

**Title:** Work-family conflict among Black, White and Hispanic men and women

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### **Abstract**

Are there racial/ethnic differences in work-family conflict? Using a nationally representative survey of Americans, we analyze differences in work-family conflict among Blacks, Whites and Hispanics and then utilize an intersectional approach, disaggregating men and women within each racial/ethnic group. Using structural equation modeling, we find that the usual predictors of conflict—family and work characteristics—have varied effects on work-family conflict among men and women of different racial/ethnic groups. Nonstandard schedules were uniformly linked to increased work-to-family conflict among all respondents, regardless of subgroup. Our findings reveal the merits of intersectional approaches, and suggest the need for theoretical models of the work-family interface that better reflect the experiences of men and women of color.

Although researchers have explored the lives and experiences of White middle-class employees in detail, and an extensive body of literature documents how gender affects work-family dynamics, relatively less attention has been paid to the experiences of people of color, the lower class, or to how race/ethnicity and gender may intersect to shape the work-family interface (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Clauss-Ehlers, 2007). This gap is increasingly problematic. The overall ratio of non-Whites to Whites is projected to change significantly over the next few decades, and Hispanics will replace Blacks as the dominant racial minority group (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Hispanics were 12.5% of the US population in 2000 and are expected to grow to 20% by 2030 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Not only do Whites and non-Whites have different experiences due to racial/ethnic inequality, but they vary in their likelihood of having certain family structures (such as single parenthood, or living with extended family members) and each is often clustered in different types of occupations. Race and ethnicity are associated with cultural variation in family and work norms and in the meanings ascribed to the work-family interface (Hill, Yang, Hawkins, & Ferris, 2004; Spector et al., 2004) and are linked to varying work and family structural conditions.

In this study, we used the National Survey of Religion and Family Life (a nationally representative dataset containing oversamples of Blacks and Hispanics) and structural equation modeling to investigate how perceptions of work-family conflict among employed individuals differ by race/ethnicity and gender. Our approach is informed by theories of intersectionality that highlight the inter-relatedness of gender and race/ethnicity in shaping life experiences and outcomes (Collins, 2000; Holvino, 2008). While studies of White professional or managerial employees have historically dominated the work-family conflict literature, this is gradually changing (see Schieman & Glavin, 2011). Our study contributes to this broadening and reveals

that we still have much to learn about how non-Whites experience work and family. We model work-family conflict two ways and find that, when an intersectional approach is used, standard indicators (such as family and work characteristics) vary in their effect on work-family conflict among men and women of different racial/ethnic groups. Our findings suggest the need to reconsider how we take race/ethnicity and gender into account in our analyses, and also suggest the need for broader theoretical models of the work-family interface that better capture the experiences of men and women of color.

### **Review of the Literature**

Work and family roles can enhance or benefit one another (Barnett & Hyde, 2001), with some scholars investigating how involvement in one role helps individuals perform another role more effectively. More commonly though, work-family researchers study role conflict, when “role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985: 77). When assessing who is likely to experience work-family conflict, directionality matters. Work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict each have different predictors and outcomes associated with them (Bellavia & Frone, 2005), but they also tend to be positively associated with one another (for a review, see Byron, 2005). Overall, juggling multiple jobs or having demanding jobs (such as those with long work hours and nonstandard work schedules) lead to more work-to-family conflict, but greater family demands (such as having young children or being a single parent) lead to more family-to-work conflict (Davis, Pirretti & Almeida, 2008; Nomaguchi, 2009, 2012; Winslow, 2005). Some predictors, such as self-employment, are not as straightforward. Having control over the location and timing of work may help bridge these competing demands (Tuttle & Garr, 2009), but it can also lead to conflict because home and work domains may be blurred (Kirkwood & Tootell, 2008).

## *Gender*

Gender is one of the most commonly studied predictors of work-family conflict (Korabik, McElwain, & Chappell, 2008), and there is an extensive and well-established body of scholarship that shows that men and women do not experience work and family the same way (Grzywacz, Almeida, & McDonald, 2002; Hochschild, 1989). However, there are competing views about how gender operates.

Some scholars, drawing on a rational approach that is rooted in time allocation, argue that men and women have different time and energy investments in work and family, and this leads to differences in work-family conflict (Guttek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). For example, according to this perspective an individual who spends a lot of time at work will have a greater likelihood of the work domain infringing on other areas of life (more work-to-family conflict). Since women continue to spend more time on childcare and routine household tasks than men (Sayer, Bianchi & Robinson, 2004; Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000), we would expect them to have higher levels of family-to-work conflict than men.

However, other scholars think that both men and women feel greater conflict when they are not able to meet the gendered expectations associated with a particular domain (Blair-Loy, 2003; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Guttek et al., 1991). Since family is gendered “female” and employment is considered “male,” women will perceive more work-to-family conflict than men, but men will report more family-to-work conflict than women.

Given the competing perspectives on gender and perceptions of conflict, it is perhaps unsurprising that the empirical evidence linking gender to work-family conflict is mixed. Some studies find no evidence of difference, and some find that gender either predicts or moderates work-family conflict, although not always in the hypothesized direction (Duxbury & Higgins,

1991; Korabik et al., 2008). Additionally, meta-analyses reflect that much of the incongruities in findings may be due to varied samples and use of different measures across studies (Byron, 2005; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005).

Unfortunately, another drawback in our understanding of gender and work-family conflict is that what we know about gender has been largely drawn from theoretical models, such as Frone, Yardley and Markel (1997), which were developed and validated from samples of predominately White, middle class professionals or managers (cf. Gelder, 2012). These models are based on the premise that home and work operate as separate spheres, and are rooted in a class-based “ideal worker” that has historically ill-fitted the values and experiences of women and those of color (Davies & Frink, 2013). In short, there is an implicit household form and a specific gendered division of labor expected: a heterosexual married couple with children. The husband is the primary breadwinner, while the wife’s primary duty is care and maintenance of the household and family but she may also supplement the family income from time to time (Smith, 1993: 52).

As Smith (1993) writes, this “Standard North American Family” operates as a powerful ideological code that permeates throughout our culture, casting other family forms or work-family arrangements as “defective.” In addition to calls that scholars should shift towards more inclusive frameworks, scholars have also begun to realize that we need more nuanced attention to differences among women and men, cross-cultural variations, and how social institutions privilege particular forms of femininity and masculinity (Blair-Loy, 2003; Collins, 2000; Ferree, 2010; Grzywacz, Arcury, Marin, Carrillo, Burke, Coates, & Quandt, 2007; Lopez, 2015; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010; Shows & Gerstel, 2009).

Current scholarship points to the need to refine our understanding of gender effects on the work-family interface in two ways. First, we need to investigate whether our dominant accounts of gender, which spring largely from a White, middle-class perspective, help us understand the work-family experiences of a more diverse array of social groups. Second, while we know that gender intersects with other aspects of identity to shape perceptions and experiences (Browne & Misra, 2003), few studies of work-family conflict take an explicitly intersectional approach in the methods employed (cf. Gelder, 2012). In this study, we take one small step toward addressing these gaps. Using a dataset that includes oversamples of non-White respondents, we first model work-to-family and family-to-work conflict by gender, and then adopt an intersectional approach and examine the predictors of work-family conflict among subgroups of men and women from differing racial/ethnic groups. We find that work-to-family and family-to-work conflict models are indeed not one size fits all.

### *Race/Ethnicity*

While there is a well-established theoretical literature and body of empirical studies in the larger work-family field that discuss how race/ethnicity shapes work and family experiences (see Browne & Misra, 2003; Gerstel & Sarkisian, 2005), not much is known about how race/ethnicity shapes work-family conflict. Empirical analyses are inconclusive, with little agreement between studies (Bellavia & Frone, 2005; Nomaguchi, 2009). Another limitation is that many studies only examine Whites or compare Whites against Blacks or Whites against all “others” (for exceptions, see Nomaguchi, 2012; Roehling, Jarvis & Swope, 2005). Moreover, although theory suggests that an intersectional approach is best, where race/ethnicity and gender are master statuses that intersect and moderate life experiences (Gerstel & Sarkisian, 2005; Browne & Misra, 2003; Collins, 2000; West & Fenstermaker, 1995; Wingfield & Alston, 2012), most work-

family conflict scholars employ approaches that treat these key statuses as independent variables, consider the effects of race/ethnicity and gender as “additive” layers (where each is added to a model in a step-by-step fashion), or interact each with one or two other variables. Since these approaches do not situate individuals within major social and contextual dimensions that shape their experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), they may obscure differences in perceptions of work-family conflict and necessitate a new methodological approach that examines each group separately.

When explaining why there might be differences between racial/ethnic groups in their work and family perceptions, scholars usually focus on structural factors (such as occupation, hours employed per week, and the number of children present in the household). However some also examine if the origins of conflict are cultural in nature, and result from varying attitudes, values, and orientations toward work and family. How individuals view work and family domains may directly affect their perceptions of conflict, but they may also serve as moderators – tempering the relationship between structural factors and work-to-family or family-to-work conflict (see Olson, Huffman, Leiva, & Culbertson, 2013). Research in this vein includes variables such as gender ideology and collectivist versus individualistic orientations in their models (Gerstel & Sarkisian, 2005; Olson et al., 2013).

Although many work-family scholars do include gender ideology in their analyses, the results are mixed. In some studies egalitarian beliefs reduce levels of conflict and traditional beliefs exacerbate conflict (Nomaguchi, 2009), but other researchers find no evidence that gender ideology influences perceptions of work-family conflict (Roehling et al., 2005). Scholars that use collectivist/individualistic orientations as predictors of work-family conflict tend to pursue cross-national comparative work-family conflict research but a few have begun using it to

assess racial/ethnic differences within one country. Olson et al. (2013), for example, studied a non-random sample of White and Hispanic workers within the United States and found that those who reported high levels of individualism—a preference for independence from others and prioritizing individual goals and norms above those of the group—had more strain-based work-to-family conflict than those with lower levels of individualism. While Olsen et al.’s sample was not random and thus cannot be generalized to the wider population, the authors speculate that individuals who perceive themselves as more independent of others may identify strongly with their job since it can afford them a sense of individual accomplishment. By way of contrast, the family domain may feed a sense of accomplishment at the collective or group-level. Olsen et al. (2013) suggest that employees with individualist preferences may allow work pressures to encroach on the family domain (generating perceptions of work-to-family conflict), but keep family strictly bound so that it does not carry over into work and interfere.

While separating racial/ethnic predictors of conflict into structural versus cultural may be appealing, in actuality the divide is rather murky. Minority ethnic groups have often historically been channeled into specific occupations and employment patterns (Tomaskovic-Devey, 1993) and cultural differences between groups can emerge over time. Thus, cultural differences in work and family can arise as group coping mechanisms to enduring structural conditions (cf. Roehling et al., 2005; Taylor, 2002). Race/ethnicity scholars have suggested that instead of casting racial/ethnic families as “deviants” from the “Standard North American Family,” researchers should adopt a “cultural variant” perspective where one family form is not championed over another (Allen, 1978; Farley & Allen, 1987).

Since research on racial/ethnic differences in work-family conflict is still in its infancy (see Roehling et al., 2005; Cole & Secret, 2012), we limit our discussion and subsequent analysis to the two largest minority racial/ethnic groups in the United States, Hispanics and Blacks.

### *Blacks*

Studies of Black families in the United States reveal that legal, economic, and social constraints have led to lower educational attainments (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2012), employment discrimination and tokenism (Carbado & Gulati, 2009; Moss & Tilly, 2001), as well as low wages (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011). As a result of these conditions, black families have a greater likelihood of single parent family structure, more egalitarian beliefs (Roos, 2009; Shows & Gerstel, 2009), and are more reliant and involved in kin-based networks (Gerstel, 2011; Stack, 1974). When these work and family factors are coupled together, scholars argue that Blacks may perceive and experience the work-family intersection differently than Whites. As Collins (1994) writes, “individual survival, empowerment, and identity require group survival, empowerment and identity” (p. 47). Thus, instead of work and family being inherently in conflict, these realms are seen as interdependent and interwoven (Collins, 1994, 2000; Garey, 1999; Lamont, 2000). Since work and family may not be viewed necessarily as distinctly separate spheres, Blacks may have typically more porous boundaries between home and work, suggesting that perceptions of conflict may be minimal. Therefore, Blacks may experience less work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict than Whites. This leads us to our first hypothesis.

*H1: Blacks will perceive less work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict than Whites.*

## *Hispanics*

In the United States, Hispanics are a diverse ethnic group (Sanchez & Jones, 2010) hailing from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central or South America, or other Spanish cultures, with shared cultural and structural elements loosely binding them together, including a collectivist approach to family life (Hofstede, 1984) and traditional gender ideology (Kane, 2000; Roos, 2009). Familism is also common, which is “a cultural value that involves individuals’ strong identification with and attachment to their nuclear and extended families, and strong feelings of loyalty, reciprocity and solidarity among members of the same family” (Marin & Marin, 1991: 13). Like Blacks, Hispanics face employment discrimination (Moss & Tilly, 2001), lower wages and lower educational attainments than Whites (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2012), and have extensive kinship networks (Kamo, 2000; Zambrana, 2011). Although Hispanics tend to have more traditional gender-role attitudes than Whites or Blacks (Kane 2000), Hispanic parents often stress collective forms of obligation over individualism (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994) and Hofstede’s (1983) seminal article indicated that, on average, people in Central and South American countries are less likely to exhibit individualist preferences than people in the US. Therefore, people with this cultural heritage may view the importance of family ties differently than other racial/ethnic groups.

An individualistic orientation coupled with viewing work and family domains as separate spheres, undergirds work-family conflict for Whites but it may be less relevant for other groups. Much like Blacks, Hispanics (as a whole) may have a more collectivist world view than Whites. It seems likely, therefore, that Hispanics will also experience less work-to-family and family-to-work conflict than Whites.

*H2: Hispanics will perceive less work-to-family and family-to-work conflict than Whites.*

However, due to the prevalence of familism and traditional gender beliefs among Hispanics, and more egalitarian gender roles among Blacks, Hispanics and Blacks may not experience the work-family intersection in exactly the same way, and especially with regard to gender.

### ***Intersectionality***

Empirical studies of work-family conflict among Hispanics are scarce and reveal a complex intersection between gender, social class and cultural values (Delcampo & Hinrichs, 2006; Roehling et al., 2005; Taylor, Delcampo, & Blancero, 2009). For example, using an additive approach, Roehling et al. (2005) found that Hispanic mothers experienced significantly more work-to-family and family-to-work conflict than Hispanic fathers, and the gap in perceived conflict between Hispanic parents was larger than that between White mothers and fathers, or Black mothers and fathers. The authors argue that this finding is due to Hispanics holding more traditional gender values than Blacks or Whites, and since Hispanic women have relatively recently entered the American workforce compared to Hispanic men, they will encounter more work-family conflict. Although the authors ascribe their findings to cultural differences, their one measure of culture, gender ideology, was not a significant predictor. Roehling et al. (2005) concluded that some other unexamined aspect of culture was driving their findings.

More recently, Grzywacs et al. (2007) studied Latino immigrants employed in the North Carolina poultry industry. They found that work-to-family and family-to-work conflict levels were extremely low, and that workers carefully “arranged their life” to minimize potential conflicts (p.1125). Nevertheless, immigrant Latinas experienced slightly more work-to-family conflict than men. Much like Roehling et al. (2005), Grzywacs et al. (2007) speculated that

traditional family ideologies placed more daily caregiving tasks on women. Even though all the Latino immigrants worked under employment conditions usually associated with high work-family conflict (such as inflexible schedules, low wages, and tenuous employment contracts), family ideologies influenced how the immigrants interpreted their work-family interface. In short, work demands weighed more heavily on Hispanic women than they did Hispanic men because of gendered expectations about whom has primary responsibility for the family. This leads us to our next hypothesis:

*H3: Work demands predict work-to-family conflict among Hispanic women more than they do among Hispanic men.*

Thus, while cultural values (such as familism) may influence work-family conflict for Hispanics, analyses that fail to examine how race/ethnicity intersects with gender may not capture the full story.

All is not equal among Blacks either. Although Black mothers are more likely to be single parents than in White or Hispanic households (Lofquist, Lugalía, O’Connell, & Feliz, 2012), even married Black mothers are pressured to be “strong black women” who manage the daily running of their households and are the primary wage earners; they are supposed to carry the weight of the family themselves (Barnes, 2008). Unfortunately, there is scant research on the work-family experiences of Black men, particularly among Black men in professional or managerial occupations (Wingfield & Alston, 2012). Although their results were not significant (perhaps due to small sample sizes), Roehling et al. (2005) found that Black men experienced more work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict than Black women. Their inconclusive finding makes sense when paired alongside Barnes (2008). If Black women are socialized that work-family conflict is to-be expected as a normal part of life but Black men are not, then Black

men should perceive more work-to-family and family-to-work conflict than Black women. Thus, although Blacks may view work and family as synergistic domains and perceive less overall conflict than Whites, for Black women the usual predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (such as family responsibilities and work demands) may not be as significant as they are for Black men.

*H4: Family responsibilities and work demands will better predict work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict among Black men than among Black women.*

In this paper, we examine whether the predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict vary among employed men and women of differing races/ethnicities, and contribute to the discussion of whether or not current ways of modeling work-family conflict unwittingly capture the experiences of Whites more than Blacks or Hispanics (Grzywawc et al., 2007; Joplin et al., 2003; Korabik & Ayman, 2003). We focus on how gender and race intersect to shape experiences of work-family conflict while realizing that to develop a fully intersectional account, future work will also have to account for social class, cultural values, and perhaps other factors (for example, immigrant status). Intersectional theory and the limited empirical studies to-date suggest that overall levels of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict and the predictors of conflict will vary substantially among subgroups of women and men.

### **Methods**

Our data come from the National Survey of Religion and Family Life (NSRFL), a 2006 telephone survey of U.S. working-age adults ages 18 to 79 that includes oversamples of African Americans and Hispanics. The NSRFL asked respondents about Americans' family relationships; work-family management; and information about respondents' religious identities, affiliation, and family-oriented programs and services in which people participate through local congregations. The survey cooperation rate (the proportion of units interviewed of the units who

were contacted) was 54%, with higher cooperation rates in the racial over-samples. The response rate (the number of complete interviews with units divided by the number of all eligible units in the sample) was 36%. The response rate for the African-American oversample was 41% and 34% for the Hispanic oversample. Although the overall response rate is low by traditional standards, it compares favorably to national RDD surveys with interview times greater than 15-20 minutes, according to data provided by the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR, 2008a, 2008b; CMOR, 2003). In addition, research suggests there are few differences between high response-rate government surveys such as the CPS or the U.S. Census and RDD surveys with a lower response rates (Keeter, Miller, Kohrt, Groves, & Presser, 2000; Pew Research Center for People and the Press, 2004).

The sample size for the NSRFL was 2,403 (1,531 women and 872 men). But, the effective sample size for this study was 1,481 (861 women and 620 men). Since only employed respondents were asked about their perceived work-to-family conflict or family-to-work conflict, we limited our analysis to those employed at least part-time. We also excluded those who did not have missing data for our dependent variables.<sup>i</sup>

### *Dependent Variables*

We measured work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict, using two scales modified from the Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) negative spillover scales, and treated each as continuous. The work-to-family scale asked how often the following had been true in the last three months: (a) my work kept me from spending enough time with my family, (b) my work made me feel very tired or exhausted, (c) my work made me feel anxious or depressed, or (d) my work kept me from spending enough time on myself ( $\alpha = .736$  in the final sample). The family-to-work conflict scale asked how often the following had been true in the

last three months: (a) my family kept me from spending enough time on my work, (b) my family made me feel very tired or exhausted, (c) my family made me feel anxious or depressed, or (d) my family kept me from spending enough time on myself ( $\alpha = .803$  in the final sample).

Response categories were always, often, sometimes, seldom and never.<sup>ii</sup>

### *Independent Variables*

All respondents in our models were employed. To capture gender and family characteristics, we included dummy variables indicating respondents' marital/cohabiting status and whether respondents' youngest child was either under age six or age six to 18, and gender ideology, which was measured by scaling questions regarding gender beliefs which we adapted from the National Study of Families and Households (i.e., whether respondents agree or disagree that preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother works; Husbands and wives should share household tasks equally; Women are better than men at taking care of young children; The husband should be the head of the family;  $\alpha=.456$  in the final sample<sup>iii</sup>; we reverse coded the second item) (Sweet & Bumpass, 2002; see review by Davis & Greenstein, 2009). Scores ranged from 1 to 4, with a higher score indicating a more traditional gender ideology and a lower score a more egalitarian ideology. We also included five sets work-related dummy variables: (a) professional or managerial occupation vs. all others, (b) work less than 40 hours per week and work 40 to 49 hours per week (the reference category is work 50 or more hours per week) (Schieman & Glavin, 2011), (c) whether the respondent held two or more jobs, (d) nonstandard work schedule (including any evening or night work, weekend work, rotating shifts, or regular overnight travel) vs. standard schedule, and (e) self-employment.

We used household income and educational attainment as measures of human capital. Household income was originally an ordinal variable but we treated it as continuous. Each

response category was mutually exclusive and included a range of household income, one of which was selected by respondents to represent their household income. We substituted the midpoint value of the income range selected for household income and used Pareto's curve (Parker & Fenwick, 1983) to set the last category midpoint to \$180,000. Our sample's median household income was between \$35,000 and \$50,000, which is comparable to the national 2005 estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau (DeNavas-Walt et al. 2006). Educational attainment was measured dichotomously and highlights effects of lower educational attainment (*a high school degree or less=1, other=0*). Additionally, we included variables for age and age-squared since work-family conflict may be curvilinear over the life course (see Grzywacz, Almeida, & McDonald, 2002). We also included a dichotomous self-reported measure of whether or not their parents were born in the United States. Respondents were also asked to self-identify which racial/ethnic group they belonged to<sup>iv</sup> and whether they were male or female.

### *Analytic Strategy*

Statistical analyses were performed using a combination of bivariate correlations, ANOVAs, multiple regressions and multi-group comparisons in structural equation modeling (SEM) with M-Plus ver 6.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 2011). Preliminary analyses required that we examine the study variables for normality and potential outliers. We also used bivariate correlations to ensure the lack of multicollinearity between the independent variables. Next, ANOVAs allowed us to test for differences in the independent and dependent variables across gender and ethnic groups. Table 1 provides unweighted summary statistics for the independent variables. In Table 2 we explored who experiences work-family conflict.

Since work-to-family and family-to-work are often reciprocally related (see Byron, 2005), in subsequent analyses we show the interaction between the two forms of conflict. We

first weighted the data and ran multi-group structural equation models (SEM) to examine the unique significant associations within each group. First, a model was created with the full sample to establish that the theoretical model fit the data overall well. Next, the model was run separately by gender (with Black and Hispanic treated as predictors; White was a reference category). Non-significant paths for men and women were fixed to zero to improve model fit and parsimony while retaining any significant paths. Next, the remaining shared associations across men and women were constrained to be equal in a step-by-step process to test whether the model significantly worsened with each constraint (see Figure 1). We then repeated the same process, and separated the sample by gender and race/ethnicity (White women, White men, Black women, Black men, Hispanic women and Hispanic men) (see Figure 2).

## **Findings**

Table 1 depicts bivariate descriptive statistics for our unweighted sample, and Table 2 shows unweighted means for work-to-family and family-to-work conflict by race/ethnicity and gender. While there were many significant differences among women, White, Black, and Hispanic women were equally likely to have two or more jobs (see Table 1). Likewise, Black men, White men, and Hispanic men varied on a number of measures, but there were no significant racial/ethnic differences among men in the number of jobs they had, self-employment, whether they had a school-age child, and their likelihood of working between 40 and 49 hours per week.

We did find partial support for a rational theoretical approach that draws on time allocation. Although we did not find that men experienced greater work-to-family conflict than women, women (of all race/ethnicities) did report more family-to-work conflict than men (see

Table 2). While we do not have measures of family involvement, it is likely that our sample conforms to dominant patterns and that the women in our sample did more of the household and caregiving tasks than the men. Therefore, it makes sense that family activities interfered with women's employment. The lack of gender difference in work-to-family conflict puzzled us until we understood what might be occurring with our intersectional models (see below).

When we analyzed racial/ethnic differences in conflict, we found that there were significant differences between Blacks, Hispanics, and Whites in work-to-family conflict: Hispanics experienced significantly less work-to-family conflict than Whites and Blacks (see Table 2). There were no significant group differences in family-to-work conflict. This finding supports Hypotheses 2, and lends some credence to theoretical arguments that familism leads Hispanics to regard the importance of family ties and relationships differently than Whites or Blacks. We did not find support for Hypothesis 1 (that Blacks would experience less work-to-family conflict than Whites), but our descriptive results show that Blacks had significantly different levels of work-to-family conflict than Hispanics.

Finally, our descriptive findings also show that we cannot understand work-family conflict levels through either a gender or racial/ethnic lens. We must look at their intersection as well as the directionality of conflict. As Table 2 shows, although women in our sample had higher overall levels of family-to-work conflict than men there were no significant differences between Black, Hispanic, and White women in how much family conflicted with employment. For women, gender may matter more than race/ethnicity for this type of conflict. Since studies have repeatedly found that Black men are more egalitarian and Hispanic men more traditional, it also makes sense that Black men would experience more family-to-work conflict than Hispanic

men. However only when gender and race/ethnicity were intersected did this finding emerge (there were no significant racial ethnic differences in family-to-work conflict).

### *Gender Models*

Figure 1 shows the results of perceived work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict for women and men. Each constraint was added one at a time in a stepwise fashion. Lastly, the covariances between the dependent variables were also constrained to be identical across groups. None of the constraints significantly worsened the models stepwise or overall and the gender model was a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2_{(55)} = 63.49$ ,  $p > .05$ , CFI = .97, RMSEA = .014, SRMR = .022).

For work-to-family conflict, work-related variables emerged as predictors among men. Those working less than 40 hours had lower perceived conflict than those working 50 or more hours per week, and men who worked a nonstandard work schedule reported more work-to-family conflict than those with a standard schedule. Race/ethnicity and gender ideology also mattered though: men with more egalitarian gender ideology beliefs had higher levels of reported conflict, and Hispanic men were less likely to experience conflict than White men. Taken together, these significant variables accounted for 12.8% of the variability in work-to-family conflict.

Among women, work-related variables were also significant predictors of work-to-family conflict. Women with a managerial/professional job, who worked a nonstandard schedule, or had one job reported more work-to-family conflict. Those working fewer than 50 hours per week also perceived less family-to-work conflict than those working 50 or more hours per week. The last significant predictor was income: Women with lower incomes reported more perceived

work-to-family conflict than women with higher incomes. Overall, the significant predictors of work-to-family conflict explained 18.6% of the variability among women.

Among men, those with a nonstandard schedule had significantly more family-to-work conflict than those with a standard schedule. Among women, those with a nonstandard work schedule experienced more family-to-work conflict, as did those who had children under the age of 18. Likewise, women whose parents were born in the United States also reported more family-to-work conflict than those whose parents were born elsewhere. Together, these variables explained 8.6% of the variability in family-to-work conflict among women, and 2.3% of the variability among men.

### *Intersectional Models*

Figure 2 illustrates the various associations between the independent and dependent variables (based on the results of the final model). Our first SEM model simply used the significant associations observed in each group. This model was a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2_{(135)} = 126.04$ ,  $p > .05$ , CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .012, SRMR = .027). This model showed a number of associations that were only observed in certain groups, which provided support for an intersectional approach.

As discussed above, we constrained the associations shared across groups to test whether doing so worsened the models. Each constraint was added one at a time in a stepwise fashion. Lastly, the covariances between the dependent variables were also constrained to be identical across groups. None of the constraints significantly worsened the models stepwise or overall ( $\Delta\chi^2_{(25)} = 24.07$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The final model remained a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2_{(160)} = 150.11$ ,  $p > .05$ , CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .012, SRMR = .030). Thus, any association between variables shared

across groups can be assumed to be equivalent. Model estimates for each outcome in each group are provided in table 4.

Our results exhibited several broad patterns across racial/ethnic groups (see Table 4). Similar to our gender models, and in line with previous literature (see Byron, 2005) that shows work-to-family conflict is highly correlated with family-to-work conflict, both types of work-family conflict were positively related to one another. Moreover, these effects existed for each subgroup. Second, non-standard schedules significantly predicted conflict in our models. Among men and women of all race/ethnicities, those who worked a nonstandard schedule reported more work-to-family conflict. This result was the only uniformly significant independent variable across all of our intersectional models. Nonstandard schedules were also positively associated with family-to-work conflict for many groups (the exceptions were Black women and Latinas). Third, while family variables did not consistently predict family-to-work conflict, work characteristics generally predicted work-to-family conflict regardless of race/ethnicity. For example, working fewer hours was associated with less work-to-family conflict among Whites and among Blacks but not among Hispanics. Outside of nonstandard work schedules, there were no consistent results between Hispanic women and men.

Figure 2 also reveals the merits of adopting an intersectional approach, where the predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict vary at times by race/ethnicity *and* gender. The percentage of work-to-family conflict variance explained for each subgroup varied tremendously, and ranged from 8.5% among Hispanic women to 25.8% among Black men. Likewise, the percentage of family-to-work variance explained in our SEM models differed across groups and ranged from 1% among Black women to 18.5% among Black men.

The most notable similarities between race/ethnicity and gender groups existed between White women and Black men. For both groups, having children under age 18 living in the household was positively associated with family-to-work conflict, while work-to-family conflict was higher among those working 50 or more hours per week, who had a professional/managerial occupation, or among those who had lower incomes. There are fewer, but notable, similarities between White men and Black women for work-to-family conflict. For White men and Black women, those who worked fewer hours had lower work-to-family conflict and, of course, working a nonstandard schedule had a positive effect on work-to-family conflict.

In contrast to the findings for work-to-family conflict, the predictors of family-to-work conflict exhibited greater variation by gender among Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics. Although having children under age 18 living in the household significantly predicted family-to-work conflict among Black men and White women, children did not emerge as a significant predictor of family-to-work conflict for the other groups. Likewise, Black men who were married or cohabiting had lower work-to-family conflict than other Black men, but marriage/cohabitation was positively associated with family-to-work conflict among Black women.

In support of Hypothesis 4, more work and family characteristics significantly predicted work-to-family and family-to-work conflict among Black men than among Black women: Only two variables (hours worked and nonstandard work schedules were linked to work-to-family conflict for Black women, but five variables were associated with the same type of conflict among Black men (age of child, marital status, occupation, hours worked, and nonstandard work schedule). Likewise, only one work or family variable significantly predicted family-to-work conflict among Black women (marital status), compared to three variables among Black men (age of child, occupation, and nonstandard work schedule). We had weaker support for

hypothesis 3. Hispanic women only had one additional significant work characteristic emerge as a significant predictor of work-to-family conflict than Hispanic men.

Demographic and work predictors varied at times as well. For example, age had a significant curvilinear relationship to work-to-family conflict among White women, where perceptions of conflict increased with age and then declined later in life, but the reverse pattern significantly predicted family-to-work conflict among Black men. And, working in a professional or managerial occupation was only positively linked to family-to-work conflict among Black men. Having parents born outside the United States was negatively related to family-to-work conflict among Hispanic men and women. Since many of the countries that Hispanics tend to originate from are collectivistic (Hofstede, 1984) and acculturation may slowly weaken racial/ethnic cultural norms, it makes sense that having parents born outside the United States would therefore emerge as a significant predictor of family-to-work conflict among Hispanics. Unfortunately, it is difficult to interpret our findings that Black men had lower levels of conflict in both directions if their parents were born in the United States, and that White women had significantly lower levels family-to-work conflict if their parents were born elsewhere without a firm idea of where their parents were born. We discuss this limitation further in our conclusion.

## **Discussion**

This study examines work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict among employed women and men from different racial/ethnic groups. Our results, based on an analysis of the intersection of race and gender, indicate that there is merit in adopting an intersectional approach, and that there may be cultural and ideological differences that shape perceptions of work-family conflict among racial/ethnic groups.

Our descriptive findings show that levels of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict varied by gender, race/ethnicity, and by the intersection of the two. Moreover, two divergent patterns were present. For work-to-family conflict, race/ethnicity may matter more than gender. There were significant race/ethnic differences among Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics, and these differences were also present when we looked among men and among women. One explanation for this finding is familism. Hispanic men and women may be more likely to protect family time and relationships from employment intrusions, and as a result may have lower rates of work-to-family conflict. Secondly, there were fairly uniform gender differences in family-to-work conflict. Men had lower levels than women and with one only exception (Black men had higher levels of family-to-work conflict than Hispanic men) there were no racial/ethnic differences among women or men. These findings make sense when viewed through a rational theoretical perspective, where spending more time in the family domain results in work conflict. Since Hispanic men often have more traditional gender values than Black men, they may report less family-to-work conflict.

When we moved beyond descriptive analyses, and examined whether or not the predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict varied among men and women by race/ethnicity-- we again found evidence that that an intersectional approach is needed. When we treated race/ethnicity as a predictor and split our models by gender, we found only one significant racial/ethnic difference: Hispanic men were less likely to experience work-to-family conflict than White men. Moreover, our SEM results showed that that when other factors were controlled for, race/ethnicity did not significantly predict work-to-family or family-to-work conflict among women. Instead what emerged was the usual story told in the work-family

conflict literature: family demands predicted family-to-work conflict, and work-demands influenced work-to-family conflict.

However, when we intersected race/ethnicity and gender, the classic predictors of conflict – work and family characteristics – differentially affected women and men within racial/ethnic groups in our sample. For example, our model for employed White women confirms findings from past research that has mainly examined White, middle class employees: the presence of children increased family-to-work conflict and work characteristics predicted work-to-family conflict (Byron, 2005). Employed White women and Black men who had school-aged children had more family-to-work conflict than their counterparts who had no children living in the household, but we did not find the same effect among Hispanic women or men, or among Black women. For these three groups (Hispanic women, Hispanic men, and Black women), theory and existing empirical studies indicate why this could be the case. For Hispanics, familism may urge them to protect their family relationships from work intrusions. And, the pressure to “do it all” and be self-reliant may normalize feelings of conflict among Black women. Taken together, our findings suggest that gender and race/ethnicity do indeed operate as master statuses that intertwine and influence how work and family life are experienced and perceived.

Our results also suggest that adopting a traditional analytic approach not only can mask within-group differences, but it can inadvertently create a biased narrative. With only two exceptions, overlapping Figure 1 against Figure 2 reveals a startling pattern: the significant pathways in Figure 1 for work-to-family and family-to-work conflict closely mirror the experiences of White men and White women in Figure 2 and differ sharply for other groups. Thus, our findings lend support to what a few scholars (Collins, 1994, 2000; Garey, 1999; Gelder, 2012; Hofstede, 1984; Lamont, 2000; Smith, 1993) have long suspected: we need to re-

examine whether or not perspectives rooted in separate spheres ideology resonate the same for all groups.

### **Conclusion**

Although scholars are increasingly examining the experiences of those with fewer economic resources (see Schieman & Glavin, 2011), the experiences of non-Whites remain under-researched in the work-family field (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Clauss-Ehlers, 2007). And while gender is often treated as a predictor (Korabik et al. 2008), we know less about how gender intersects with other aspects of identity to shape perceptions about work-family conflict (Gelder, 2012; Grzywacs et al., 2007). To address this gap, this study expanded upon the work begun by Roehling et al. (2005), who used an additive approach and investigated variations in work-family conflict between men and women of the same racial/ethnic group. Instead, we adopted an intersectional approach, and investigated the effects of race/ethnicity and gender on work-to-family and family-to-work conflict across and within groupings.

Given the increasing necessity of having workers deviate from a standard schedule in a 24/7 economy, our finding that nonstandard schedules were associated with increased work-to-family conflict among all respondents raises cause for concern. Additional supports for nonstandard workers (regardless of gender or race/ethnicity) are sorely needed, and would improve the work-family lives of workers.

Another contribution of our study is that model similarities among Hispanic and Black women in our sample provide some support for arguments that Black women view work and family as synergistic and that higher levels of familism may exist among Hispanics (Delcampo & Hinrichs, 2006; Roehling et al., 2005; Taylor, Delcampo, & Blancero, 2009), especially for those whose parents were born outside the United States. Since Black women have had a longer

history of juggling employment with family responsibilities than White women (Goldin, 1977), each group may not regard the work-family intersection in the same way. However, further research is necessary to know for sure whether this is the case.

Likewise, similarities between employed White women and Black men may indicate that these groups are more likely to encounter work and family as competing domains. It may also signal that Black men do not have the same privilege as White men of being relatively free from family-based demands while at work. On average, our analysis supports the argument that White men better fit ideal worker ideology, where men are primarily responsible for paid employment and work and family operate as separate spheres; Black men do not seem to experience the same buffer from conflict over managing work and family responsibilities. Thus, our findings suggest the need to fund more research on the specific constraints faced by persons of color in American workplaces -- both academic research and policy-oriented research aimed at eliminating barriers to promotion and the retention of employees of color. In particular, it seems that Black men may need the same kinds of support to facilitate a good work-family balance that White women need.

This study is not without limitations. We were not able to investigate how work-family conflict varied by Hispanic heritage (e.g. Puerto Rican, Mexican, etc.), nor were we able to include measures of family support, the number of extended family members living in the household, work support, boundary-spanning activities (such as working at home), or schedule control in our models. We also were not able to assess whether or not perceived conflict was greater if one versus both parents were born outside of the United States, whether the perceived conflict levels were influenced by which parent was born elsewhere (mother or father), nor did we know which country the parents were born in. Further analyses with more fine-tuned measures are needed. Much like Roehling et al. (2005), our results indicate that we also need

better measurements of cultural ideologies and more analyses of how ideologies may temper perceptions of how family intersects with work (cf. Olson et.al., 2013). Gender ideology is not a good predictor of conflict in either direction (cf. Roehling et al., 2005).

Since individualism is closely tied to a separate spheres ideology which historically developed out of white middle class men's work and family experiences (Davies & Frink, 2014), one possible future research direction could be to investigate individualistic-collectivist values and work-family conflict perceptions. While there is a growing body of comparative nation-level scholarship (see Billing, Bhagat, Babakus, Srivastava, Shin, & Brew, 2013), we know less about collectivist-individualistic values and work-family conflict among men and women of different racial/ethnic groups within the United States (cf. Olsen et al., 2014). Directly assessing these values may help us understand the underlying mechanisms that could be driving work-family conflict differences.

Another avenue to explore may be religious participation. In the United States, religious institutions are a primary location for the perpetuation of familism, and thus may serve as a proxy for this manifestation of family ideologies (Chrisitano, 2000; Edgell, 2005; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). Perhaps more research into the role of religious institutions and how participating in religious communities shapes perceptions of gender roles and family responsibilities could demystify racial/ethnic differences in levels of work-family conflict, and how it is experienced. For example, a recent study found that religious beliefs operate as a buffer against the negative effects of work-to-family conflict for Blacks (Henderson, 2014).

Scholars are beginning to question whether or not dominant work-family theoretical models reflect diverse voices (Grzywacs et.al, 2007; Spector et.al, 2004). Since treating race/ethnicity and/or gender as independent variables is relatively commonplace in the work-

family literature, our findings raise concerns that scholars may be incorrectly specifying models predicting work-family conflict. Our research suggests that existing theory could be strengthened by incorporating insights generated by an intersectional approach and reconceptualizing how core explanatory factors such as education, income, and work and family characteristics work together with race/ethnicity and gender to shape work-family conflict.

We argue for more integration between scholarship on work-family conflict and the wider work-and-family field and urge researchers to carefully consider the theoretical implications of analytic strategies. Specifically, we echo the voices of others (Ferree, 2010; Collins, 2000; Grzywacz et al., 2007; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010; Shows & Gerstel, 2009) in advising work-family scholars to be greater attuned to biases that may be built into current ways of thinking about the work-family intersection. By examining how the predictors of work-family conflict can vary by subgroup, this paper takes a first step towards a greater understanding of work-family conflict. But, much work remains to be done to increase our understanding of how experiences of work and family are shaped by gender and race/ethnicity in the United States and how these experiences, in turn, influence perceptions of conflict.

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<sup>i</sup> In the full sample, 732 respondents were not employed at the time of the survey. The employed sample had higher income, was more likely to be white, less likely to be Hispanic, more likely to work full time, and was more likely to have a college degree than the full sample (results available upon request). Our employed sample does include some respondents who have missing household income data (147 cases). We ran the final constrained model using only participants with complete income data and the resulting model still had the same significant effects and remained a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2_{(158)} = 147.97$ ,  $p > .05$ , CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .012, SRMR = .030). Moreover, we ran t-tests to compare those who are missing income data to those who are not on all of the variables in the model (predictors and the outcomes) and found minimal differences. Those missing income data were significantly lower in work-to-family conflict ( $p < .05$ ), and were less likely to be college graduates or have gone to graduate school ( $p < .05$ ).

<sup>ii</sup> There were only modest differences in the Cronbach alpha scores across subgroups. For the family-to-work conflict scale: White men (.694), White women (.777), Black men (.689), Black women (.744), Hispanic men (.710), and Hispanic women (.781). For the work-to-family conflict scale: White men (.758), White women (.830), Black men (.749), Black women (.793), Hispanic men (.802) and Hispanic women (.807).

<sup>iii</sup> Although our gender ideology scale had a low alpha for our sample, it was not very different from the alpha reported by Roehling et al. (2005) in their study of racial/ethnic differences in work-family conflict (their alpha coefficient for gender ideology was .50).

<sup>iv</sup> Respondents to our survey were asked to self-classify and choose the race with which they most closely identify; there were no multi-racial response options and we did not ask a follow-up question about ethnicity. Most likely, our measure captures differences in ethnicity and culture as well as different experiences in interacting with the major organizations and institutions (schools, employers, the government) that people encounter on a daily basis.