097$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , CI [0.052, 0.151]) strongly prove the claim that BO mediates the relationship between WF and TI; thus, H7 was also supported.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that work-family conflicts (WF) have a positive impact on the decisions of white-collar workers in various industries in Thailand to leave their current jobs. This impact aligns with Role Theory, which suggests that when employees are expected to perform job tasks beyond a manageable balance with their family responsibilities, they are more likely to decide to quit. This study goes beyond previous empirical research conducted by Blomme et al. (2010), Karakose et al. (2021), Zhou et al. (2020), Yildiz et al. (2021), and Zhang et al. (2020) by indicating that the positive impact of WF on turnover intentions extends across a wide range of positions and industries in Thailand. This impact is not limited to high-pressure jobs with heavy workloads and time-consuming tasks, such as hospitality, education, and the medical or healthcare industry. Moreover, the study confirms the previous findings of Jamadin et al. (2015), Mack & Rhineberger-Dunn (2019), and Viegas & Henriques (2021), which revealed a positive direct impact of WF on job stress (JS). This suggests that white-collar workers facing significant conflicts between work and family roles



**Figure 1** Estimated Model

Note(s).  $\longrightarrow$  direct effect,  $\dashrightarrow$  mediating effect,

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

are more likely to experience higher levels of job stress. Similarly, the study supports the prior findings of Dall'Ora et al. (2020) and Chen et al. (2018), indicating a positive direct impact of WF on burnout (BO). This implies that white-collar workers experiencing conflicts between job demands and family responsibilities are more prone to feelings of exhaustion and burnout.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that job stress and burnout play a mediating role between WF and turnover intentions (TI) in white-collar workers in Thailand. According to Role Theory, individuals experiencing more conflicts between work and family life due to their job responsibilities are more likely to have higher levels of job stress, and such individuals are more likely to seek new job opportunities, consistent with the findings of Mack and Rhineberger-Dunn (2019). The study's results also align with prior research by Barriga Medina et al. (2021), Chen et al. (2018), Hou et al. (2022), Lambert et al. (2019), Rajendran et al. (2020), Ran et al. (2020), Scanlan & Still (2019), and Zheng et al. (2021), indicating that severe conflicts between professional and family life often lead to exhaustion, decreased work engagement, and ultimately the decision to leave the job.

The primary objective of the current study was to examine the direct impact of WF on TI and the mediating role of job stress and burnout in this relationship. The study also aimed to determine whether this concept is applicable to white-collar workers. Although similar studies have been conducted in the past, this research demonstrates that the impacts of these factors are likely to be relevant to white-collar workers across diverse industries, not just high-stress occupations. The findings can be applied to the work of Koon and Yen-Hwa (2019), which found that providing a favorable work environment that allows employees to manage their time between work and family can help reduce the conflict between their work and family roles, thus supporting efforts to alleviate stress and feelings of exhaustion.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Theoretical Implications**

As role theory claims, an individual may incur costs such as acquiring punishment from the organization, which is one result of the individual violating the norms or requirements of their respective role (Hindin, 2007). However, the findings of this study showed that cost does not only mean costs for the individuals, but also for the organization. That is, chronic stress could be created for individuals by the uncertain state caused by the occurrence of conflicts between family roles and work roles (Folkman, 2013; Hobfoll & Freedy, 1993; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). When many individual resources are exhausted by job stress or burnout exceed employees' psychological limits, employees may develop intentions of turnover (Ahmad & Afgan, 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2007). Simultaneously low performance triggered by turnover intentions will appear (Ritacco et al., 2013), meaning definite costs for the organization. Most previous studies based on role theory have mainly highlighted the norms of individual behavior and neglected individual agency (Jackson, 1998). Meanwhile, burnout and job stress are two substantial stressors which suppress individual agency (Mahmoud & Rothenberger, 2019; Stern et al., 2020; Thoits, 2006). This study contributes to the development of role theory, testing the mediating roles of job stress and burnout between work-family conflict and turnover intentions to identify the potential impact of role conflicts on individual agency.

This study finds that burnout only partially mediates the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions. This means that several other factors may exist which could mediate the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions. As previous studies show that work-family conflict could impact the psychological safety and wellbeing of individuals (Obrenovic et al., 2020), job and life satisfaction (Jahan Priyanka et

al., 2023) and nonattendance behaviors (Scott L. et al., 2015). How these factors further impact turnover intentions still require future study.

## **6.2 Managerial implications**

This study offers suggestions for enhancing the supervision of white-collar workers within private sector organizations, particularly regarding the conflict between work and family life. The findings indicate that employee care strategies should not only focus on compensation, motivation, and career advancement opportunities, but also consider the individual family circumstances of each employee, which can significantly impact their work performance and career decisions. Thus, this study proposes several managerial implications. First, executives of organizations must develop policies, particularly balance strategies, to effectively provide for their employees and empower them to achieve a work-life balance that accommodates their family responsibilities (Ribeiro et al., 2023). Second, considering work-life balance is a useful strategy to minimize the likelihood of work-family conflict (Soomro et al., 2018). Furthermore, work-life balance can improve employee productivity and prevent them from deciding to quit their job. Third, executives should take responsibility for supporting the physical and mental health of their employees to address factors such as stress and fatigue that can affect job performance and lead to employee turnover. Encouraging mental health care programmes for employees experiencing pressure from both work responsibilities and family obligations is crucial for improving employee productivity in the workplace. Finally, as white-collar workers constitute a significant portion of the labor force in the country's job market, it is recommended that the government implement measures to support and encourage employees in both the public and private sectors. These measures should focus on legal provisions pertaining to working hours and personal time to help workers effectively balance their professional and personal commitments, thereby contributing to the success of the organization.

## **7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

A few constraints should be noted in this study. Firstly, this study was limited to examining the effect only on white-collar workers. However, in the future, it is important to expand the study to include blue-collar workers and use a similar framework, as the nature of their work differs, which may lead to varying research findings. Secondly, the current study only looked at the overall group of respondents without considering their specific job roles and responsibilities within their respective organizations. To better comprehend how each job position is affected by the framework, future research should delve deeper into the specific positions of the sample group. This will allow for a more detailed comparison of the effects of different frameworks on each role. Third, expanding on the relationship between work-family conflict, job stress, burnout, and turnover intentions, future research should focus on the factor of family status or the worker's wealth as a mediating factor, to determine how family status can affect this framework. Lastly, future research could further explore the dimensions of job characteristics, pressure, and the job position of respondents, to increase the accuracy of theoretical insights.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

This study investigated the associations that correlate between work-family conflict, job stress, burnout, and turnover intentions. Although there have been numerous past studies exploring these topics, only a few have specifically focused on white-collar workers. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the impact of these theoretical constructs on this specific group,

with the aim of providing insights that can be applied to enhance organizational management effectiveness. As white-collar workers are a crucial labor force, driving an organization's strategic and operational objectives, particularly in the context of private organizations in Thailand. Consequently, the results from this study may contribute to the development of effective organizational management practices in this context. The results from the study demonstrate that the impact resulting from the conflict of roles that white-collar workers experience from their job and family life may lead to this group of workers making decisions to leave their organization and seek a new organization that can meet the demands of both roles, thus helping to balance their responsibilities in each role perfectly. Additionally, the mediating effect of job stress was supported, suggesting that the level of stress that employees receive from balancing their responsibilities in both roles, especially when their job role affects their family role, can be another factor that mediates their decision to leave their organization more easily. Burnout also plays an important role in mediating the relationship between work-to-family conflict and turnover intentions, as the level of emotional exhaustion and fatigue from work significantly increases when employees are facing conflicts between their work and family lives. The information from this study can be applied to organizational management in terms of policy development and strategy, to take better care of the group of white-collar workers who are valuable assets to their organization. Providing strategies to support an employee in balancing their responsibilities between work demand and family life will help organizations to maintain and take care of their employees, enabling them to work efficiently and sustainably for the organization.

## 9. FUNDING

This research was funded by the Walailak University Individual Research Grant, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand, with Grant Number WU65237. The research was approved from Ethics Committee in Human Research at Walailak University (WUEC-23-021-01).

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