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# Mitigating Family-work Conflict and Cognitive Absenteeism for Sustainable Work Environments

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## Abstract

Family problems slow down a person's ability to concentrate at work. This problem is commonly seen among working women. Therefore, this study focuses on working. The PERMA model of well-being is used as a mediator to explain how good psychological well-being can help reduce mental distraction. The research focus is on understanding how family duties disturb work involvement and how well-being helps women handle these pressures and support a sustainable work environment. The findings are supported by the Conservation of Resources(COR) theory and the broaden-and-build model, which explain how stress reduces personal resources and how positive emotions help build them. The quantitative method was used and information was collected from 596 working women through an online questionnaire. The results show that family-work conflict has a strong effect on cognitive absenteeism [β = 0.359]. Although all PERMA dimensions showed partial mediation. Only engagement and accomplishment were statistically significant, while meaning was not. The findings help in creating a sustainable work environment because they relate to Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 8. They show that improving employee well-being and supporting work–life balance can reduce cognitive absenteeism. The study also provides practical suggestions for professionals and organizations to improve sustainability.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Absenteeism, Decent Work, Family-work Conflict, Sustainable Work Environments, Well-being.

## Introduction

In today's work life, the boundary between work and personal life is not clearly defined. In this situation, family pressure often affects employees' ability to work, making it harder for them to carry out their job duties properly (1). This leads to mental distraction and cognitive disengagement at work, creating a serious problem for both employees and organizations (1, 2). Even this become worsen after the COVID-19 pandemic came, because of a sudden shift to flexible work arrangements and constant online connection made it harder for employees to separate work from family life, which increased family-work conflict (3). Managing family pressure is important because it improves employee well-being and helps in building a sustainable workforce (4). Earlier studies show that Family work conflict (FWC) is connected with higher stress, lower job satisfaction and more psychological problems, which often lead to absenteeism and intentions to leave the job (5). One major outcome of FWC is cognitive absenteeism, where employees are physically present at work but mentally distracted or emotionally disconnected (6). Research shows that cognitive absenteeism reduces attention, decision-making ability and overall job performance and it negatively affects productivity and workplace safety (7). Studies also report that productivity loss due to cognitive absenteeism can be up to 1.5 times higher than loss caused by traditional absenteeism (8). In sectors such as healthcare and education, where many women are employed, cognitive absenteeism caused by work–family conflict increases errors and reduces service quality (9, 10). These problems reduce employee morale, increase turnover and raise organizational costs (11). Therefore, promoting employee well-being is very important to reduce the negative effects of family–work conflict and cognitive problems. Previous studies show that well-being helps reduce the psychological stress caused by work-family conflict (12, 13).



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Instead of viewing well-being in a general way, the PERMA model, which includes positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment, provides a clear framework to understand how well-being can reduce the negative effects of FWC (14). Research suggests that higher well-being reduces the harmful impact of FWC on mental health and thinking ability, which in turn lowers cognitive absenteeism and improves work engagement (15). Based on this, the present study examines the effect of family–work conflict on cognitive absenteeism and studies the mediating role of employee well-being using the PERMA model. This research focus is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 8, showing the importance of well-being in creating a productive and sustainable workforce.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions: How does family–work conflict influence cognitive absenteeism? How do the PERMA dimensions of well-being mediate this relationship? And how does reducing family-work conflict and cognitive absenteeism support a sustainable work environment and contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 8?

## Family Work Interference

Research on family-work conflict (FWC) consistently shows that it negatively affects employees' psychological well-being, job satisfaction and performance. More studies indicate that higher levels of FWC are associated with increased psychological distress and lower satisfaction with both work and life. For instance, it has been demonstrated that when employers' obligations are not fulfilled, family-work conflict is increased, resulting in greater psychological distress and reduced life and family satisfaction (16). Similarly, family-work conflict is found to reduce job satisfaction, although an unexpected increase in life satisfaction is associated with work-family conflict (17, 18). Burnout is frequently identified as a key mechanism linking work demands to both directions of conflict and negative outcomes. It is shown that heavy workloads lead to burnout, which intensifies both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict, reduces work and life satisfaction and increases the risk of turnover (19). The experience of family-work conflict is also shaped by gender and socioeconomic status (SES). It is found that women from higher socioeconomic backgrounds experience greater work-to-family interference, while women overall report higher levels of family-to-work conflict (20). In addition, research shows that family-to-work conflict directly affects job performance, while work-to-family conflict mainly influences overall well-being (13). Modern work arrangements and global disruptions make this problem more complex. Mobile and remote work increases both types of conflict and also raises turnover intentions (21). The COVID-19 pandemic further increased these conflicts and reduced the sense of meaningful work, especially through work-family conflict (22). From this, it is clear that addressing family-work conflict is very important because reducing it can lower employee turnover, improve long-term productivity and support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 8.

## Cognitive Absenteeism

Cognitive absenteeism (CA) occurs when employees are present in the workplace, but mentally, they do not focus much on the tasks they perform. As such, it affects their ability to do the work effectively. Unlike physical absenteeism, cognitive absenteeism cannot be seen and can be expressed cognitively through lack of memory, lack of attention and lack of concentration (23). Research indicates that stress related to one's work is an important factor contributing to cognitive absenteeism. High levels of demands and pressure to deliver more and faster can exhaust mental energy, leading to higher levels of cognition (24). If workers experience higher levels of stress associated with work, research has found that workers tend to commit more errors and lack accuracy in their work, indicating higher levels of cognitive absenteeism (3, 25). The other factor that plays an equally significant role is health stress. In recent times, health stress has also been an important factor. Research has found that workers who experienced the effects of COVID-19 reported higher levels of cognitive failures and job underperformance and higher levels of desires to quit job roles (26). This indicates that workers' mental disengagement at workplaces can be caused not only by stress from work settings but also from physical health issues. The working environment also plays an important role in determining the levels of cognitive absenteeism in organizations (27, 28). When workplace violence,

abuse and bullying arise, more cases of mental failures have been observed. In this case, workplace exhaustion acts as an intermediate variable. When such conditions persist in an organization, it can result in loss of mental strength in workers due to persistent bad work conditions. From previous study, it can be observed that cognitive absenteeism at work settings is an issue that can be caused by stressors related to health and work environment factors (27). Institutions should work on addressing absentee rates, as it is a crucial factor in ensuring the sustainability of employees' mental health and it is related to Sustainable Development Goal 3.

## Family Work Conflict and Cognitive Absenteeism

Studies show that family-to-work interference (FIW) plays an important role in cognitive absenteeism. FIW leads to more cognitive mistakes and lowers workplace safety performance (9, 10). Research also shows that family interference with work harms safety and job performance because it increases work-related exhaustion and cognitive failure (11). It is reported that FIW, especially in high-risk jobs, reduces safety performance, showing the strong effect of family demands on workplace safety (29). Some studies have also looked at the role of personality traits in this relationship. The findings show that traits like neuroticism and conscientiousness are related to cognitive failures and work–family conflict further increases these effects (30). This suggests that individual differences affect how family-to-work interference influences cognitive functioning at work.

## Well-being and Family Work Conflict

Well-being helps people stay calm and focused even when family pressure increases (14). It has a positive effect on family relationships in the work context and the PERMA dimensions of well-being are closely linked to reducing family-work conflict. Each part of the PERMA model helps in lowering family-related problems at work. For example, positive emotions help people build personal strength, which allows employees to manage stress from both work and family responsibilities (31). This idea matches the broaden-and-build theory, which explains that positive emotions increase resilience and reduce conflict between work and family roles (32). Engagement, which means being deeply involved in work, also helps employees handle family pressure better. Studies show that family-work conflict often leads to job dissatisfaction, so higher engagement can reduce these negative effects (18). Supportive relationships at work and at home also help in reducing family conflicts. Research shows that positive relationships provide emotional support, reduce conflict between work and family roles and help maintain better boundaries between work and family life (33). In addition, it is highlighted that meaning reduces strain because meaningful engagement in one domain creates satisfaction and lowers feelings of frustration or resentment that contribute to family-work conflict (17). Finally, high levels of accomplishment contribute to a positive identity, as feelings of competence and mastery help employees feel more in control of both work tasks and family responsibilities (34).

## Well-Being's Role in Reducing Psychological Distress

Recent research identifies well-being as a key mediator between psychological factors and distress, with the PERMA model playing a central role in reducing negative outcomes. Strong evidence for this relationship is provided by studies (12, 35, 36). It is shown that PERMA influences grit and well-being, with positive emotion explaining the relationship between grit and well-being (35). Research also shows that PERMA acts as a mediator between achievement and life satisfaction, which means achievement, improves life satisfaction through PERMA-based well-being (36). Other studies report that positive emotions, engagement and meaning, which are key parts of the PERMA model, help in reducing psychological distress (12). Research also highlights that self-compassion, compassion for others and flourishing improve well-being and reduce psychological distress (11, 13). It is further shown that flourishing mediates the relationship between religious faith and psychological distress, indicating that spirituality protects mental health through well-being (11). Although many studies agree that well-being plays a mediating role, their focus is different. For example, one study reports high levels of depression, anxiety and stress among Ukrainian students due to cultural and contextual factors, without studying well-being as a mediator (37). Other studies take a wider social view by linking positive functioning at work with organizational behavior and job satisfaction (38).

It is also reported that meaning-focused coping helps reduce the negative effects of distress on physical health (39). From these findings, it is clear that well-being, especially through the PERMA model, is very important for reducing psychological distress. Existing studies also show that family pressure increases cognitive failure at work, while PERMA-based well-being helps reduce these negative effects.

Therefore, the objectives of the present study are as follows: (a) to explore the effect of family-work conflict on cognitive absenteeism, (b) to explore the role of the PERMA dimensions as a mediator in the relationship between family to work conflict and cognitive absenteeism and (c) to investigate the effect of the reduction of family-work conflict and cognitive absenteeism on the sustainable working environment.

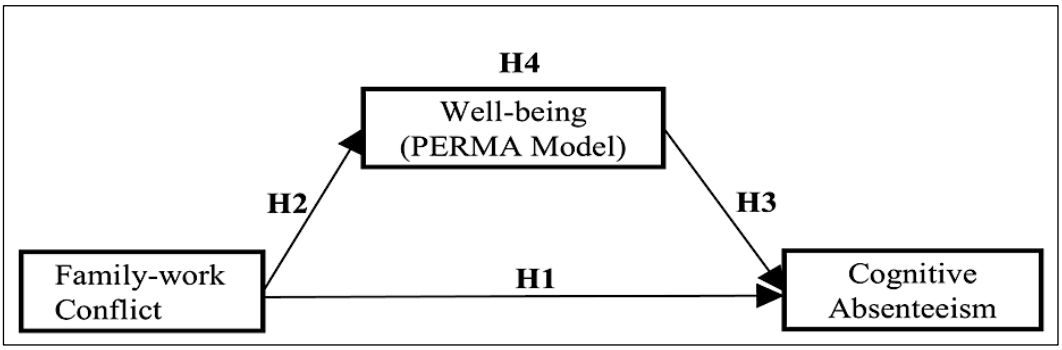


**Figure 1:** Conceptual Model

## Hypothesis Formulation

Research has consistently shown that stress within the work environment can negatively affect an individual's cognitive functioning. It has been found that family interference with work (FIW) lowers safety performance by increasing cognitive failures, indicating that family-related stress reduces employees' focus and effectiveness (29, 30). When family duties interfere with work, reduced attention, forgetfulness and mental fatigue are more likely to be experienced by employees.

Based on this evidence, the first hypothesis (H1) is proposed:

**H1:** Family-work conflict has a positive influence on cognitive absenteeism.

Studies suggest that conflict between family and work roles adversely affects individual well-being. It was found that job and life satisfaction are reduced, while job satisfaction alone was reported to decrease in study (17, 18). These findings suggest that family-related stress negatively affects psychological well-being. Based on the PERMA model, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is proposed in this study, stating that family-work conflict reduces well-being across its five dimensions.

**H2:** Family-work conflict has a negative influence on Positive Emotions **(H2a)**, Engagement **(H2b)**, Relationships **(H2c)**, Meaning **(H2d)** and Accomplishment **(H2e)**.

Psychological well-being has been shown to reduce everyday cognitive failures such as memory lapses, distractions and attention errors (40). Building on this evidence, the present study examines how the elements of well-being in the PERMA model are associated with lower cognitive absenteeism, leading to Hypothesis 3 (H3):

**H3:** Positive emotions (**H3a**), Engagement (**H3b**), Relationships (**H3c**), Meaning (**H3d**) and Accomplishment (**H3e**) each have a negative influence on cognitive absenteeism.

Some components of the PERMA model have been found to reduce psychological distress among nurses experiencing insomnia, indicating that well-being can lessen the cognitive effects of stress (12). From this, the present study examines how PERMA components mediate the relationship between family-work conflict and cognitive absenteeism, leading to Hypothesis 4 (H4):

**H4:** Positive emotions (**H4a**), Engagement (**H4b**), Relationships (**H4c**), Meaning (**H4d**) and Accomplishment (**H4e**) collectively mediate the relationship between family-work conflict and cognitive absenteeism. The relationships among variables are shown in the conceptual framework (Figure 1), while Figure 2 gives a view of PERMA components with family-work conflict and cognitive absenteeism.

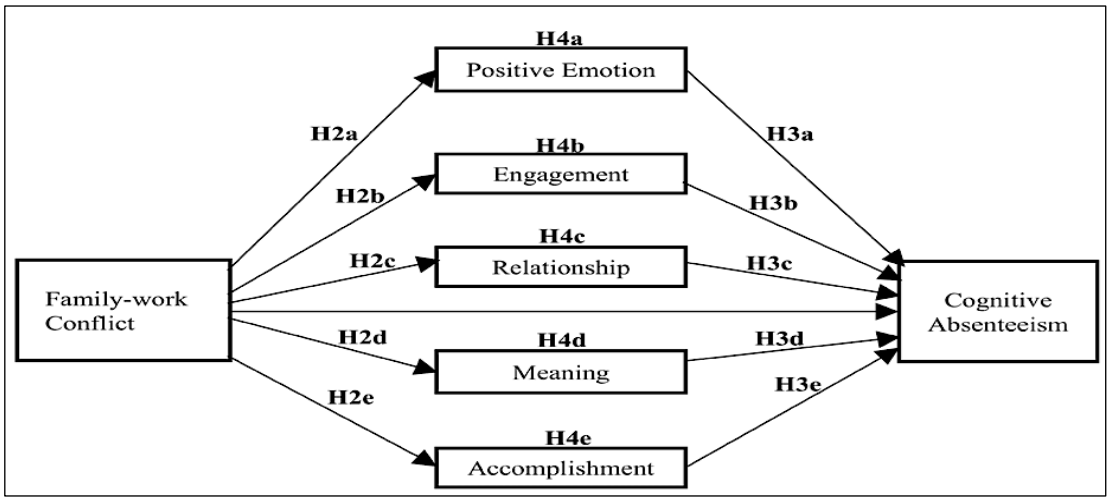


**Figure 2:** Conceptual Model with Individual Constructs of PERMA

# Methodology

## Procedure

A total of 596 working women from different organizations across India took part in this study. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire. The questionnaire was shared through Google Forms because it is easy to use, low-cost and helps collect responses quickly (41). To reduce closeness effects, the questions for each variable were grouped separately. Data were collected during April and May 2025. A non-probability sampling method was used, which included convenience sampling and snowball sampling (42). At the beginning of the survey, participants were informed about the purpose of the study. They were also assured that their responses would remain private and anonymous. Only working women were allowed to participate and responses that did not meet this condition were removed. Out of 623 responses received, 596 were valid and included in the final sample, giving a response rate of 95.67%. Participants were also told that there were no right or wrong answers and those honest responses were important. All results were analyzed together without identifying any individual.

## Sample Size

Sample size refers to the number of people needed to carry out a study. It depends on whether the total population is known or not. Here, the total population was not known, so a non-probability sampling method was chosen. For this type of sampling, researchers suggest having at least 15 participants for each question in the survey (43). Since this study used 35 questions, at least 525 participants were needed. The study collected data from 596 participants, which is more than the minimum required number.

**Table 1:** Demographic Profile

| Age | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 18-30 | 155 | 26.00 |
| 31-45 | 167 | 28.03 |
| 45-60 | 274 | 45.97 |
| Total | 596 | 100 |
| Marital status | | |
| Un married | 293 | 49.1 |
| Married | 303 | 50.9 |
| Total | 596 | 100 |
| Occupational Sectors | | |
| Private Employee | 286 | 47.98 |
| Government Employee | 107 | 17.96 |
| Self-Employed | 203 | 34.06 |
| Total | 596 | 100 |
| Education Level | | |
| Schooling | 113 | 18.95973 |
| Under Graduate | 268 | 44.96644 |
| Post Graduate | 155 | 26.00671 |
| Ph.D | 60 | 10.06711 |
| Total | 596 | 100 |

## Instrumentation

The survey was designed to match the research objectives. It was divided into three parts. The first part included a screening question to make sure that only working women participated and responses from men and non-working individuals were removed. The second part contained four questions to collect demographic details (Table 1). The third part included 35 items used to measure seven variables. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "5 - Strongly Agree" to "1 - Strongly Disagree." The questions were adapted from previous studies, with small wording changes to suit this research. Family-Work Conflict was measured using five items taken from earlier research (44). The PERMA Profiler for well-being, with five variables and three items each (15 in total), was adapted from the past study (45). Cognitive Absenteeism was assessed using 15 items, grouped into three variables with five items each, found from the past study (6). To check content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by five academic experts. A pilot study with 35 working women was also conducted to test face validity, following the guidelines of a previous study (46). This helped improve the structure of the questionnaire and the revised version was then shared with the main study participants.

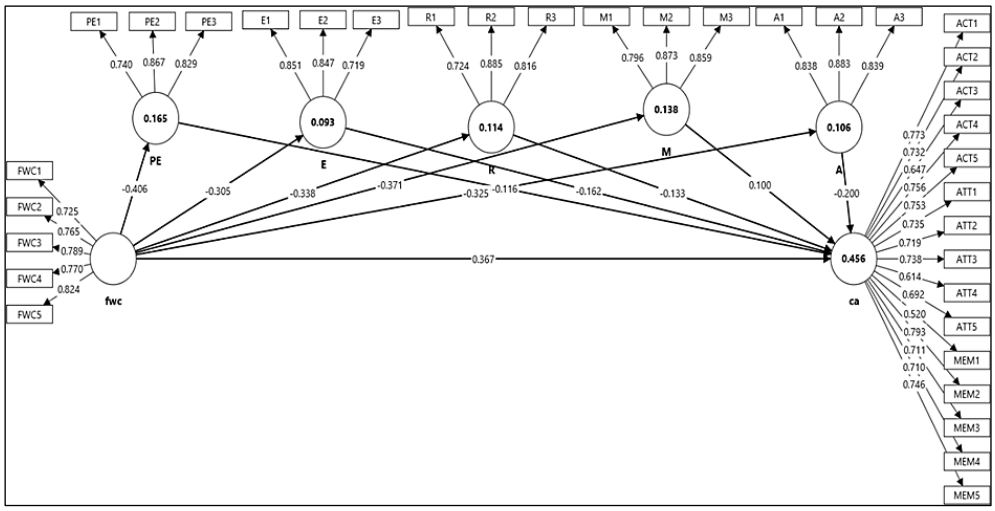


**Figure 3:** Structural Equation Modelling of Lower Order Construct

## Data Analysis

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed in this study to test and validate the framework. PLS-SEM was appropriate for this study, as it allows simultaneous analysis of multiple dependent relationships and assessment of latent variables. It also enabled examination of both lower- and higher-order dimensions of the PERMA model. Results of these relationships are shown in Figures 3 and 4. The analysis began with the measurement model to ensure reliability and validity (Table 2). Reliability means consistency over time, while validity ensures the tools measure what they intend in Table 3. After this, the structural model was tested to examine the research hypotheses (Tables 4 and 5), showing the strength and direction of the key relationships. SmartPLS 4.0 software supported the analysis, helping build and refine the model.

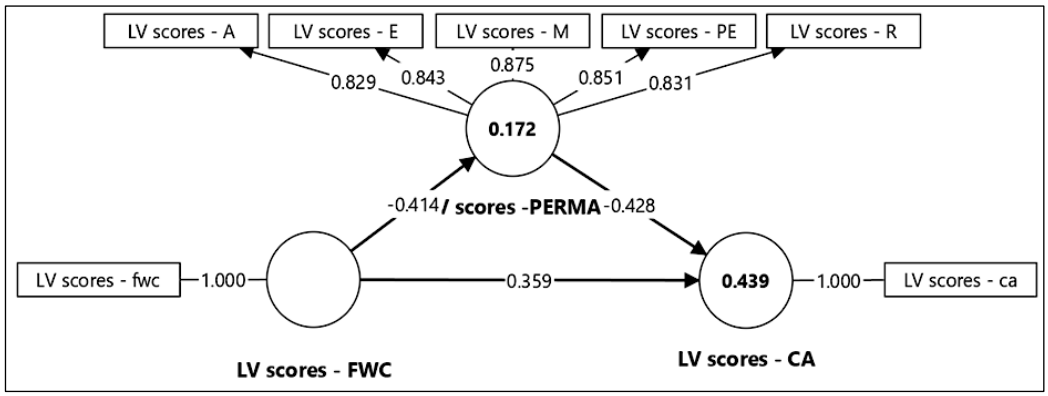


**Figure 4:** Structural Equation Modelling of Higher Order Construct

# Results

## Results of the Measurement Model

The confirmatory factor analysis part of this study showed that the proposed model achieved convergent and discriminant validity (Table 3). First, all constructs show Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values greater than the 0.50 threshold for social science research (47). The study's AVE values were between 0.601 and 0.729. Second, the Composite Reliability (CR) values for the constructs ranged from 0.849 to 0.939, which exceeds the 0.70 threshold; thus, we now have evidence of internal consistency reliability (48-50). Lastly, Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.738 to 0.929, all above the acceptable limit of 0.60 (Table 2). The proposed model validated the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and internal consistency reliability was achieved. The square root of the AVE for all constructs was greater than inter-construct correlations, confirming distinct constructs (43). The proposed relationship also showed no issue with multicollinearity, as the maximum VIF value was 2.803, below the cut-off of 5 (50, 51). Three procedural remedies were further employed to control common method bias (CMB). The inventory items were presented randomly, the participants were instructed explicitly to minimize ambiguity in their responses and they were assured anonymity. The results indicated that these measures were highly effective in controlling for CMB. Harman's Single Factor Test suggested that the first factor accounted for less than 50% of the variance for the overall model; this result alleviated serious concerns with method variance. Further, the results showed that inter-construct correlations for the lower-order model were low to moderate, confirming that the CMB control procedures were effective and indicating no CMB. The lower-order model also showed a good fit with SRMR = 0.064 [cut-off = 0.08], d_ULS = 2.556 and d_G = 1.062 (where SRMR gives the average absolute correlation residual and d_ULS and d_G measure inequality between observed and reproduced covariance matrices). The higher-order model likewise showed good fit indices [SRMR = 0.047, NFI = 0.953], supporting a good fit for the hierarchical model (43).

**Table 2:** Measures, Reliability and Convergent Validity

| Variable | Item | Factor loading | Cronbach alpha | Composite Reliability (rho_a) | Composite Reliability (rho_c) | Average Variance Extracted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | FWC1 | 0.725 | | | | |
| Family Work Conflict | FWC2 | 0.765 | | | | |
| | FWC3 | 0.789 | 0.834 | 0.839 | 0.883 | 0.601 |
| | FWC4 | 0.770 | | | | |
| | FWC5 | 0.824 | | | | |
| | PE1 | 0.740 | | | | |
| Well being | PE2 | 0.867 | 0.750 | 0.781 | 0.854 | 0.662 |
| (PERMA Profiler) | PE3 | 0.829 | | | | |
| | E1 | 0.851 | | | | |
| | E2 | 0.847 | 0.741 | 0.783 | 0.849 | 0.653 |
| | E3 | 0.719 | | | | |
| | R1 | 0.724 | | | | |
| | R2 | 0.885 | 0.796 | 0.801 | 0.880 | 0.711 |
| | R3 | 0.816 | | | | |
| | M1 | 0.796 | | | | |
| | M2 | 0.873 | 0.796 | 0.801 | 0.880 | 0.711 |
| | M3 | 0.859 | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A1 | 0.838 | | | | |
| | A2 | 0.883 | 0.814 | 0.816 | 0.890 | 0.729 |
| | A3 | 0.839 | | | | |
| | MEM1 | 0.520 | | | | |
| Cognitive Absenteeism | MEM2 | 0.793 | | | | |
| | MEM3 | 0.711 | | | | |
| | MEM4 | 0.710 | | | | |
| | MEM5 | 0.746 | | | | |
| | ATT1 | 0.735 | | | | |
| | ATT2 | 0.719 | | | | |
| | ATT3 | 0.738 | 0.929 | 0.932 | 0.939 | 0.507 |
| | ATT4 | 0.614 | | | | |
| | ATT5 | 0.692 | | | | |
| | ACT1 | 0.773 | | | | |
| | ACT2 | 0.732 | | | | |
| | ACT3 | 0.647 | | | | |
| | ACT4 | 0.756 | | | | |
| | ACT5 | 0.753 | | | | |

## Results of the Structural Model

The model provided strong evidence for the proposed hypotheses connecting FWC, PERMA dimensions of well-being and cognitive absenteeism. The model explained a moderate variance in cognitive absenteeism [$R^2$ = 0.439; adjusted $R^2$ = 0.437] and a weaker but significant variance in PERMA [$R^2$ = 0.172]. The $Q^2$ values also confirmed predictive relevance, with CA showing a medium effect [0.286] and PERMA a small effect [0.167]. As predicted in H1, FWC had a significant positive impact on CA [β = 0.359, t = 9.898, p < 0.001], indicating that greater inter-role conflict increases cognitive withdrawal from work. Supporting H2, FWC showed a significant negative relationship with PERMA [β = -0.414, t = 10.258, p < 0.001] (Table 4). Each PERMA dimension, positive emotions (H2a), engagement (H2b), relationships (H2c), meaning (H2d) and accomplishment (H2e), was negatively affected by FWC, confirming the adverse effect of family-related stressors on well-being. H3 was also supported, with PERMA showing a significant negative effect on CA (β = -0.428, t = 10.351, p < 0.001). Among the dimensions, positive emotions (H3a), engagement (H3b), relationships (H3c) and accomplishment (H3e) showed a significant reduction in cognitive absenteeism. However, meaning (H3d) was not found to be significant [p = 0.054]. This suggests that short-term psychological resources help reduce mental disengagement at work, while a sense of meaning does not directly reduce cognitive withdrawal.

**Table 3:** Discriminant Validity (52)

| | Accomplishment | Engagement | Meaning | Positive Emotion | Relationship | Cognitive Absenteeism | Family work conflict |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accomplishment | **0.854** | | | | | | |
| Engagement | 0.63 | **0.808** | | | | | |
| Meaning | 0.652 | 0.685 | **0.843** | | | | |
| Positive Emotion | 0.623 | 0.641 | 0.691 | **0.814** | | | |
| Relationship | 0.6 | 0.626 | 0.68 | 0.616 | **0.811** | | |
| Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.508 | -0.489 | -0.448 | -0.506 | -0.482 | **0.712** | |
| Family work conflict | -0.325 | -0.305 | -0.371 | -0.406 | -0.338 | 0.536 | **0.775** |

The mediation results of hypothesis (H4) show that PERMA partially mediate the effect of family-work conflict on cognitive absenteeism [β = 0.177, t = 6.58, p < 0.001]. The elements, specifically positive emotions, engagement, relationships and accomplishment, showed a significant effect in reducing cognitive absenteeism, while meaning showed an insignificant effect (Table 5). This means that when employees feel emotionally strong, engaged in their work, have good relationships and feel proud of their achievements, cans supress the effect of family-work conflict on their mental focus. Doing Meaning work alone will not help in this relationship. From the results, it is obvious that the model works well and clearly explains how FWC affects cognitive absenteeism through PERMA-related well-being. These findings show that workplaces should support work–life balance and employee well-being to reduce mental distraction at work.

**Table 4:** Direct Relationships in the Proposed Model

| Path | Original sample | Sample mean | STDEV | T values | p-values | $f^2$ | VIF | Hypo | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family Work Conflict – Positive Emotion | -0.406 | -0.408 | 0.039 | 10.31 | 0 | 0.198 | 1 | H2a | Supported |
| Family work conflict – Engagement | -0.305 | -0.307 | 0.042 | 7.297 | 0 | 0.103 | 1 | H2b | Supported |
| Family work conflict – Relationship | -0.338 | -0.34 | 0.04 | 8.51 | 0 | 0.129 | 1 | H2c | Supported |
| Family work conflict – Meaning | -0.371 | -0.373 | 0.037 | 10.077 | 0 | 0.160 | 1 | H2d | Supported |
| Family work conflict – Accomplishment | -0.325 | -0.326 | 0.04 | 8.208 | 0 | 0.118 | 1 | H2e | Supported |
| Positive Emotion - Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.116 | -0.115 | 0.047 | 2.465 | 0.014 | 0.010 | 2.393 | H3a | Supported |
| Engagement – Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.162 | -0.163 | 0.051 | 3.154 | 0.002 | 0.021 | 2.329 | H3b | Supported |
| Relationship – Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.133 | -0.134 | 0.041 | 3.272 | 0.001 | 0.015 | 2.195 | H3c | Supported |
| Meaning – Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.1 | 0.099 | 0.052 | 1.927 | 0.054 | 0.007 | 2.803 | H3d | Not Supported |
| Accomplishment - Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.2 | -0.199 | 0.05 | 3.971 | 0 | 0.034 | 2.126 | H3e | Supported |
| LV scores of Family work conflict - LV scores of Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.359 | 0.358 | 0.036 | 9.898 | 0 | 0.191 | 1.207 | H1 | Supported |
| LV scores of Family work conflict - LV scores of PERMA | -0.414 | -0.414 | 0.040 | 10.258 | 0 | 0.207 | 1.000 | H2 | Supported |
| LV scores of PERMA - LV scores of Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.428 | -0.428 | 0.041 | 10.351 | 0 | 0.270 | 1.207 | H3 | Supported |

Notes: STDEV: Standard Deviation, T Values: Test statistics, p- values: Probability values, $f^2$: Effect size, VIF: Variance Inflation Factor.

**Table 5:** Mediation Relationship of PERMA in the Proposed Model

| Relationship | Original sample | Sample mean | STDEV | T values | p- values | Hypo | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family Work Conflict- Positive Emotion - Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.047 | 0.047 | 0.02 | 2.399 | 0.016 | H4a | Supported |
| Family Work Conflict - Engagement – Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.049 | 0.05 | 0.017 | 2.996 | 0.003 | H4b | Supported |
| Family Work Conflict - Relationship – Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.045 | 0.045 | 0.015 | 3.103 | 0.002 | H4c | Supported |
| Family Work Conflict - Meaning – Cognitive Absenteeism | -0.037 | -0.037 | 0.02 | 1.886 | 0.059 | H4d | Not Supported |
| Family work conflict - Accomplishment - Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.018 | 3.692 | 0 | H4e | Supported |
| LV scores of Family work conflict - LV scores of PERMA - LV scores of Cognitive Absenteeism | 0.177 | 0.178 | 0.027 | 6.58 | 0 | H4 | Supported |

Note: STDEV: Standard Deviation, T Values: Test statistics, p-values: Probability values, Hypo: Hypotheses.

# Discussion

The purpose of this empirical study was to understand influence of FWC on cognitive absenteeism among working women and how PERMA model of well-being, helps reduce this problem. These connections are proven by the results. The result of hypothesis (H1) clearly shows that when family and work pressures increase, employees experience more stress and become mentally distracted at work. This finding match earlier studies on stress and mental overload and is also linked to SDG 3, which focuses on mental health and well-being (7, 53). This problem can be reduced when organizations take steps to lower FWC, as employee well-being improves and job performance and productivity increase over time (54). The results from Hypothesis H2 and its sub-parts (H2a-H2e) show that FWC negatively affects employee well-being. Increased family pressure reduces all PERMA dimensions of well-being. This result supports the Conservation of Resources theory, which explains that continuous stress slowly drains a person's emotional and mental strength (55). Recent study also show similar results, where poor work-life balance reduces employee well-being and productivity (56). These findings are connected to SDG 8, which focuses on decent work and growth. From this, it is clear that family-related pressure harms employee well-being (57). When discussing Hypothesis H3, the results show that PERMA well-being has a negative effect on cognitive absenteeism. This means that when PERMA-based well-being increases, cognitive absenteeism decreases. Most PERMA dimensions, such as

positive emotions, engagement, relationships and accomplishment, help employees stay mentally focused at work. This shows that good well-being protects employees from mental distraction. These results support the Broaden-and-Build theory, which explains that positive emotions help people think clearly, solve problems and become mentally stronger over time (32). This idea also supports SDG 8, because a positive and healthy workforce is more productive. However, meaning (H3d) did not show a strong effect on cognitive absenteeism. This suggests that meaningful work is important for long-term satisfaction, but it may not reduce mental distraction immediately (58). This shows the need for simple and practical well-being support at work. Moving to the mediation results, Hypothesis H4 gives more clarity. Most PERMA dimensions partly explain how FWC leads to cognitive absenteeism. Among the PERMA dimensions, engagement and accomplishment showed the strongest effects. This means that when family pressure reduces employees' involvement in work and their sense of achievement, mental distraction increases (59, 60). By improving engagement and a sense of accomplishment, organizations can reduce mental distraction, lower employee turnover and improve productivity over time. Meaning did not act as a mediator, which shows that having a sense of purpose alone may not be enough to reduce mental withdrawal during stressful situations.

## Implications

The results obtained from the study have vital implications for HR managers. First, from the findings, it's clear that FWC leads to an increase in cognitive absenteeism. This indicates that mental distraction isn't a weakness for an organization. However, it arises from the pressures of the family and a lack of balance between work and life (61, 62). By understanding this fact, HR managers need to adopt more supportive and understanding working policies for employees, especially working mothers. The second implication for the study's findings includes the role of the PERMA model for the better well-being of employees. By adopting the PERMA method of well-being, employees will benefit from staying mentally concentrated at work. Organizational managers need to adopt the well-being strategy of the PERMA model. This strategy includes adopting work policies that benefit the PERMA model. This includes adopting flexible working policies that benefit work. Examples of such policies include the adoption of hybrid working schedules, which boost work engagements. Family leave and daycare services boost work-positive emotions. Hybrid working allows employees to work from home. Family leave provides an extra period for new mothers. These policies help employees balance work and life. These policies boost work-related mental health. Many employees will be encouraged to work with such an organization. The third implication for the research findings includes the increase in work engagements. HR managers need to adopt activities that boost work wellness. Activities such as work job enrichment, work rewards, work team-building activities and work-related goals boost work engagements. Boosting work engagements will ensure better work-related health. Activities such as work enrichment and work-related rewards will help the employees feel a sense of achievement. Implementing such policies will ensure a healthy work environment. Employee Assistance Programs work to ensure that work-related emotional problems, work-related stresses and work-related family-related problems don't hinder work. Eventually, the fourth implication for the research findings includes the involvement of work-related meanings. Meaning, by itself, will not ensure a decrease in work-related cognitive distractions. This implies that work-related policies need to adopt more work-friendly policies rather than work-related ones. This implies that adopting work-related policies, such as work wellness, will ensure better work-related mental concentration. Eventually, all goals under Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 8 are supported by this research or study. Reducing work-related conflicts will ensure that work-related health issues related to work concentrations will boost work productivity.

# Conclusion

This research did an empirical analysis of the relationship between family-work conflict (FWC), cognitive absenteeism (CA) and the PERMA model of well-being. The results show that FWC has a strong negative effect on employees' mental focus at work and reduces all five PERMA dimensions of well-being. The findings also show that well-being helps protect employees from cognitive absenteeism. Most PERMA dimensions, especially

engagement and accomplishment, showed a strong negative relationship with cognitive absenteeism and acted as important mediators between FWC and cognitive absenteeism. This means that employees who feel engaged in their work and experience a sense of achievement are better able to stay focused at work even when they face family pressure. Therefore, the findings clearly show that when organizations reduce family–work conflict and strengthen PERMA-based well-being, they can lower cognitive absenteeism, improve employee performance and support the achievement of SDG 3 and SDG 8.

## Limitations and Future Directions of the Study

Although this study makes useful contributions, it also has some limitations and gives directions for future research. First, this is a cross-sectional study, where data were collected at one point in time. Because of this, it is difficult to clearly say which factor causes the other. Future studies that follow longitudinal method can better explain how FWC and well-being change over time. Second, the study used self-reported responses, so some participants may have given socially acceptable answers, even though efforts were made to reduce this issue. Future research can use data from different sources to improve accuracy. Third, this study used only quantitative methods. Adding qualitative methods, such as interviews, can help understand how cultural differences affect the way people experience FWC and how they handle it. Fourth, this study focused only on SDGs 3 and 8, which limited the discussion to well-being and work-related outcomes. Future studies can connect FWC and CA with other Sustainable Development Goals.

## Abbreviations

CA: Cognitive Absenteeism, FIW: Family Interference Work, FWC: Family-Work Conflict, PERMA: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment, PLS-SEM: Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling, SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals.

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## Author Contributions

Reshma C: research idea, writing- introduction, literature review, methods, manuscript draft, follow ethical guidelines, Aruna Polisetty: data analysis, discussion, implications, conclusion, review, corrections, revision, supervision. Aruna Ploisetty also guided Reshma C throughout the study and ensured that ethical standards were followed. Both authors approved the final version of the paper and take full responsibility for the work.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors state that they have no conflicts of interest related to this study.

### Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study were collected using a structured questionnaire. No human participants were involved as subjects; respondents were only involved in providing responses to the questionnaire. Due to confidentiality and ethical considerations, the data are not publicly available. However, the authors are committed to providing access to any supplementary materials or sources upon reasonable request.

## Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

Generative AI tools were used solely to enhance the clarity, grammar and language quality of the manuscript. The AI assistance did not influence the study design, data analysis, or interpretation of results.

## Ethics Approval

This research was carried out as part of management research. Participants were only asked to fill out a questionnaire and no sensitive or personal information was collected. Because of this, approval from an ethics committee was not required. A structured questionnaire was used, with informed consent included. Participation was entirely voluntary and no one was forced into taking part.

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