






“The impact of sociodemographic factors and work-family conflict on the relationship between organizational support and women’s burnout”

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THE IMPACT OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND WOMEN'S BURNOUT

Abstract

Women's burnout affects not only the individuals suffering from this condition but also those around them and the organization they work for. This phenomenon spills over into their personal lives and increases the likelihood of work-family conflicts. Organizational, personal, and family circumstances can affect women's burnout. This study aims to determine the influence of perceived organizational support on burnout at work while mediating work-family conflict and moderating sociodemographic factors such as age, romantic relationship status, and number of children. The quantitative study involved 404 employed women aged 18 to 64. A structured questionnaire was distributed via social media or e-mail targeting employed women in Lithuania's public and private sectors. IBM SPSS and a special PROCESS macro were applied to perform a mediation-moderation analysis. The study showed that the direct effect of perceived organizational support is greater than the indirect effect in mediating work-family conflicts. This is true in the case of both general burnout and its separate components. The significant moderating effect of age revealed that younger women aged 18 to 34 experience more burnout than older women. The number of children demonstrated a significant moderating effect between perceived organizational support and burnout and its dimensions for women with two or more kids. No moderating effect of romantic relationship status on the interconnection between perceived organizational support and women's overall burnout or its individual dimensions was found.

Keywords

perceived organizational support, work-family conflict,
burnout, disengagement, exhaustion

JEL Classification

J53, J81

INTRODUCTION

Employees' mental health and well-being are considered among the key factors defining the long-term effectiveness of organizations. Employee well-being is essential for an individual's interactions with an organization, such as seeking support from management, changing one's workplace or career, and experiencing burnout, stress, or even social isolation and violating employee wellness.

Today's biggest challenges include the conditions of burnout and stress resulting from accelerated levels of anxiety, fatigue, depression, and sleep disorders experienced by the population during the COVID-19 pandemic – in short, employees' mental health. Burnout affects not only the individuals suffering from it but also those around them and the organization itself. Further, burnout syndrome affects two areas important for each individual: personal life and work. People who experience burnout syndrome are more likely to develop mental and

physical diseases like depression, anxiety disorders, sleep disorders, and alcohol abuse, all of which negatively affect work productivity, increase absenteeism due to sickness, and contribute to the occurrence of accidents on the way to and from the workplace and at the workplace itself (e.g., injuries, errors). The consequences involve increased economic costs and damage to the organization's reputation. Increased personal and professional conflict also occurs, making individuals more likely to develop depression. Therefore, the question arises as to whether organizational support helps reduce burnout in work-family conflict. A critical question is whether such a conflict acts only as a direct factor affecting burnout or whether it also acts indirectly as a mediator.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee burnout is an essential factor affecting employee performance. Burnout and emotional exhaustion are consequences of intensive physical, affective, and cognitive strain; that is, they are long-term consequences of prolonged exposure to particular job demands. Disengagement refers to distancing oneself from one's work in general and the work object and content. Scientists agree that burnout is a multidimensional condition. However, researchers in this area do not have a unified definition of employee burnout. Burnout is usually defined as a long-term reaction to work-related stressors (Jamil et al., 2013) or a state of exhaustion or frustration resulting from professional relationships related to fatigue, depersonalization (disengagement), and a reduction in professional aspirations (Dimitriu et al., 2020). Burnout at work is characterized by high emotional exhaustion, severe depersonalization, and a sense of low personal accomplishment (Nagar, 2012). Demerouti et al. (2010) assess burnout in two dimensions: emotional exhaustion and disengagement from work, treating depersonalization as a form of withdrawal from work directed at clients.

Studies show that burnout is affected by several individual factors. Langballe et al. (2011) demonstrate that burnout syndrome is more common in women than men. One reason is that women are primarily employed in educational and social sectors involving constant contact with others. At the same time, men are more often engaged in sectors such as engineering, where there is less contact (Purvanova & Muros, 2010). In addition, women are more likely to experience burnout due to their sensitivity, emotionality, stress, and psychological problems; therefore, organizational support is profoundly important (Szkody & McKinney, 2020).

Individuals with low self-esteem more frequently experience burnout (Devebakan et al., 2018). According to the conservation of resources (COR) theory, these individuals underestimate their internal resources, are less resistant to failure and negative emotions, and usually attribute particular events and achievements not to themselves but to persons occupying superior positions. Burnout is often associated with Type A behavior, characterized by irritability, impatience, excessive control, neuroticism, and perfectionism (Hill & Curran, 2016), all of which increase the risk of experiencing burnout (Bianchi, 2018).

Organizational factors also affect burnout. One of the main stressors at work is a lack of autonomy. Autonomy allows employees to feel important and competent in performing tasks. This often leads to better outcomes at work (Saragih, 2011), greater satisfaction with one's work, and lower chances of experiencing burnout syndrome (Akkoç et al., 2021). Conversely, a lack of autonomy (not feeling necessary and competent, which implies possessing resources) reduces employees' sense of personal accomplishment, leading individuals to experience burnout syndrome. According to the COR theory, workload can be perceived as a stressor if it threatens human resources (Zeng et al., 2020). Employees under significant pressure (when they must perform more tasks in a shorter time) may experience more anxiety and increased symptoms of depression (Engelbrecht et al., 2020).

Individuals who experience stress due to high demands at work may experience emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, hindering their ability to work effectively (Matthews & Rutherford, 2021). Finally, unresolved conflicts at work have also been found to influence burnout (Janssen et al., 1999). One reason for such conflict is role ambiguity. Role ambiguity, uncertainty, and conflict

are interrelated because they lead to role tension (Lambert & Paoline, 2008). Individuals invest in roles that provide a favorable balance of rewards and costs. If family rewards are lower than career rewards, individuals are likely to invest more in their careers than in their families (Langballe et al., 2011). People who experience a role conflict lose the ability to perform their job competently. Therefore, they begin to experience self-disappointment and can no longer cope with continuous stressors at work (Akkoç et al., 2021). This leads to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

Work-family conflict (WFC) also affects employee burnout. According to the COR model, one of the non-work-related resources that can reduce burnout at work is the ability to balance the two roles of work and family. The problem arises when both partners are full members of the labor market (Glavin & Schieman, 2012). Due to increasing work requirements, balancing these two areas is challenging (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). Individuals spend more and more time at their workplace, leaving less time for their families (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). Employees are affected by stress, heavy workloads, and control at work. All these factors may hinder employees' engagement in family life (Lambert et al., 2017), as psychological strain makes them suffer from WFC. Engagement in certain activities lasting for more extended periods can also be stressful. For example, long and inflexible working hours, extended work trips, and working overtime can indirectly lead to conflict due to scarce time resources (Jansen et al., 2006). Parents with young children are among the most vulnerable as they are deprived of the ability to devote enough time to their family role due to inflexible schedules and working overtime (AlAzzam et al., 2017).

Individuals who experience stress-based WFC are more prone to psychological and physiological health problems, achieve lower work outcomes, and are less involved in family life (Suter & Kowalski, 2021). Specific patterns of role behavior may be incompatible with expectations for the role behavior of others (Bruck et al., 2002). The major stressors in WFC are role overload and role conflict (the aspiration to be perfect in all roles). This form of conflict is experienced by individuals inclined to workaholism and perfectionism. While

some researchers argue that behavioral WFC may be relevant only for certain professions (e.g., law enforcement officers, doctors, and social workers) (Bruck et al., 2002), WFC may also occur when certain behaviors do not meet environmental expectations (Clark et al., 2019).

Women are more likely to experience burnout due to the family roles they must fulfill, which they find challenging to balance with work and career (Haines III et al., 2019). WFC usually emerges when the expectations of one role or another are not satisfied (Glavin & Schieman, 2012) or when there is a lack of resources to perform a particular role. Without access to the necessary resources, a person may be unable to cope with stress and suffer from the physical and psychological consequences characteristic of this phenomenon (increased irritability, anxiety, insomnia and depression, deteriorating physical health, and alcohol consumption) (Bilodeau et al., 2020; Zhao et al., 2021), all of which may lead to increased divorce rates (Yucel & Fan, 2019). Thus, women who suffer from burnout are also prone to frequent occurrences of WFC.

Organizational support plays a vital role in resolving WFCs. Huge workloads and family conflicts are related to the process of energy depletion. Therefore, finding ways to help employees recover from emotional exhaustion is crucial, as it contributes to the well-being of employees in the organization (Pluut et al., 2018). Individuals who receive emotional support from their managers (empathy, trust, and care) cope with accelerating burnout faster, and their self-confidence and desire to achieve personal performance goals increase (Yürür & Sarikaya, 2012). Employees whose managers recognize and help them overcome difficulties show that they value their employees (French et al., 2018). The feedback they receive allows them to feel empowered due to the perception that they can manage the situation themselves and that everything can be solved (i.e., a feeling of perceived autonomy) (Szkody & McKinney, 2020).

A relationship between organizational support and WFC undoubtedly exists, and perceived organizational support (POS) helps reduce an individual's WFC (Ghislieri et al., 2017; French et al., 2018; Ekmekci et al., 2021). Moreover, higher POS is more predictive of emerging burnout

than family-derived support (Alcover et al., 2018). Furthermore, women who more frequently perceive organizational support are less likely to experience WFC (Ghislieri et al., 2017; Ekmekci et al., 2021). Since POS “serves an important social and emotional function” (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 710) and is related to positive mood, some authors hypothesize that POS also leads to better family mood.

While studying the relationship between organizational support and burnout, sociodemographic relationships were analyzed between these phenomena with age, marital status, and number of children as moderators. Research has established that people under thirty experience burnout more often than those over thirty due to a lack of work experience and too little involvement in the work culture. Moreover, young professionals are often financially unstable – a situation more common in young families when parents are still building their careers – which can lead to burnout. According to COR theory, when job demands exceed available job resources (Salmela-Aro & Upadaya, 2018), employees who experience burnout early in their careers are more likely to change jobs (Minamizono et al., 2019). Women under 35 and over 55 are more sensitive to burnout due to possible WFC (while caring for young children or nursing other family members) (Marchand et al., 2018), indicating a bimodal relationship. Marital status is another significant factor that can lead to burnout. The research observed higher levels of disengagement in subjects living without a partner. The family environment or the couple’s lifestyle may provide security and support and protect the subject from impersonal, cynical, and negative attitudes in the workplace (Cañadas-De la Fuente et al., 2018).

On the other hand, women still assume greater family responsibilities (household work, raising children), so women with young children frequently experience burnout syndrome (Racine et al., 2022). Having children has been linked to deeper emotional exhaustion and a lower sense of accomplishment, leading to disengagement from work. Ayala and Carnero (2013) showed that having children is positively associated with burnout, possibly because nurses take on additional responsibilities in the family, which leads to WFC.

Despite the ongoing debate, there is no agreement on which and how many factors affect burnout. Therefore, this study aims to determine the influence of perceived organizational support on burnout at work while mediating work-family conflict and moderating sociodemographic factors such as age, romantic relationship status, and number of children.

Based on previous arguments, seven hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: *Perceived organizational support has a negative influence on women’s burnout.*
- H2: *Perceived organizational support has a negative influence on work-family conflict.*
- H3: *Work-family conflict has a positive effect on women’s burnout.*
- H4: *Work-family conflict mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and women’s burnout (H4a), exhaustion (H4b), and disengagement (H4c).*
- H5: *Age moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and women’s burnout (H5a), exhaustion (H5b), and disengagement (H5c).*
- H6: *Romantic relationship status moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and women’s burnout (H6a), exhaustion (H6b), and disengagement (H6c).*
- H7: *The number of children in a woman’s family moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and burnout (H7a), exhaustion (H7b), and disengagement (H7c).*

Figure 1 represents the conceptual framework of the study. The dependent variable measures employee burnout using its two latent variables, exhaustion and disengagement, while POS is an independent variable. WFC is a mediating variable; three sociodemographic characteristics – relationship status, age, and number of children – are moderating variables.

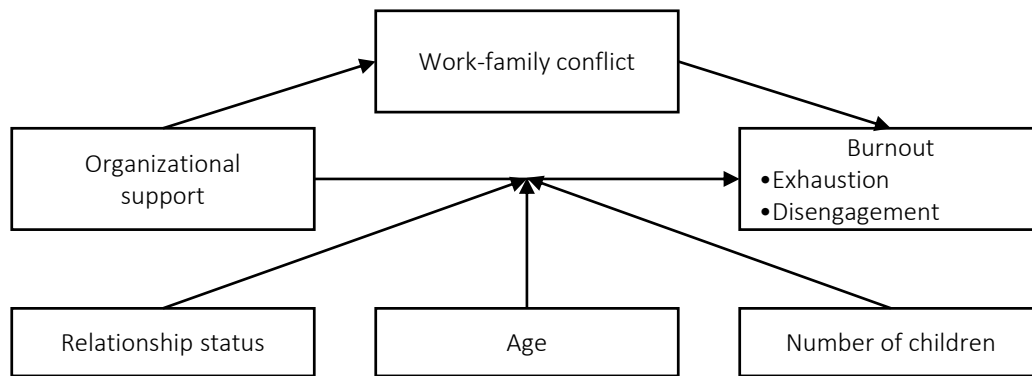


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

2. METHODS

The primary data for the empirical research were obtained through a quantitative survey using two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was used to measure burnout. The study follows a reliable and validated Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) questionnaire by Demerouti et al. (2010). The questionnaire was developed to evaluate burnout severity based on disengagement and exhaustion. The survey includes 16 items oriented in two dimensions: disengagement (8 items) and exhaustion (8 items). Originally, Netemeyer et al. (1996) developed the survey to measure work-family and family-work conflicts. However, this study focused on work-family conflict only. Thus, this study used just one part of Netemeyer et al.'s (1996) questionnaire, comprising five items. The paper used a five-point Likert scale, with 1 corresponding to "strongly disagree" and 5 corresponding to "strongly agree." The reverse questions were re-coded. The higher the score, the greater the level of burnout.

The second questionnaire was employed to evaluate WFC. The shortened "Perceived Organizational Support" questionnaire (Eisenberger et al., 1986) was applied to evaluate respondents' understanding of organizational support. Initially, the questionnaire included 36 items; however, this study used only a 16-item questionnaire. Seven items out of 16 were reversed and re-coded. Responses to each measure were obtained using a Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree."

The WFC scale measured the mediating factor, while the moderating variables included age, number of children, and romantic relationship status.

Double translation was applied to verify the consistency of using the questionnaire in the Lithuanian language. IBM SPSS and a special PROCESS macro were applied to perform mediation-moderation analysis.

2.1. Sample and data collection

The empirical data were collected using an online questionnaire hosted on Lithuania's popular online survey platform (apklausait.lt). As the target group comprised employed women aged 18 to 64, respondents were approached via Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, or e-mail. In addition, respondents were asked to share the link to the survey with their co-workers. In total, 404 respondents completed the questionnaires. A similar number of respondents came from public (55.4%) and private (44.6%) organizations. Most respondents were not employed in managerial positions (76.2%). More than half of respondents had over 10 years of job experience (55.4%). Meanwhile, a minority of participants in the survey held entry-level positions (12.1%), while 15.8% of women were in mid-level positions, and a similar number of respondents held senior-level positions (16.6%). Most respondents held a bachelor's or master's degree (85.6%) or were university students (3%), 8.7% of women had obtained a professional bachelor's degree (i.e., non-university higher education), and the smallest group of women (2.7%) had finished only primary or secondary school. The youngest respondents, aged 18 to 34, comprised 40.8% of all respondents, while 45% were in the 35–54 age group, and those over 55 comprised 14.1% of the sample. The study focused, in particular, on family and work matters. Twenty-seven percent of women identified themselves as single (never mar-

ried (17.6%), divorced (7.9%), or widowed (1.5%)), and the others were married (61.6%) or living with a partner (11.4%). Most respondents had children (59.1%), with 17.6% having one child, 35.9% having two kids, and 6.4% having more than two children. Women without children made up 40.1% of respondents.

3. RESULTS

The study conducted a comprehensive data analysis, starting with scale reliability, descriptive statistics, and correlations to gain insights into the main variables. Subsequently, a mediator analysis was used to explore the importance of WFC for burnout. Finally, a moderator analysis examined potential conditional relationships of sociodemographic factors.

3.1. Scale reliability, descriptive statistics, and correlations

Cronbach's alpha was used to test the scale reliability of all the constructs used in the data analysis. The test proved that the data were suitable for further research. The values fluctuated from 0.77 (Disengagement) to 0.949 (POS). In this paper, Cronbach's alpha for burnout was 0.877, similar to Demerouti et al.'s (2010) result of 0.85. The sub-scales were similar to or slightly lower than Demerouti et al.'s (2010) methodology. Nonetheless, they satisfied the minimum Cronbach's alpha requirement of 0.7 (Kline, 1998). The value of Cronbach's alpha for the WFC scale

(0.916) was greater than Netemeyer et al.'s (1996) result of 0.88. The estimated values of Cronbach's alpha for all constructs were in line with the previous studies, indicating good data reliability.

The data showed that minimum and maximum values were collected for WFC and POS (Table 1). However, after comparing the subscales of disengagement and exhaustion, women feel more exhausted ($M = 1.5$) than disengaged ($M = 1.25$) in their work. The maximum values also confirmed this finding. Hence, women perceive the organization's support and feel valued by the organization ($M = 4.73$). The results revealed that the mean for burnout was much lower (2.88).

Meanwhile, comparing the subscales, the mean for exhaustion (3.08) was slightly higher than for disengagement (3.01). Thus, burnout results in exhaustion. The results showed that burnout and its sub-constructs (disengagement and exhaustion) were positively correlated with the mediator WFC (with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.55 to 0.61). Meanwhile, POS had negative relationships to burnout, and its sub-constructs (disengagement and exhaustion) had correlation coefficients in the ranges of $r = -0.46$ to -0.63 , while WFC's correlation coefficient was $r = -0.4$. This implies some relationship between burnout, disengagement and exhaustion, and WFC. Thus, aggregating them into a mediator model might be reasonable. The strongest correlation coefficients were found for burnout and its sub-constructs, which might indicate multicollinearity. All correlations were significant at the level of 0.05.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics: Reliabilities, means, standard deviations, and correlations

Descriptive statistics	Variables				
	Brn	Dsg	Exh	WFC	POS
Reliability	0.877	0.770	0.839	0.916	0.949
Mean	2.88	3.01	3.08	2.43	4.73
Std. deviation	0.65	0.75	0.60	1.05	1.26
Min	1.25	1.25	1.50	1.00	1.00
Max	4.63	5.00	4.63	5.00	7.00
Correlation					
Brn	1				
Dsg	0.92	1			
Exh	0.84	0.96	1		
WFC	0.55	0.61	0.60	1	
POS	-0.63	-0.53	-0.46	-0.40	1

Note: Brn = Burnout; Dsg = Disengagement; Exh = Exhaustion; WFC = Work-family conflict; POS = Perceived organizational support.

3.2. Mediator analysis

Mediation or an indirect effect occurs if the causal effect of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y) is transmitted by the mediator (M). In other words, X affects Y because X affects M, and M, in turn, affects Y (Preacher et al., 2007). POS was taken as a predictor of burnout, and work-life balance was used as a mediator. POS was expected to affect burnout because it affects work-family life balance; thus, it indirectly affects burnout. The mediator analysis was performed in step-by-step order. Table 2 presents the results of the linear regression. The first step involved indicating the interlinkages between the predictor and the mediator. A statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) negative relationship was found between POS and WFC, confirming the second hypothesis. However, the linear relationship was only $R^2 = 0.16$. In the next step, a multiple regression analysis was run in which the predictor and mediator were taken as independent variables to predict the outcome. In this case, an analysis was done on how POS and work-family balance might explain burnout and its dimensions. The analysis revealed that POS and WFC are good predictors of women's burnout, and its dimensions as a linear relationship varied from $R^2 = 0.42$ to $R^2 = 0.5$. The greatest R^2 was obtained when the linear relationship was estimated between the predictors and the full burnout construct. The lowest R^2 was estimated when the effect of POS and work-family balance was explored on exhaustion.

Further, standardized coefficients indicated a positive relationship between the mediator work-family balance and burnout, and its dimensions varied from $\beta = 0.36$ ($t = 9.37$, $p < 0.001$) for the full burnout construct to $\beta = 0.499$ ($t = 12.06$, $p < 0.001$) for exhaustion. In all three cases, the results were significant at the 0.01 level. This confirmed the third hypothesis. However, the standardized coefficients for the second independent variable, POS, and burnout and its dimensions were negative and fluctuated from $\beta = -0.26$ for exhaustion ($t = -6.33$, $p < 0.001$) to $\beta = -0.49$ ($t = -12.72$, $p < 0.001$) for burnout; for disengagement, $\beta = -0.33$ ($t = -8.54$, $p < 0.001$).

The next step was to estimate the direct effect between the predictor POS and burnout and its dimensions. The analysis revealed that the results were significant at the level of $p < 0.001$, confirming that POS has a direct effect on burnout and its dimensions. Further, the results indicated a significant indirect effect of POS on burnout ($B = -0.074$, BaCI [-0.0978; -0.0511] with the total effect of $B = -0.3229$) and its dimensions through WFC. Compared with the others, the greatest indirect effect was estimated for disengagement ($B = -0.1135$ BaCI [-0.1464; -0.0825] with a total effect of $B = -0.3144$). As both the direct and indirect effects of POS were significant, WFC partially mediates the relationship between POS and burnout

Table 2. Mediation analysis

Models statistics	POS =>WFC	POS+WFC => Brn/Dsg/Exh			POS => Brn/Dsg/Exh		
POS							
		Brn	Dsg	Exh	Brn	Dsg	Exh
Unstandardized B	-0.3326	-0.2493	-0.2009	-0.1245	-0.3229	-0.3144	-0.2196
SE	0.0379	0.0196	0.0235	0.0197	0.0198	0.0251	0.0210
t	-8.7644	-12.7177	-8.5366	-6.3278	-16.3016	-12.5104	-10.4461
p	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Standardized	-0.4005	-0.4871	-0.3383	-0.2620	-0.6309	-0.5294	-0.4621
WFC							
Unstandardized B		0.2212	0.3412	0.2859			
SE		0.0236	0.0283	0.0237			
t		9.3695	12.0380	12.0682			
p		<0.001	<0.001	<0.001			
Standardized		0.3589	0.4770	0.4996			
R2	0.1604	0.5061	0.4713	0.4230	0.3859	0.2802	0.2135
F	76.8147	205.4510	178.7257	147.0124	252.6672	156.5097	109.1219
p	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

Note: Brn = Burnout; Dsg = Disengagement; Exh = Exhaustion; WFC = Work-family conflict; POS = Perceived organizational support.

Table 3. Mediation effect

Total effect of POS on Brn/Dsg/Exh					Percentages
	Effect	SE	t	p	
POS => Brn	-0.3229	0.0198	-16.3016	<0.001	100%
POS => Dsg	-0.3144	0.0251	-12.5104	<0.001	100%
POS => Exh	-0.2196	0.0210	-10.4461	<0.001	100%
Direct effect of POS on Brn					
POS => Brn	-0.2493	0.0196	-12.7177	<0.001	77.2
POS => Dsg	-0.2009	0.0235	-8.5366	<0.001	63.9
POS=> Exh	-0.1245	0.0197	-6.3278	<0.001	56.7
Indirect effect(s) of POS on Brn (POS=>WFC=>Brn)					
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	
Brn	-0.0736	0.0118	-0.0978	-0.0511	22.8
Dsg	-0.1135	0.0164	-0.1464	-0.0825	36.1
Exh	-0.0951	0.0136	-0.1219	-0.0687	43.3

Note: Brn = Burnout; Dsg = Disengagement; Exh = Exhaustion; WFC = Work-family conflict; POS = Perceived organizational support.

and its dimensions. However, the direct mediating effect of WFC on this relationship was greater than the indirect effect (Table 3).

The level of confidence for all confidence intervals is 95%. The number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals is 5,000.

3.3. Moderation effect

The study also investigated whether age, number of children in the family, or romantic relationship status moderated the linkages between POS and women's burnout. The study used SPSS 28, Hayes Process Macro Model 1, to perform the moderation analysis. First, the paper set POS as the independent variable and burnout as the dependent variable, moderated by women's age. Thus, the expectation was that age would impact women's burnout. However, the interaction between POS and W1 was insignificant ($p = 0.14$). Meanwhile, the interaction of POS and W2 was significant at $p < 0.05$. The highest-order unconditional interaction of age on POS and burnout was significant at $p < 0.1$ with 0.0072. The results showed that younger women experienced more burnout than older women. As seen in Table 4, the moderating effect for the 18–34 age range was greatest with an effect of -0.38 ($t = -12.52$, $p < 0.001$); for the 35–55 age range, the effect was -0.31 ($t = -12.52$, $p < 0.001$); and for women aged 55 and older the effect was -0.23 ($t = -3.76$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, H5a was supported. However, the moderation of age, POS, and disengagement was insignificant

for POSxW1 ($t = 0.82$, $p = 0.413$) and POSxW2 ($t = 1.11$, $p = 0.268$). Thus, H5b was not supported. A similar situation was seen in the case of the moderation of age on POS and exhaustion. The interaction between POS and all age groups was insignificant, with POSxW1 ($t = 0.25$, $p = 0.803$) and POSxW2 ($t = 0.63$, $p = 0.529$). The study rejected H5c as well. Younger women seem to suffer the most from burnout compared to the other employee age groups.

Further, the paper explored whether romantic relationship status moderated the effect of POS on burnout and its dimensions. The results revealed insignificant interaction between POS and relationship status toward burnout and its dimensions ($p > 0.05$) based on estimating the moderating effect of relationship status on POS and burnout ($t = 1.5016$ and $p = 0.134$) and its dimensions, disengagement ($t = 0.8088$, $p = 0.4191$) and exhaustion ($t = 0.5210$, $p = 0.6026$). Thus, H6a, H6b, and H6c were rejected. The number of children demonstrated a significant moderating effect on the relationship between POS and burnout and its dimensions. The results showed a significant moderating effect for women with two kids (POS x W2 $t = 1.94$, $p = 0.05$) and women with three or more kids ($t = -1.99$, $p = 0.05$). The highest-order unconditional effect of the number of children on POS and burnout was significant at $p = 0.01$ with 0.0151.

Meanwhile, the greatest conditional effect of POS on burnout was for women with three or more kids, with an effect of -0.5048 ($t = -7.1352$, $p <$

Table 4. Moderation results

Hypothesis	Moderator	Moderation	Coefficient	SE	t	p	R ²	ΔR ²	Decision
Moderating effect of age on POS and burnout									
H5a	Age	POS x W1	0.06	0.04	1.47	0.14	0.44	0.0072	Supported
		POS x W2	0.14	0.07	2.09	0.037			
Moderating effect of age on POS and disengagement									
H5b	Age	POS x W1	0.04	0.05	0.82	0.413	0.31	0.0025	Not supported
		POS x W2	0.09	0.09	1.11	0.268			
Moderating effect of age on POS and exhaustion									
H5c	Age	POS x W1	0.01	0.04	0.25	0.803	0.23	0.0008	Not supported
		POS x W2	0.05	0.07	0.63	0.529			
Moderating effect of Relationship status on POS and Burnout									
H6a	Relationship status	POS x relationship	0.0651	0.04	1.50	0.134	0.41	0.0033	Not supported
Moderating effect of Relationship status on POS and Disengagement									
H6b	Relationship status	POS x relationship	0.0446	0.06	0.81	0.412	0.29	0.0012	Not supported
Moderating effect of Relationship status on POS and Exhaustion									
H6c	Relationship status	POS x relationship	0.0241	0.05	0.52	0.602	0.221	0.0005	Not supported
Moderating effect of Number of Children on POS and Burnout									
H7a	Number of children	POS x W1	0.03	0.06	0.50	0.614	0.43	0.0151	Supported
		POS x W2	0.09	0.05	1.94	0.053			
		POS x W3	-0.15	0.08	-1.99	0.047			
Moderating effect of Number of Children on POS and Disengagement									
H7b	Number of Children	POS x W1	-0.0070	0.07	-0.09	0.923	0.31	0.0199	Supported
		POS x W2	0.0984	0.06	1.69	0.091			
		POS x W3	-0.2312	0.09	-2.35	0.019			
Moderating effect of Number of Children on POS and Exhaustion									
H7c	Number of Children	POS x W1	-0.0117	0.06	-0.19	0.846	0.24	0.0201	Supported
		POS x W2	0.0541	0.05	1.11	0.269			
		POS x W3	-0.2171	0.08	-2.62	0.009			

Note: POS = Perceived organizational support.

0.001). The number of children moderated the effect of POS on disengagement. A moderating effect was revealed for women with two kids (POS x W2 $t = 1.6962$ and $p = 0.09$) and women with three or more kids ($t = -2.3475$, $p = 0.019$) with the highest order unconditional interaction of 0.0199 with $p = 0.01$. At the same time, the greatest conditional effect of POS on disengagement was for women with three or more kids, with an effect of -0.5628 ($t = -6.2237$, $p < 0.001$). However, number of children had a significant moderating effect on POS and exhaustion only for women with three or more children POS x W3 ($t = -2.6148$, $p = 0.0093$) with 0.0201 ($p = 0.0163$) and a conditional effect of -0.4386 ($p < 0.001$).

Thus, the results revealed that the number of children significantly moderated the effect of POS on burnout and disengagement for women with two or more children. In comparison, the number of

children significantly moderated the effect of POS on exhaustion only for women with three or more children. However, the greatest effect of POS on burnout and its dimensions was found in women with three or more children.

4. DISCUSSION

As seen from the literature review, most researchers have examined either the WFC mediating relationship between POS and burnout syndrome (Lee et al., 2013) or the moderating effect of sociodemographic indicators on burnout (Blanch & Aluja, 2012; Marchand et al., 2018). This study has expanded the scientific discussion by emphasizing that the relationships between the mentioned phenomena can both mediate and moderate. The study has demonstrated the role of WFC as a partial mediator in the relationship between

POS and burnout and its dimensions. WFC has a much greater indirect effect on exhaustion than on work disengagement. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies claiming that WFC can be treated as a mediator between POS and emotional exhaustion (Lee et al., 2013), manager's support and emotional exhaustion (Yeh et al., 2021), and manager's support and burnout (Blanch & Aluja, 2012). It is possible that the higher the POS, the lower the individual's WFC. This means that it is essential for the employee to feel some support from the organization when facing difficulties between these two areas of life (work and family) (Kossek et al., 2011), as this can, first and foremost, reduce exhaustion. This study also found that the direct effect of POS on burnout is larger than the indirect effect. This partially coincides with the findings of Blanch and Aluja (2012) regarding the importance of direct managers' support for reducing burnout. In a supportive work environment, women may feel better able to take more responsibility in the family role, which helps them deal with burnout.

The study has confirmed that age moderates the relationship between POS and burnout. The results have shown a negative linear relationship in the case of burnout; that is, the effect of POS on burnout decreases with age. This effect is more pronounced in younger women. The study adds to burnout research by explaining why young employees experience burnout. Previous results confirm that in the early stages of pursuing a career, younger employees are first engaged in mastering the skills to meet the requirements and demands of their work. Thus, they are likely to take a greater risk of depleting their personal resources and

experiencing exhaustion or subsequent disengagement. In addition, younger employees may be juggling WFC, a risk factor for burnout (Marchand et al., 2018). The analysis suggests that one cause of burnout may be lacking organizational support. The study confirms that the role of POS in helping employees avoid burnout without transferring their experienced emotions to family life (Kossek et al., 2011) is more important for younger employees.

The study confirmed that the number of children moderates the relationship between POS, general burnout, and the emotional exhaustion dimension. A moderating relationship appears in families with three or more children but not in those with two or fewer children. Women with three or more children may use their organization's family support system more frequently to achieve a better work-life balance, which can lead to less burnout and exhaustion. The obtained results agree with the findings of Bekker et al. (2005) and partly with those of Cañadas-De la Fuente et al. (2018). The responsibilities of raising children possibly reduce rather than increase the emotional overload and feelings of exhaustion experienced by women (Cañadas-De la Fuente et al., 2018). Notably, this study measured the number of children, while other researchers (Bekker et al., 2005; Cañadas-De la Fuente et al., 2018) only measured the presence or absence of children. The study did not confirm the moderating effect of romantic relationship status on the relationship between POS and women's overall burnout and its dimensions. The obtained results align with Bekker et al. (2005), who confirmed that romantic relationship status had no relationship with any dimension of burnout.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to determine the influence of perceived organizational support on burnout at work while mediating work-family conflict and moderating sociodemographic factors such as age, romantic relationship status, and number of children. The questionnaire targeted employed women aged 18 to 64 in Lithuania.

The study has important theoretical implications. First, the study demonstrated a partial mediating effect of work-family conflict on the relationship between perceived organizational support and women's burnout. This finding shows that perceived organizational support partially and directly reduces women's burnout at work. On the other hand, perceived organizational support also helps to reduce work-family conflict and, at the same time, additionally contributes to the reduction of burnout. This

study helps to fill a gap in the research literature, expanding the field of burnout research by identifying both the direct and indirect effects of perceived organizational support on burnout through perceived work-family conflict.

Second, the study confirmed that age moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and burnout. It suggests that perceived organizational support, which helps prevent burnout without transferring the emotions experienced to family life, is more important for younger employees.

Third, the study confirmed a moderating effect of the number of children on the relationship between perceived organizational support and burnout in women. It found that the most significant impact of perceived organizational support on burnout and its dimensions occurs in women with three or more children. This study expands the field of burnout research by identifying both direct and indirect effects of perceived organizational support on burnout through perceived work-family conflict and assessing the influence of sociodemographic characteristics.

The results of the study may be helpful for practitioners. These insights are valuable for HR departments and managers of organizations as they provide an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of burnout's importance and practical consequences. The paper confirmed that women may need help and organizational support in dealing with burnout. This finding may prompt HR policymakers to consider improving individual employees' well-being. They can organize support programs to help employees overcome burnout. This should include the creation of a favorable environment for all stakeholders (e.g., friendlier policies for individuals to balance work and family and more flexible working hours and methods, i.e., office/home), feedback and counseling (more frequently and through various communication channels) and other support mechanisms.

However, several limitations of this study should be highlighted. First, all measurements are based on self-reported data and represent the respondents' subjective perceptions. More extensive results might be achieved using more objective measures to examine the relationships between the dimensions analyzed in this study. Second, the study data are limited geographically and culturally, representing only the employed population of Lithuania. Hence, results from other Eastern European countries may reveal further compelling aspects of the issue. Third, all the data were collected during pandemic restrictions, which heavily changed interactions between employees and their organizations. This could affect the evaluations provided by the respondents. Therefore, a new study in a more stable and predictable environment could give slightly different results.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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