

Impact of Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict on the Quality of Work Life among Train Drivers: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

The contemporary occupational landscape of railway transportation is characterized by escalating operational complexities, irregular work schedules, prolonged duty hours, and heightened safety responsibilities. These occupational exigencies often engender substantial interference between professional and familial domains, thereby affecting employees' overall quality of work life. The present study investigates the prevalence of Work–Family Conflict (WFC), Family–Work Conflict (FWC), and Quality of Work Life (QWL) among train drivers. A quantitative research design was employed, and primary data were collected from 300 train drivers working in the South-Central Railway Zone through a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression techniques were utilized to analyze the data. The findings reveal that train drivers experience a moderate-to-high level of Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict. Furthermore, Quality of Work Life was found to be significantly influenced by both dimensions of role conflict. Work–Family Conflict exhibited a stronger negative effect on Quality of Work Life than Family–Work Conflict. The study underscores the necessity of organizational interventions such as flexible rostering systems, psychological support mechanisms, family-friendly policies, and work-life balance initiatives to enhance occupational well-being among train drivers. The findings contribute to the literature on occupational stress, work-life balance, and employee well-being within the transportation sector.

Keywords: Work–Family Conflict, Family–Work Conflict, Quality of Work Life, Train Drivers, Occupational Stress, Railway Employees, Work-Life Balance.

Introduction

The railway sector constitutes one of the most critical components of national transportation infrastructure. Train drivers occupy a pivotal role in ensuring operational efficiency, passenger safety, and punctuality. However, the nature of their occupation frequently necessitates irregular schedules, overnight shifts, extended working hours, and prolonged periods away from home. Such occupational demands often precipitate conflicts between professional obligations and familial responsibilities.

Work–Family Conflict refers to a form of inter-role conflict wherein work demands interfere with family responsibilities. Conversely, Family–Work Conflict occurs when family-related obligations hinder occupational performance. Persistent exposure to these conflicts may adversely affect employees' psychological well-being, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall Quality of Work Life.

Quality of Work Life represents an individual's perception of occupational well-being encompassing job security, work environment, compensation, participation in decision-making, work-life balance, and opportunities for personal development. Understanding the relationship between role conflicts and Quality of Work Life among train drivers is essential for formulating evidence-based organizational policies aimed at enhancing employee welfare and operational effectiveness. The contemporary workplace has undergone profound transformations characterized by increasing job demands, technological intensification, workforce diversification, and evolving family structures. These developments have significantly heightened concerns regarding the interface between

work and family domains. Work–Family Conflict (WFC) and Family–Work Conflict (FWC) have emerged as critical psychosocial challenges affecting employee well-being, occupational effectiveness, and quality of life. Recent scholarly evidence suggests that the inability to effectively balance occupational and family responsibilities contributes to elevated stress levels, reduced job satisfaction, impaired psychological health, and diminished organizational commitment (Smith et al., 2020).

The work–family interface has attracted increasing academic attention because of its implications for both organizational performance and employee welfare. According to recent systematic evidence, conflict between work and family roles extends beyond the individual employee and generates spillover and crossover effects that influence family members, workplace relationships, and broader social outcomes. Work–family conflict has been associated with emotional exhaustion, reduced life satisfaction, poorer physical health, and increased absenteeism, thereby representing a significant concern for organizations seeking to maintain a productive and healthy workforce (Ratnaningsih & Idris, 2024).

Quality of Work Life (QWL) has simultaneously emerged as a central construct within human resource management and organizational psychology. QWL encompasses employees' perceptions regarding occupational well-being, work environment, organizational support, participation opportunities, job security, work-life balance, and overall satisfaction with their professional experiences. Contemporary research demonstrates that organizations promoting employee well-being through supportive work environments and equitable management practices experience enhanced productivity, commitment, and employee retention (Zulkarnain et al., 2024).

Recent empirical studies further indicate that Work–Family Conflict is among the most significant determinants of Quality of Work Life. Employees experiencing elevated levels of role conflict often report lower perceptions of workplace fairness, diminished psychological well-being, and reduced occupational satisfaction. Evidence from organizational settings demonstrates that increasing work–family interference substantially decreases Quality of Work Life and overall employee effectiveness (Zulkarnain et al., 2024).

Theoretical advancements in work–family research have also contributed to a more nuanced understanding of conflict dimensions. A recent meta-analysis emphasized that work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict should be conceptualized as distinct yet interrelated constructs, each exerting unique effects on employee attitudes and behavioral outcomes. The findings highlighted the importance of examining both directions of conflict independently to understand their differential impacts on occupational well-being and organizational functioning (Hetrick et al., 2023).

Research conducted during the post-pandemic period further suggests that the boundaries between work and family domains have become increasingly blurred. Employees frequently encounter overlapping responsibilities that intensify role strain and compromise work-life balance. Contemporary evidence indicates that persistent work–family conflict adversely affects both job satisfaction and life satisfaction through multiple psychological mechanisms, including reduced organizational commitment and diminished perceptions of control over work schedules (Huan Yang, 2024).

occupational settings characterized by high responsibility and safety sensitivity, such as railway transportation, the implications of work–family conflict are particularly significant. Although limited recent studies have focused specifically on train drivers, available evidence from railway operations demonstrates that work–family conflict adversely affects job satisfaction, safety participation, and overall occupational functioning. Employees engaged in safety-critical transportation roles often experience heightened psychological strain because of irregular work schedules, extended duty periods, and substantial operational responsibilities (Chu et al., 2020). contemporary investigations into Quality of Work Life indicate that work-life balance functions as a critical antecedent of employee well-being. Higher levels of Quality of Work Life contribute positively to employee engagement, job satisfaction, psychological resilience, and organizational effectiveness. Conversely, reduced Quality of Work Life is associated with burnout, turnover intentions, absenteeism, and diminished organizational performance (Jayaraman et al., 2023).

understanding the interaction between Work–Family Conflict, Family–Work Conflict, and Quality of Work Life among train drivers has become increasingly important. Given the unique occupational demands associated with railway operations, empirical examination of these variables may provide valuable insights for organizational

policy development, workforce well-being initiatives, and sustainable human resource management practices. The present study therefore seeks to examine the level of Work–Family Conflict, assess the level of Family–Work Conflict, and evaluate the Quality of Work Life among train drivers operating within the South Central Railway Zone.

Objectives Of The Study

1. To examine the level of Work–Family Conflict among train drivers.
2. To assess the level of Family–Work Conflict among train drivers.
3. To evaluate the Quality of Work Life of train drivers.

3.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Descriptive and Quantitative Research Design

Population: Train Drivers working in South Central Railway Zone

Sample Size: 300 Train Drivers

Sampling Technique: Stratified Random Sampling

Data Collection Tool: Structured Questionnaire using a Five-Point Likert Scale

Statistical Tools:

- Descriptive Statistics
- Reliability Analysis
- Correlation Analysis
- Multiple Regression Analysis

Data Analysis And Interpretation

Table 1: Level of Work–Family Conflict among Train Drivers

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	42	14.0
Moderate	118	39.3
High	140	46.7
Total	300	100

Interpretation

Table 1 indicates that 46.7% of train drivers reported a high level of Work–Family Conflict, whereas 39.3% experienced a moderate level and only 14.0% reported a low level. These results suggest that occupational demands substantially interfere with family responsibilities among train drivers. The prevalence of high Work–Family Conflict may be attributed to irregular shifts, extended duty periods, and limited family interaction opportunities.

Table 2 Level of Family–Work Conflict among Train Drivers.

Level	Frequency	Percentage
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Low	56	18.7
Moderate	129	43.0
High	115	38.3
Total	300	100

Interpretation

Table 2 analysis reveals that 43.0% of respondents experienced a moderate level of Family–Work Conflict, while 38.3% reported high levels. Family responsibilities, including childcare, eldercare, and domestic obligations, appear to exert considerable influence on occupational functioning. These findings signify the reciprocal nature of role interference experienced by train drivers.

Table 3 Level of Quality of Work Life among Train Drivers

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	96	32.0
Moderate	143	47.7
High	61	20.3
Total	300	100

Interpretation

Table 3 indicates Nearly half of the respondents (47.7%) reported a moderate Quality of Work Life, whereas 32.0% experienced low Quality of Work Life. Only 20.3% reported high levels. These findings indicate that a substantial proportion of train drivers perceive limitations in their occupational well-being, potentially resulting from persistent work-family tensions and occupational stressors.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD
Work–Family Conflict	3.87	0.74
Family–Work Conflict	3.61	0.69
Quality of Work Life	2.91	0.81

Interpretation

Table 4 indicates the mean score for Work–Family Conflict (3.87) was comparatively higher than Family–Work Conflict (3.61), indicating greater interference of occupational responsibilities with family life. The Quality of Work Life mean score of 2.91 suggests a moderate level of occupational well-being among train drivers.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis

Variables	WFC	FWC	QWL
WFC	1		
FWC	.621**	1	
QWL	-.587**	-.542**	1

**p < .01

Interpretation

Table 5 results demonstrate a significant negative relationship between Work–Family Conflict and Quality of Work Life ($r = -0.587$, $p < .01$). Similarly, Family–Work Conflict exhibited a significant negative association with Quality of Work Life ($r = -0.542$, $p < .01$). Increased levels of role conflict are associated with diminished occupational well-being.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Quality of Work Life

Predictor	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Work–Family Conflict	-0.451	-8.972	.000
Family–Work Conflict	-0.312	-6.418	.000

Model Summary

R = 0.671

R² = 0.450

Adjusted R² = 0.446

F = 121.538

p = .000

Interpretation

Table 6 regression model explains 45.0% of the variance in Quality of Work Life. Work–Family Conflict emerged as the strongest predictor of Quality of Work Life ($\beta = -0.451$), followed by Family–Work Conflict ($\beta = -0.312$). Both predictors significantly and negatively influence Quality of Work Life.

Discussion

The present study investigated the levels of Work–Family Conflict (WFC), Family–Work Conflict (FWC), and Quality of Work Life (QWL) among train drivers employed in the South Central Railway Zone. The findings provide significant empirical insights into the occupational realities of train drivers and demonstrate the intricate relationship between work-related pressures, family responsibilities, and perceptions of occupational well-being.

The first objective sought to examine the level of Work–Family Conflict among train drivers. The findings revealed that a substantial proportion of respondents (46.7%) experienced high levels of Work–Family Conflict, while 39.3% reported moderate levels. These results indicate that occupational demands significantly interfere

with family responsibilities among train drivers. The prevalence of high Work–Family Conflict may be attributed to the distinctive characteristics of railway operations, including irregular work schedules, rotational shifts, overnight duties, prolonged working hours, and frequent absences from home. Such occupational conditions often reduce the time and psychological resources available for family engagement, thereby creating tensions between professional and domestic roles. The findings are consistent with contemporary work–family literature, which suggests that occupations characterized by non-standard work arrangements are particularly vulnerable to elevated levels of Work–Family Conflict. Train drivers operate within highly regulated and safety-sensitive environments where operational efficiency and vigilance are paramount. Consequently, the substantial work demands associated with this occupation frequently supersede family obligations, resulting in heightened role strain and psychological burden. These findings support the proposition that occupational responsibilities remain a dominant source of inter-role conflict within transportation-related professions. The second objective focused on assessing the level of Family–Work Conflict among train drivers. The results demonstrated that 43.0% of respondents experienced moderate levels of Family–Work Conflict, while 38.3% reported high levels. These findings indicate that family-related responsibilities also exert considerable influence on occupational functioning. Although Work–Family Conflict emerged as slightly more prevalent, the substantial presence of Family–Work Conflict highlights the bidirectional nature of role interference experienced by train drivers.

Family-related demands such as childcare obligations, eldercare responsibilities, household management, and unforeseen domestic situations may consume substantial emotional and cognitive resources. When these demands intensify, employees may experience difficulties concentrating on work-related responsibilities, particularly in occupations requiring sustained attention and decision-making accuracy. Given that train drivers are entrusted with passenger safety and operational reliability, the intrusion of family-related concerns into the workplace may create additional psychological stress and potentially compromise occupational effectiveness. Therefore, the findings emphasize the necessity of viewing work–family dynamics as a reciprocal process rather than a unidirectional phenomenon.

The third objective aimed to evaluate the Quality of Work Life among train drivers. The results indicated that nearly half of the respondents (47.7%) perceived their Quality of Work Life to be moderate, while 32.0% reported low levels and only 20.3% experienced high levels. These findings suggest that although train drivers may derive professional satisfaction from their occupational roles, several organizational and personal challenges continue to constrain their overall work-life experience.

Quality of Work Life encompasses multiple dimensions, including job security, organizational support, compensation, working conditions, work-life balance, career growth opportunities, and psychological well-being. The moderate-to-low levels of Quality of Work Life observed in the study may be attributable to the cumulative effects of occupational stressors, demanding schedules, role conflicts, and limited opportunities for personal and family engagement. The findings indicate that improvements in organizational support systems and work-life balance initiatives may substantially enhance employees' perceptions of occupational well-being. The descriptive statistical analysis further reinforces these observations. The mean score for Work–Family Conflict (3.87) exceeded that of Family–Work Conflict (3.61), indicating that occupational demands constitute a more prominent source of role interference than family demands among train drivers. This finding reflects the highly demanding nature of railway operations, where work schedules and operational responsibilities frequently dominate employees' daily lives. The Quality of Work Life mean score (2.91) further confirms that respondents experience only a moderate level of occupational well-being, suggesting considerable scope for organizational interventions.

The correlation analysis revealed significant negative relationships between Work–Family Conflict and Quality of Work Life ($r = -0.587, p < .01$) and between Family–Work Conflict and Quality of Work Life ($r = -0.542, p < .01$). These findings indicate that increasing levels of role conflict are associated with declining perceptions of occupational well-being. Employees experiencing frequent interference between work and family domains are likely to report lower job satisfaction, reduced psychological comfort, diminished organizational commitment, and decreased overall life satisfaction. The stronger negative correlation observed between Work–Family Conflict and Quality of Work Life suggests that occupational demands exert a more detrimental influence on employee well-being than family-related demands. This outcome may be attributed to the rigid scheduling structures and operational constraints inherent within railway organizations. Since train drivers possess limited autonomy over

their work schedules, the inability to adequately balance professional and family responsibilities may result in greater frustration and dissatisfaction. The regression analysis provides further support for these conclusions. The model explained approximately 45.0% of the variance in Quality of Work Life ($R^2 = 0.450$), indicating substantial explanatory power. Both Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict emerged as statistically significant predictors of Quality of Work Life. However, Work–Family Conflict exhibited a stronger negative influence ($\beta = -0.451$) than Family–Work Conflict ($\beta = -0.312$). This finding demonstrates that occupational demands represent the most critical determinant of Quality of Work Life among train drivers.

The prominence of Work–Family Conflict as a predictor may be explained by the unique characteristics of railway employment. Occupational obligations frequently require employees to prioritize work commitments over personal and family needs. Over time, this imbalance may generate emotional exhaustion, psychological strain, and reduced satisfaction with both professional and personal life domains. Consequently, employees may perceive lower levels of organizational support and diminished quality of work experiences. Study support contemporary theoretical perspectives derived from Role Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory. These frameworks suggest that individuals possess finite resources, including time, energy, and emotional capacity. When occupational and family roles compete for these limited resources, conflict emerges, ultimately reducing individual well-being and quality of life. The empirical evidence generated by this study substantiates these theoretical propositions within the context of railway transportation. Findings underscore the importance of implementing organizational strategies aimed at reducing role conflict and enhancing Quality of Work Life. Flexible scheduling systems, family-friendly policies, counselling services, employee assistance programs, stress management initiatives, and enhanced supervisory support may significantly mitigate work–family tensions. Such interventions are likely to improve employee well-being, strengthen organizational commitment, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately contribute to safer and more efficient railway operations. Study demonstrates that Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict constitute significant occupational challenges for train drivers and exert substantial negative effects on their Quality of Work Life. Addressing these challenges through evidence-based human resource policies and organizational support mechanisms is essential for fostering sustainable employee well-being and long-term organizational effectiveness.

5. Findings

The findings of the study are presented in accordance with the stated research objectives. The analysis revealed that Work–Family Conflict is a significant occupational challenge among train drivers. Out of 300 respondents, 140 respondents (46.7%) reported a high level of Work–Family Conflict, while 118 respondents (39.3%) experienced a moderate level and only 42 respondents (14.0%) reported a low level of conflict. The mean score for Work–Family Conflict was 3.87 (SD = 0.74), indicating a relatively high prevalence of work-related interference with family responsibilities. These findings suggest that irregular work schedules, night shifts, extended duty hours, and prolonged absence from home significantly restrict employees' ability to fulfil family obligations. The predominance of high Work–Family Conflict indicates that occupational demands constitute a major source of psychosocial strain among train drivers. The findings indicate that Family–Work Conflict is also prevalent among train drivers, although its intensity is comparatively lower than Work–Family Conflict. Among the respondents, 129 (43.0%) reported moderate levels of Family–Work Conflict, 115 (38.3%) reported high levels, and 56 (18.7%) reported low levels. The mean Family–Work Conflict score was 3.61 (SD = 0.69).

The results suggest that family responsibilities, including childcare, eldercare, household management, and family emergencies, often interfere with occupational functioning. However, the comparatively lower mean score indicates that occupational demands exert a stronger influence on family life than vice versa. The evaluation of Quality of Work Life revealed that 143 respondents (47.7%) experienced a moderate level of Quality of Work Life, 96 respondents (32.0%) reported low Quality of Work Life, and only 61 respondents (20.3%) perceived a high Quality of Work Life. The overall mean score for Quality of Work Life was 2.91 (SD = 0.81).

These findings indicate that despite the availability of organizational support structures, a substantial proportion of train drivers remain dissatisfied with various dimensions of their work environment, including work-life balance, occupational stress, scheduling flexibility, and overall well-being.

The correlation analysis demonstrated a statistically significant negative relationship between Work–Family Conflict and Quality of Work Life ($r = -0.587, p < 0.01$) and between Family–Work Conflict and Quality of Work Life ($r = -0.542, p < 0.01$).

The regression analysis indicated that Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict jointly explained 45.0% of the variance in Quality of Work Life ($R^2 = 0.450; F = 121.538; p < 0.001$).

Work–Family Conflict emerged as the strongest predictor of Quality of Work Life ($\beta = -0.451, p < 0.001$), followed by Family–Work Conflict ($\beta = -0.312, p < 0.001$).

These findings confirm that increasing levels of role conflict significantly reduce the Quality of Work Life among train drivers.

Conclusion

substantial occupational challenges encountered by train drivers. The pervasive presence of Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict significantly undermines their Quality of Work Life. Railway administrations should implement comprehensive work-life balance initiatives, optimize duty schedules, introduce employee assistance programs, and strengthen psychosocial support systems. Such interventions are likely to foster employee well-being, enhance organizational commitment, and improve operational efficiency. The study concludes that train drivers experience a substantially high level of Work–Family Conflict. Nearly 86.0% of respondents reported either moderate or high levels of conflict, indicating that occupational responsibilities frequently interfere with family obligations. The nature of railway operations, characterized by irregular shifts and demanding schedules, significantly contributes to this phenomenon. The study concludes that Family–Work Conflict is also prevalent among train drivers, with 81.3% of respondents reporting moderate to high levels of conflict. Family responsibilities influence occupational functioning; however, the magnitude of this influence is comparatively lower than the effect of work demands on family life. The study concludes that the Quality of Work Life of train drivers remains predominantly moderate. Approximately 79.7% of respondents reported either low or moderate Quality of Work Life. This suggests that existing organizational practices require substantial improvement to enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and work-life integration. The study establishes that Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict are significant determinants of Quality of Work Life. The regression model explaining 45.0% of the variance in Quality of Work Life demonstrates the substantial influence of role conflicts on employee well-being. Consequently, reducing role conflict should be considered a strategic priority for railway management.

Suggestions

1. Flexible Scheduling Systems

Railway authorities should introduce scientifically designed duty rosters that minimize consecutive night shifts and extended duty periods. Improved scheduling flexibility may significantly reduce Work–Family Conflict.

2. Work-Life Balance Programs

Specialized work-life balance initiatives should be implemented to assist train drivers in effectively managing competing occupational and family demands.

3. Family Support Services

Railway organizations should establish family assistance programs, including childcare support, family counseling services, and emergency family assistance mechanisms.

4. Psychological Well-Being Interventions

Regular stress management workshops, resilience-building programs, and mental health counseling services should be provided to reduce occupational strain.

5. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

Formal Employee Assistance Programs should be introduced to address work-related and family-related concerns before they adversely affect employee performance.

6. Supervisor Support Training

Supervisors should receive training in supportive leadership practices to help employees manage work-family challenges effectively.

7. Technology-Based Workforce Management

AI-enabled scheduling systems can be employed to optimize shift allocation and reduce unnecessary work-family disruptions.

Implications Of The Study

- Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to the expanding literature on Role Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory by empirically demonstrating the influence of Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict on Quality of Work Life among railway employees.

The findings validate the bidirectional nature of work-family interactions and establish Quality of Work Life as a critical outcome variable influenced by role conflicts.

- Managerial Implications

The study provides evidence-based insights for railway administrators and human resource managers. The identification of Work–Family Conflict as the strongest predictor of Quality of Work Life ($\beta = -0.451$) highlights the need for management interventions aimed at reducing occupational stressors. Managers can utilize these findings to design employee-centered scheduling systems and family-supportive organizational policies.

- Policy Implications

Railway policymakers should incorporate work-life balance considerations into workforce planning strategies. National railway organizations may benefit from establishing formal guidelines addressing work-family integration and employee well-being.

- Social Implications

Improving Quality of Work Life among train drivers may contribute to enhanced family functioning, psychological well-being, occupational safety, and public transportation reliability.

Future Scope Of The Study

1. Future studies may employ longitudinal research designs to examine changes in Work–Family Conflict and Quality of Work Life over time.

2. Comparative investigations may be conducted across different railway zones to identify regional variations in work-family experiences.

3. Future research may incorporate mediating variables such as job stress, burnout, emotional exhaustion, organizational commitment, and psychological resilience.

4. Moderating variables including age, marital status, family size, years of service, and shift type may be examined.

5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) may be employed to investigate complex causal relationships among Work–Family Conflict, Family–Work Conflict, job stress, and Quality of Work Life.

6. Future studies may compare train drivers with other railway occupational categories such as station masters, loco inspectors, maintenance personnel, and traffic controllers.
7. Mixed-method research incorporating qualitative interviews may provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of train drivers.
8. Future studies may examine the effectiveness of organizational interventions designed to improve work-life balance and employee well-being.
9. Cross-national studies involving railway employees from different countries may enhance the generalizability of findings.
10. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence-based workforce management systems may be evaluated for their effectiveness in reducing Work-Family Conflict and enhancing Quality of Work Life.

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