

Unmasking the Mystery of Sex and Gender between the Bidirectional Relationship of Work-Family Conflict and Job Satisfaction

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Sex has been the most commonly investigated variable in the extant work–family literature; however, findings have been inconsistent. This study focuses on comparing sex (male, female) and gender [expressivity (akin to femininity), instrumentality (akin to masculinity)], as moderators between the bidirectional relationship of work–family conflict (work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict) and job satisfaction. Utilizing a sample of matched pairs of 182 men and 182 women, the results of the moderated regression analysis revealed that only gender moderated the relationship between work–family conflict and job satisfaction for these full-time employees. We discuss suggestions for implications, limitations, and future research.

INTRODUCTION

In the court case of *J.E.B. vs. the State of Alabama* (1994), Supreme Court Justice Scalia related gender to sex by expressing his belief that masculinity is equivalent to being a male and femininity is equivalent to being a female. Similar to Justice Scalia, the word *gender* has been used interchangeably with the word *sex* in the work–family (WF) literature, which Korabik, McElwain, and Chappell (2008) believe is the reason why sex has been based on mistaken assumptions about men and women. Sex, however, refers to the anatomical structure or biological dichotomy of being male or female (Korabik et al., 2008), while gender refers to the attitudinal, social, and/or cultural characteristics considered by society typically normal of a particular sex (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Diamond, 2002). Generally, gender, not sex, is useful for explaining attitude, value, and trait differences among workers or individuals (Livingston & Judge, 2008).

Traditionally, males were considered the breadwinner and dominated the work domain, while females were expected to take on the domestic responsibilities of being the homemaker in the family domain

(Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). However, over the past forty years, women began participating in the work domain for many reasons [e.g., woman's desire to work outside of the home (Walker, 2011); movement toward workplace equality (Donnelly et al., 2016); economic necessity of dual-earner households (Bacchus, 2008); and the number of single mothered households (Seltzer et al., 2005)]. Because of these changes, women are on the verge of outnumbering men in the workforce, and there is an increase in the number of men and women who are likely to operate in both the work and family domains simultaneously (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). The possibility of society changing gender perceptions and the growing acceptance of these changes make it important to gain a better understanding of individual's role perceptions and the impact on the work and family domains.

A significantly high proportion of WF studies have been concerned with sex differences (see Eby et al., 2005); however, studies on work–family conflict (WFC) have yielded mixed results. Some studies indicate that women experience higher levels of conflict than men, some studies show men experience higher levels of conflict than women, some studies reveal no sex differences; yet, some studies cannot offer definitive conclusions about sex differences (see Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). This contradiction questions why it has been difficult to pinpoint the differing conflict levels between men and women.

Prior WF studies have investigated sex and gender as antecedents of the work-to-family interface (empirically, Powell & Greenhaus, 2010) and the family-to-work interface (conceptually, Powell & Greenhaus, 2009). Livingston and Judge (2008) examined the interaction of gender role orientation and WFC to predict emotions such as guilt. Findings from Minnotte and scholars (2016; 2013; 2010), as well as, Zvonkovic and other scholars (1994) revealed that beliefs about traditional and egalitarian roles concerning gender can influence how people view and respond to various family dynamics (i.e., parental success, marital satisfaction). Altogether, these findings from previous WF studies have echoed the importance of gender as a lens through which the WF interface is viewed. However, to our knowledge, there have not been any studies comparing sex and gender as moderators of the relationship between WFC and work-related outcomes to determine if sex and gender affect the strength of the relationship the same.

The purpose of this study is examine sex (one of the most frequently studied variables in this research stream, Eby et al., 2005) and gender (possible additional and/or alternative lens) as comparative moderators of the relationship between WFC and job satisfaction (one of the most studied work-related outcomes of WFC). When examining gender from the theories of the psychology of gender, femininity and masculinity may assist or clarify differences. Femininity (Masculinity) is referred to as beliefs about the extent to which a person possesses psychological traits that are associated with traditional roles of women (men) (Spence & Helmreich, 1980). Biernat (1991) found when examining the relationship between femininity and masculinity that as individuals become older, there appears to be less of a distinction between the two constructs. This finding warrants further examination when comparing sex and gender. For this study and per Cook's (1985) suggestion, we use *expressivity* for femininity and *instrumentality* for masculinity. Therefore, we seek to shed possible light on previous inconsistent findings concerning sex as a moderator in the WFC-job satisfaction relationship; in addition to understanding the importance of sex and gender.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Since the purpose of our study is to compare two moderators, sex and gender, and their strength on the relationships, we will provide a very brief theoretical discussion on the relationship between WFC and job satisfaction because this relationship has been well-defined (see Allen et al., 2000; Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). According to Marks (1977) and Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), role theories based on the scarcity perspective argue that when individuals experience interrole conflict when fulfilling the requirements of one role, it makes it more difficult to fulfill the requirements of another role. WFC is a form of interrole conflict, a negative interdependency between work and family roles, that asserts experiences from the work (family) role lead to time constraints, strain, and/or dysfunctional behavior in

the family (work) role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This interrole conflict is a bidirectional relationship between work and family (work-to-family and family-to-work). Work-to-family conflict (WTFC) refers to the work domain interfering with the family domain, and family-to-work conflict (FTWC) refers to the family domain interfering with the work domain. These forms of conflict may influence work-related attitudes and behavior.

Consistent among the three WFC meta-analyses (see Allen et al., 2000; Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998) are the findings that a negative relationship exists between the bidirectional relationship of WFC and job satisfaction, which is “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976, p. 1297). Essentially, individuals who experience work responsibilities interfering with family obligations or family obligations interfering with work responsibilities are less likely to be satisfied on their jobs. As previously tested, we expect that a high degree of these forms of conflict may lead to lower levels of job satisfaction.

Work-to-Family Conflict: Sex and Gender as Moderators

Sex.

The psychology of gender theories of Deaux and LaFrance (1998) propose that individuals develop their gender belief systems based on many internally harmonious notions that they have about gender. Further, the scholars suggest that the factors of the gender belief systems consist of attitudes that men and women acquired from the traditional roles individuals play in society. In addition, the formation of gender identity stems from what individuals learn about male and female’s roles from childhood to adulthood. Gender belief systems consist of gender stereotypes that individuals have certain psychological traits that are similar to members of each sex (Kite, Deaux, & Haines, 2008). Although there are many theories explaining the derivation of the gender belief system, the common theme is that the social building blocks of gender exert a dominant power on individuals’ beliefs about themselves and others.

Social role theory argues that the traditional division of labor in society among men and women shapes gender belief systems (e.g., Eagly, 1987). Following traditional roles, Eagly (1987) proposes that males are historically expected to occupy roles that call more for instrumental or masculine characteristics (e.g., independent, aggressive) and assume responsibilities outside the home (e.g., on average, males during their lifespan are expected to play with action figures and video games, be involved in sports, do yard work), which promote aggression, assertiveness, among other instrumental roles. On the contrary, females are historically expected to occupy roles that call more for expressive or feminine characteristics (e.g., compassionate, understanding) and assume responsibilities inside the home (e.g., on average, females during their lifespan are more likely to play with dolls and dress-up, wash dishes, cook dinner, Eagly, 1987), which foster compassionate, nurturing, among other expressive roles. These distinctive traits to be a man or woman when fulfilling traditional roles or gender stereotypes are often what influence or governs the gender belief systems. Men and women’s expectations began to deviate as a consequence of associated sex differences in social behavior (Eagly, 1987), and are transmitted to future generations and impact the social behavior of each sex (Eagly, 1987).

Guttek, Searle, and Klepa (1991) suggest that on average greater stress is placed on family roles for women than men. Since women and men are expected to adhere to their social roles, we expect women, who subscribe to this notion, are more likely to gravitate to their family obligations (Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh, & Reilly, 1995). We suggest, from a social role perspective, that since women tend to give family roles greater priority, which could possibly lead to women having an issue with work responsibilities interfering with family obligations, the job satisfaction of women is likely to be more negatively affected by WTFC than the job satisfaction of men.

H1: Sex will moderate the relationship between WTFC and job satisfaction such that the negative relationship between work-to-family and job satisfaction will be stronger (more negative) for women compared to men.

Gender – Expressivity.

By contrast, as stated by Markus (1977), self-schema theory proposes that “attempts to organize, summarize, or explain one’s own behavior in a particular domain will result in the formation of cognitive structures about the self or what might be called self-schemata. Self-schemata are cognitive generalizations about the self, derived from past experience, that organize and guide the processing of self-related information contained in the individual’s social experiences” (p. 64). Once individuals begin to believe an idea about themselves (including but not limited to personality traits and interests), there is a strong gravitation for those schemas to be retained and eventually become self-perpetuating because those traits are important to whom they are, what they recall, and what they accept as true about their sense of self.

As an extension of self-schema theory, Markus and scholars (1982) propose self-schema theory of gender as a notion that argues how an individual processes the disparity of gender information, and how gender is represented in the self-identity. Based on self-schema theory of gender and considering individuals who may have developed nontraditional schemas and, thus, have views about men and women that do not conform to traditional views of gender, we abandon the assumption that gender and sex are synonymous, along with the assumption that women are automatically expressive and men are automatically instrumental. Instead, we reason that men may possess expressive traits and may be just as compassionate and understanding as women when juggling work and family.

Presently, the roles in many families have switched possibly altering the views of men and women. For instance, according to recent U.S. Census data, the number of men who have left the workforce entirely to raise children has substantially increased to 550,000 since 1970 because more wives are becoming the major source of income for the home (Torabi, 2014). Further, 626,000 men work part-time jobs while serving as the primary caretaker of children less than the age of fifteen while their wives work (Williams, 2012). Nontraditional situations, such as these, alter the traditional schemas of those involved, including the children. Not only have views of the roles of men and women in families evolved over time, but family structure has also evolved (e.g., domestic partnership). Thus, now more than ever, gender schemas may be skewed toward nontraditional roles and behavior in the workplace could potentially follow.

We suggest from a self-schema theory on gender perspective that since individuals process their gender schema based upon what they believe about themselves, we believe an individual can subscribe to any gender they feel more comfortable with (e.g., caring, compassionate). Due to the changes in the family structure in recent decades, societal expectations of compliance with traditional sex norms or sex stereotypes have relaxed or weakened. Since highly expressive individuals view family as more important, are likely more concerned about the quality of life in the family domain (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010), and give their family roles greater priority, the job satisfaction of highly expressive individuals is likely to be more negatively affected by WTFC than those of individuals lower in expressivity.

H2: Expressivity will moderate the relationship between WTFC and job satisfaction such that the negative relationship between WTFC and job satisfaction will be stronger (more negative) for individuals who are higher in expressivity compared to individuals who are lower in expressivity.

Family-to-Work Conflict: Sex and Gender as Moderators

Sex.

Mannheim (1993) suggests that on average men are more work centered than women. Since men and women are expected to adhere to their social roles, we expect men, who subscribe to this notion, are more likely to gravitate to their work responsibilities (Tenbrunsel et al., 1995). We suggest from a social role perspective that since men tend to give work roles greater priority, which could possibly lead to men having an issue with family obligations interfering with work responsibilities, the job satisfaction of men is likely to be more negatively affected by FTWC than the job satisfaction of women.

H3: Sex will moderate the relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction such that the negative relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction will be stronger (more negative) for men compared to women.

Gender – Instrumentality.

As aforementioned about self-schema theory on gender perspective, by contrast, we believe males and females are no longer expected to follow what was once considered traditional roles. But, women can subscribe to feeling comfortable with being aggressive, assertive, and/or independent as men given the societal expectations have relaxed or weakened for traditional sex norms or sex stereotypes. Based on Powell and Greenhaus's (2010) findings related to expressivity and family importance, we would expect highly instrumental individuals to view the quality of life in work as more important than family, give their work roles greater priority, and be more immersed in work responsibilities and have conflict with family obligations interfering with work responsibilities resulting in the job satisfaction of highly instrumental individuals likely being more negatively affected by FTWC than those of individuals lower in instrumentality.

H4: Instrumentality will moderate the relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction such that the negative relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction will be stronger (more negative) for individuals who are higher in instrumentality compared to individuals who are lower in instrumentality.

METHODS

Population, Procedures, and Participants

To test the hypothesized relationships, we sampled full-time workers in which the U.S. government classifies for statistical purposes as "management, professional, and related occupations" (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010). In 2015, individuals' jobs characterized by this classification represented 38.9% of the U.S. civilian labor force and, women occupied over half of those jobs (51.2%, U.S. Department of Labor, 2016). In Casper et al.'s (2007) review of WF studies over a 24-year period, 68% of the studies used a similar type of sample. Individuals working in this occupational classification tend to have work schedules and work arrangements that are more flexible than others (Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994); however, they are often required to work long hours (Brett & Stroh, 2003), which we believe will produce a wide array of WFC scores, and our reasoning for selecting this type of population.

Since over half of this occupational classification are women, we believe it is possible to collect such a sample, but unlikely that one organization would have enough matched pairs of males and females who meet all criteria. To achieve this goal, we utilized targeted sampling, a type of snowball sampling that requires participants to recruit their acquaintances. While there are a number of biases inherent in snowball sampling (Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004), major benefits are sampling individuals who probably would not be sampled because of the lack of participation; assisting with uncovering characteristics about a population that are not apparent; and minimizing natural barriers that prevent individuals with similar characteristics, traits, and other social factors that otherwise might not have been identified (Lund Research Limited, 2012; Theme Horse, 2016). Snowball sampling is an acceptable form of sampling methodology in social science research (e.g., Eddleston, Veiga, & Powell, 2006; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010), and Wheeler, Shanine, Leon, and Whitman's (2014) study found that student-recruited samples do not lead to different practical conclusions as compared to non-student recruited.

As noted by Korabik et al. (2008), we wanted to limit factors that could possibly influence the existence or nonexistence of sex differences and, thus, alter interpretations in our WF study (e.g., Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). For this reason, Byron (2005) asserts it is important to pay attention to the composition of the sample, and Aguinis (2004) recommends equalizing the groups in the sample while oversampling from the smaller group. Based on the aforementioned information and rationale behind Powell and Greenhaus's (2010) sampling procedure, we sought to identify match pairs too based on similar demographic characteristics [marital status, approximate household income, parental status (number of

children 18 and under living with the respondent), and age range (+/- five years)] to minimize differences and questionable interpretations.

The sampling procedure used for this study was as follows: As one of several options for earning extra credit, business students from the capstone business course at three U.S. universities, a majority at least worked part-time jobs (of which half worked full-time jobs), were asked to recruit their connections [e.g., students with full-time jobs tend to recommend coworkers; students with part-time jobs or no jobs tend to recommend family friends (parents, family, and/or friend’s coworkers)] to participate in the study. Approximately fifty-two percent of the students agreed to participate (166 out of 319). The 166 students were instructed to provide contact information for individuals (not including their spouse or significant other) who worked full-time in managerial, professional, or related occupational positions and lived with “family”, which was operationalized as a significant other, spouse, and/or dependents (children and/or elders). Individuals identified by the students utilizing this procedure were sent an invitation from the principal investigator’s email address (via surveymonkey.com) with the subject line stating who referred them, with information explaining the purpose of the study, and with instructions on where to click the link if they agree to participate and fill out the online survey. To verify participants’ eligibility, we asked questions at the beginning of the survey pertaining to U.S. citizenship, full-time work status (30 hours or more a week), and family living arrangements. Eligible individuals proceeded to complete the survey. To increase the response rate, a reminder was sent one week after the initial invitational e-mail message to those who had not responded or completed all of the entire survey (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables of interest.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS^a

Variables ^b	SEX	EXP	INS	WTFC	FTWC	JS	SITE	AGE	CHILD
EXP	.175								
INS	-.092	.297							
WTFC	-.017	-.011	.098						
FTWC	-.089	-.130	-.047	.500					
JS	-.009	.108	.071	-.316	-.134				
SITE	.000 ^c	-.077	-.097	.053	.054	.017			
AGE	.070 ^c	.015	.003	-.040	.051	.192	.232 ^c		
CHILD	.133 ^c	.048	.089	.047	.025	.054	.141 ^c	.203 ^c	
Mean	.500	4.209	4.059	2.772	2.294	3.727	.962	3.604	1.124
s.d.	.501	.632	.636	.859	.693	.919	.615	1.491	1.146
α		.919	.857	.875	.854	.865			
95% CI for α		.906 to	.834 to	.855 to	.830 to	.842 to			
		.931	.878	.893	.875	.886			

Note. EXP = Expressivity; INS = Instrumentality; WTFC = work-to-family conflict; FTWC = family-to-work conflict; JS = Job Satisfaction; SITE = data collection site; AGE = Age range; CHILD = number of children 18 and under; α = Cronbach Alpha.

^a $n = 364$. Correlations with absolute values of .106 or greater are significant at the $p < .05$ level or better.

^bCoding was as follows: Sex: 0 = “Male,” 1 = “Female”; Age range: = 1 = “18-22,” 2 = “23-28,” 3 = “29-35,” 4 = “36-42,” 5 = “43-51,” 6 = “52-61,” 7 = “62 or older.”

^cGiven sex, data collection site, age range, and number of children 18 and under are categorical variables, Cramer’s V was used to calculate the association between sex and site ($p = 1.000$), sex and age ($p = .939$), sex and child ($p = .376$), site and age ($p < .001$), site and child ($p = .274$), and age and child ($p < .001$). The Cramer’s V reveals that there is a strong association between the site and age and between age and child.

Out of the approximately 1,730 surveys disseminated, 731 (42.3%) complete and usable surveys returned, 364 (49.8%) of which were from matched pairs of 182 men and 182 women. Approximately

fifty percent of the respondents had children (18 years old and under) living with them, 58.2% African American (27.2% White), and 56.3% were married and currently living with a spouse. In terms of the highest educational level completed, 24.5% of those surveyed had a graduate degree; 31.9% had an undergraduate degree; and 40.1% had a lesser degree (e.g., associate). The sample's total household income was as follows: 52.7% made less than \$75,000; 15.1% made between \$75,000 and \$99,999; 31.0% made \$100,000 or more. Our occupational classification sample consist of 16.8% technical, 76.1% professional, and 7.1% executives.

Utilizing Cramer's V because the demographical data is categorical, our intended sampling strategy yielded no sex differences in respondent's approximate total household income ($V = .118, p = .545$), parental status ($V = .133, p = .376$), educational level ($V = .069, p = .893$), and age range ($V = .070, p = .939$). However, men were more likely to be married [61.5% vs. 51.1%, $M_{men} = 2.603 > M_{women} = 2.419, t = 2.105, p = .036, 95\% \text{ CI } (.0121, .357)$] than women (cf. Powell & Greenhaus, 2010).

Measures

The variables were sex, expressivity, instrumentality, WTFC, FTWC, and job satisfaction. All variables had acceptable reliabilities (Nunnally, 1978) and findings are specified in Table 1. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "strongly disagree" to 5, "strongly agree". Higher scores indicated greater levels of the variable of interest. The items for each variable were average to yield a score.

Sex. Sex is coded as 0 for "Male" and 1 for "Female".

Expressivity. We used an 8-item shortened version of the femininity scale of Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI, Bem, 1974), adapted by Zhang, Norvilitis, and Jin (2001). Example items are "I am compassionate" and "I am a gentle person".

Instrumentality. Likewise, we used an 8-item shortened version of the masculinity scale of Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI, Bem, 1974), adapted by Zhang et al. (2001). Example items are "I am aggressive" and "I am an independent person".

Work-to-Family Conflict. Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) developed and validated 9-item scale measuring WTFC. An example item is "My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like".

Family-to-Work Conflict. Similarly, we utilized the 9 item scale measuring FTWC developed by Carlson et al. (2000). An example item is "Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy".

Job satisfaction. An abbreviated 5-item version of the scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) was used to assess employees' overall level of job satisfaction. An example item is "I am very satisfied with my job."

Control variables. Data collection sites, age range, and number of children 18 and under were held constant to minimize their effect on job satisfaction. We controlled for the three data collection sites because they differed across two variables of interest (i.e., marital status, education). To minimize conflicting results due to different life stages or sex differences in job satisfaction (Alzoubi, 2016), we controlled for age. The number of children 18 or under living with a respondent were controlled because an individual's family role may influence his or her work activities (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000).

Data Analysis

The moderation model was tested using Hayes's (2013) PROCESS macro (Model 2) for SPSS. The analysis involved 1,000 bootstrapping samples, 95% confidence intervals, and predictors were mean centered. Aiken and West (1991) suggests that the interaction coefficient should be graphed if significant to allow for proper interpretation.

RESULTS

TABLE 2
REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR MODERATING THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN WORK-TO-FAMILY CONFLICT AND JOB SATISFACTION

Variables	Job Satisfaction			
	R^2	ΔR^2	F	β
Controls				
Site				.0714
Age Range				.0995***
Children				.0579
Independent Variables				
WTFC				-.3077****
Sex				-.0732
Expressivity				.1553*
Interaction Terms				
WTFC x Sex (H1)				.1968
WTFC x Expressivity (H2)				-.2322
	.1745		9.352****	
WTFC x Sex		.0083		
WTFC x Expressivity		.0185**		
Both Interactions		.0250**		

Note. Site = Data Collection Site; Child = Number of Children 18 and under;

WTFC = Work-to-Family Conflict.

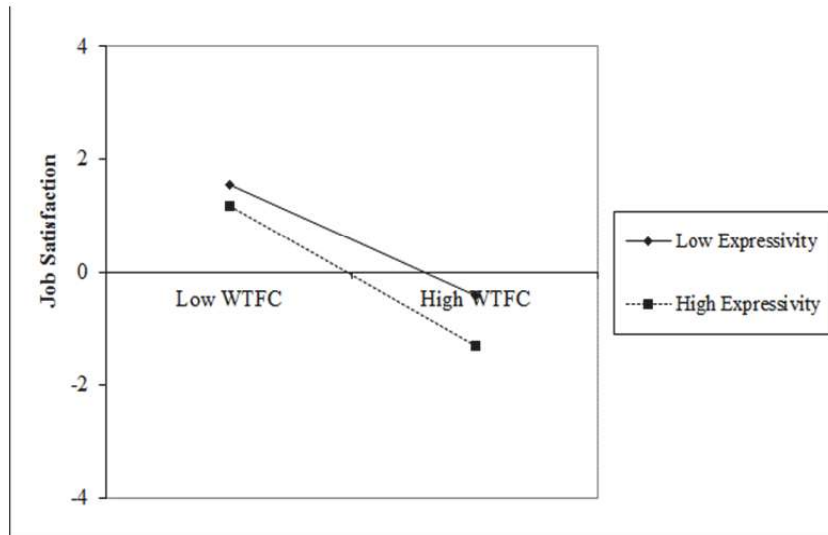
$n = 364$ (182 Men; 182 Women)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .005$; **** $p < .001$.

Table 2 presents the results of the moderating effect of sex and expressivity between the relationship of WTFC and job satisfaction. Like other studies that examined the relationship between WTFC and job satisfaction (cf. Allen et al., 2000; Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), we confirmed that WTFC was negatively related to job satisfaction [not hypothesized, $\beta = -.3077$, $p < .001$, 95% CI (-.4117, -.2037)]. Sex did not moderate the relationships between WTFC and job satisfaction [$\beta = .1968$, $p = .0598$, 95% CI (-.0082, .4018)]; therefore, hypothesis 1 is not supported. In support of hypothesis 2 and depicted in Figure 1, expressivity moderated the relationship between WTFC and job satisfaction [$\beta = -.2322$, $p = .0051$, 95% CI (-.3943, -.0701)]. The moderation by expressivity uniquely accounts for 1.85% of the variance, $F(1, 354) = 7.9407$, $p = .0051$. Other significant effects, expressivity [$\beta = .1553$, $p = .0313$, 95% CI (.0141, .2966)] and age [$\beta = .0995$, $p = .0010$, 95% CI (.0405, .1584)], are positively related to job satisfaction.

Table 3 presents the results of the moderating effect of sex and instrumentality between the relationship of FTWC and job satisfaction. Similar to other studies that examined the relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction (cf. Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), we confirmed that FTWC was negatively related to job satisfaction [not hypothesized, $\beta = -.2093$, $p = .0027$, 95% CI (-.3455, -.0731)]. Sex did not moderate the relationships between FTWC and job satisfaction [$\beta = .0820$, $p = .5505$, 95% CI (-.1878, .3518)]; therefore, Hypothesis 3 is not supported.

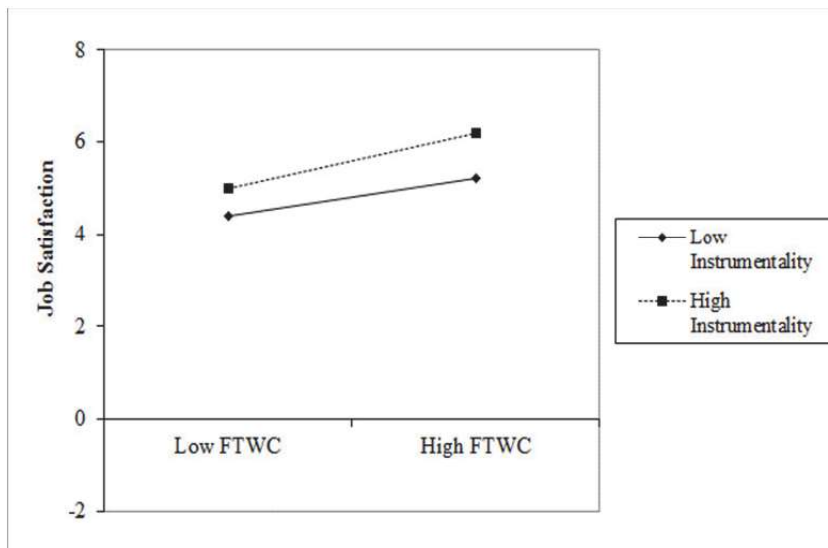
FIGURE 1
GRAPHICAL DEPICTION OF THE MODERATION OF EXPRESSIVITY ON THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-TO-FAMILY CONFLICT AND JOB SATISFACTION



Note. WTFC = work-to-family conflict

Instrumentality moderated the relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction [$\beta = .2316, p = .0431, 95\% \text{ CI } (.0073, .4559)$]; however, we hypothesized a more negative relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction for individuals higher in instrumentality. As depicted in Figure 2, our findings suggest a positive relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction for individuals higher in instrumentality. Thus, while significant findings are present, hypothesis 4 is not supported. The moderation by instrumentality uniquely accounts for 1.07% of the variance in support of job satisfaction, $F(1, 354) = 4.1223, p = .0431$. The significant effects of age [$\beta = .1239, p = .0001, 95\% \text{ CI } (.0618, .1859)$] was positively related to job satisfaction.

FIGURE 2
GRAPHICAL DEPICTION OF THE MODERATION OF INSTRUMENTALITY ON THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY-TO-WORK CONFLICT AND JOB SATISFACTION



Note. FTWC = family-to-work conflict

Treatment of common method variance (CMV)

To minimize biases which stem from using single-source data, we designed our study with recommendations from Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003). We provided detailed information about the precautions taken to assure confidentiality and informed participants that there were no right or wrong answers to obtain honest responses, reduce evaluation apprehension, and socially desirable responses. All variables contained multiple indicators with acceptable reliability. Utilizing a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), we added a single unmeasured latent method factor to our model to allow all items from the other factors to load on it. We calculated the variance explained using the sum of the squared loadings to index the total amount of variation due to the method factor to determine the extent of the influence of CMV. Since CMV in our model (12.9%) is less than Williams et al.'s (1989) capstone of 25%, the method factor appears to account for slight variation in the data suggesting remedies utilized were beneficial for controlling CMV and demonstrate CMV is not an invasive problem.

TABLE 3
REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR MODERATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
FAMILY-TO-WORK CONFLICT AND JOB SATISFACTION

Variables	Job Satisfaction			
	R^2	ΔR^2	F	β
Controls				
Site				.0374
Age Range				.1239****
Children				.0511
Independent Variables				
FTWC				-.2093***
Sex				-.0257
Instrumentality				.0901
Interaction Terms				
FTWC x Sex (H3)				.0820
FTWC x Instrumentality (H4)				.2316*
	.0769		3.6846****	
FTWC x Sex		.0009		
FTWC x Instrumentality		.0107*		
Both Interactions		.0113		

Note. Site = Data Collection Site; Child = Number of Children 18 and under;

FTWC = Family-to-Family Conflict.

$n = 364$ (182 Men; 182 Women)

* $p < .05$; *** $p < .005$; **** $p < .001$.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to expand the understanding of possible reasons for inconsistent findings of sex differences in WF studies. Utilizing social role theory and self-schema theory of gender, we offered comparative hypotheses with sex (male, female) and gender (expressivity, instrumentality), as moderators of the relationship between WFC and job satisfaction to enhance the contribution of previous WF scholars concerning gender (Livingston & Judge, 2008; Minnotte, 2016; Minnotte et al., 2013; Minnotte et al., 2010; Powell & Greenhaus, 2009, 2010; Zvonkovic et al., 1994). Our research suggests that attitudinal identification with gender was more significant than biological classification when examining the relationships under investigation and offers an additional viewpoint of linkages among sex, gender, WTFC, FTWC, and job satisfaction.

If sex and gender were synonymous and society only adhered to traditional roles, we would expect similar findings for hypotheses 1 and 2 and similar findings for hypotheses 3 and 4. Traditional roles of men and women may be antiquated given the changing composition of America's demographics. For our study, individuals higher in expressivity tend to indicate that their job satisfaction has been negatively impacted more by WTFC than those individuals who were lower in expressivity. Yet, we did not have the same findings for women, which demonstrates the impact of gender. Similarly, different findings resulted when comparing men to instrumentality as moderators in the relationship between FTWC and job satisfaction.

Interestingly, for individuals who were higher in instrumentality, the more FTWC they encounter, the more satisfaction they experience on their jobs. This surprising, almost bizarre, finding warrants further investigation in approaching an explanation. We think this possibly speaks to the meaning of work or work centrality (Mannheim, 1975) in one's life, in that work, for some, could provide status and significant purpose. For example, for individuals high in instrumentality, work could become a sanctuary of sorts and/or a place to escape the challenges a person encounters at home (e.g., strained relationship with their partner, difficulty with kids), which makes being at work more enjoyable and/or satisfying. Overall, these unique findings suggest that maybe the traits that an individual identifies with are just as important as what an individual was born.

Equally important, the average score for individuals on the expressive and instrumental scales were 4.209 and 4.059, respectively. Also, noteworthy is that 92% of the respondents in this study averaged greater than 2.5 on both the expressivity and instrumentality scales (akin to androgynous individuals). Further, the household income for our sample was lower as compared to the national household income average (\$79,263, U. S. Census Bureau, 2016). As such, it is quite possible that individuals with a lower total household income may not have the luxury of being only highly expressive women or only highly instrumental men. Rather, the life demands inherent with overcoming financial struggles (e.g., working multiple jobs) and racial challenges (e.g., coping with systemic devaluation) might require one to step into the role of being both expressive and instrumental in fulfilling the needs of one's life demands. Overall, while not the initial focus of this work, these nuances may shed light on the cultural and socioeconomic differences between past homogenous samples of majority individuals and ours, a WF sample consisting of a larger percentage of African Americans.

LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study is not without its limitations. The results are based exclusively on data collected via self-report measures through a survey instrument from one source at one point in time, which may lead to the problem of common method bias, common source bias, and inflated predictive relationships (Avolio, Yammarino, & Bass, 1991). We implemented several procedural and statistical remedies to minimize these potential problems, and our tests suggest a method latent variable explained very little variation in the data. Due to the perceptual nature of this study, survey methodology was appropriate because others' perceptions of employees' attitudes would not be as valid as employees' self-reported information. In addition, we considered that research has failed to demonstrate proof of meaningful inflation with self-reported measures as explained by Crampton and Wagner (1994). Causality should not be inferred and is not suggested. Future research should test the proposed model using longitudinal data collected at several points in time and/or multiple sources.

Additionally, we used a type of snowball sampling, targeted sampling (Watters & Biernacki, 1989), that relies specifically on a sample of individuals and their network to generate a number of individuals to participate in the study. Because of our sampling strategy, we did not randomly select the population thereby possibly introducing the likelihood of selection biases (Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004). However, we utilize a hidden population (i.e., 58.2% African Americans) that has been greatly overlooked (i.e., on average, 72% of participants across WF studies were White, Casper et al., 2007). The desire to increase the percentage of African Americans in a WF study stems from research that suggest African Americans, on average, experience more discrimination in the workplace than other racioethnic groups (Mckay et al.,

2007), which could impact work attitudes and behaviors. Since minorities (e.g., Hispanics, African Americans) are changing the demographics of the U.S. population and shaping the American workforce [i.e., by 2030, approximately 83 million jobs will be occupied by minorities (Vuong, 2013)], it would be interesting to duplicate the proposed model utilizing a comparative sample of Whites, Hispanics, and African Americans, as this would increase generalizability.

Even though our sample is highly androgynous, there are inherent advantages and disadvantages. An advantage of our sample being a majority androgynous is that the individuals flow seamlessly between traditional masculine and feminine roles. For example, in the home, both the husband and the wife may assume responsibility for dinner preparation, homework assistance, and getting the children ready for bed, while simultaneously concentrating on what needs to be done at work. Conversely, a disadvantage of our sample being a majority androgynous is that one may not demonstrate the most effective characteristic at the appropriate time. For example, an individual may be aggressive on the job when a subordinate or coworker needs compassion. This could ultimately affect their working relationship. Further, not knowing when to be instrumental or expressive could be detrimental to a company. Given our 92% androgynous sample, findings may be different for samples higher in one and lower in the other (e.g., higher instrumentality and lower expressivity, lower instrumentality and higher expressivity) and warrants further investigation. Future research is recommended to increase the understanding of how employees' gender and sex might minimize negative experiences of the WF interface, thereby benefiting their quality of life, as well as, their employers.

Implications for Practice

The conceptualization of gender should be as complex as are the capacities for people's unique identities. In the workplace, as with any other place, individuals increasingly adopt and display attitudes about gender that have been created by the environments in which they reside. In the present-day workplace, some males are just as family-oriented as females are expected to be, and many females are just as career-minded as males. This *changing of the guards* is intertwined with individuals' identities (gender role identity) and values (family vs. work). Employers must embrace diversity and tune into individuals' beliefs and deep-level diversities now more than ever. This includes offering training programs for managers and subordinates alike on dimensions of diversity and to combat stereotypes for men and women and the resulting adverse treatment of those whose values and behavior run counter to these stereotypes. Moreover, flexible work arrangements and family-friendly work policies should be universal and not tailored toward traditional sex norms.

All this calls into question the generalizability of other studies which suggest that all males are expected to be instrumental (masculine) and all females are expected to be expressive (feminine) because increasingly fewer people fit neatly into the homogenous groups traditionally studied. Just turning on the nightly news, viewing constant news feeds, and taking the pulse of people via social media will surely show the many changes in the world. As the face of the country (and world) shifts and those that inhabit the workplace transform, so must the generalizations we make about sex and gender, among other things.

In conclusion, our research has made some important contributions to the WFC literature by comparing sex and gender, as two moderators, that society and many scholars have utilized interchangeably. While not the focus of this paper, it was also interesting to capture perspectives of a hidden population. Our findings highlight the importance of understanding the schemas that individuals develop about gender and suggest the need for WF researchers to recognizing differences in employees both within and between the sexes because these differences may warrant varied mechanisms of reducing these types of conflict. Since nontraditional roles are becoming more acceptable among society, utilizing self-schema theory of gender to explain how individuals may develop either traditional or nontraditional views about gender and including different underexamined perspectives, our study provides an initial argument for WF scholars to consider gender as well as sex when examining relationships with WF variables. Overall, it is our sincere hope that this study can further the dialogue of the best means forward of exploring the similarities and, more importantly, the differences between sex and gender.

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