Organizational Commitment on Work–Family Conflict: Role of Gender as a Moderator among IT Employees

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Abstract- Increase in the work demands in the information technology (IT) sector has heightened concerns surrounding work–family conflict (WFC), particularly in contexts of long working hours, continuous technological change and blurred work–family boundaries. Drawing on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Social Exchange Theory, this study examines the relationship between organizational commitment and work–family conflict and investigates the moderating role of gender among IT employees in India. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 645 employees working in major IT firms through a structured questionnaire. Established scales were employed to measure work–family conflict and the three dimensions of organizational commitment—affective, continuance and normative commitment—and the data were analyzed using reliability analysis, correlation analysis and hierarchical multiple regression. The findings indicate that affective commitment is negatively associated with work–family conflict, suggesting that emotional attachment functions as a psychological resource that mitigates role strain, whereas continuance commitment is positively related to work–family conflict, indicating heightened resource depletion when attachment is driven by perceived costs of leaving. Normative commitment does not exhibit a significant direct effect; however, gender significantly moderates the normative commitment–work–family conflict relationship, with higher normative commitment associated with lower work–family conflict among female employees compared to male employees. By integrating COR theory and Social Exchange theory, the study advances understanding of how different forms of organizational commitment operate as resources or stressors. Also highlights the importance of adopting a gender-sensitive perspective when examining work–family dynamics in technology-intensive work environments.

Keywords: Work-family conflict, Organizational Commitment, Gender, IT, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary workplace is increasingly characterized by pervasive information and communication technologies (ICTs) that have fundamentally reshaped how work is organized, performed and experienced. Modern organizations rely extensively on computers, mobile devices, cloud infrastructures, collaborative platforms and digital communication systems to enable productivity and coordination across spatial and temporal boundaries (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2019; Cecez-Kecmanovic et al., 2014). These technological developments have intensified the interconnection between work and non-work domains, particularly for employees in the information technology (IT) sector, whose professional roles are deeply embedded within technology-mediated environments. Prior research conceptualizes this entanglement between technological artefacts and human action through the lens of sociomateriality, which emphasizes that social practices and material technologies are inseparable and mutually constitutive (Leonardi, 2013; Orlikowski, 2007). The IT profession is widely recognized as demanding and dynamic, requiring employees to engage in ongoing learning to keep pace with rapid technological change (Obschonka et al., 2012). Continuous innovation renders existing technical knowledge obsolete within short time frames, compelling IT professionals to invest substantial time and energy in skill renewal and capability development (Tsai et al., 2007). While such continuous learning enhances employability and professional relevance, it also extends work demands beyond traditional working hours, contributing to blurred boundaries between work and family roles. As organizations increasingly adopt digital platforms

such as cloud systems, virtual collaboration tools and remote working technologies, IT professionals play a critical role in sustaining organizational functioning, often at the cost of increased work intensity and reduced recovery opportunities (Carugati et al., 2020). These developments have significant implications for employees' work–family interface. Work–family conflict (WFC) arises when pressures from the work domain interfere with the fulfilment of family responsibilities, making participation in both roles more difficult (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). Extensive empirical evidence indicates that WFC is associated with a range of adverse outcomes, including reduced job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, absenteeism and weakened organizational attachment (Netemeyer et al., 1996; Ernst Kossek and Ozeki, 1998; Oliveira et al., 2013). Within high-technology contexts, where work demands are often unpredictable and boundary-spanning, the experience of WFC may be particularly pronounced, yet remains under-examined in emerging economy settings such as India.

From a theoretical perspective, Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides a robust framework for understanding the emergence and consequences of WFC. COR theory posits that individuals possess finite psychological and physical resources and experience stress when these resources are threatened or depleted (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). Work–family conflict represents a resource-depleting process in which time, energy and emotional resources expended in the work domain reduce individuals' capacity to meet family demands (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Importantly, COR theory emphasizes the primacy of resource loss, suggesting that losses are more salient than gains and may trigger loss spirals, prompting individuals to adopt strategies aimed at protecting remaining resources (Demerouti et al., 2004). In the context of IT work, prolonged work demands, continuous learning requirements and technology-enabled availability may accelerate resource depletion, intensifying work–family conflict.

At the same time, employees do not respond uniformly to resource depletion. Organizational commitment represents a critical attitudinal mechanism through which employees interpret and respond to work demands. Organizational commitment has been conceptualized as the strength of an individual's identification with, involvement in and attachment to an organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model distinguishes between affective commitment (emotional attachment), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving) and normative commitment (felt obligation to remain). These dimensions reflect distinct motivational bases and are associated with different behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. Extant research consistently demonstrates that affective commitment is positively associated with desirable outcomes such as job satisfaction, performance and organizational citizenship behavior, while continuance commitment has been linked to less favorable outcomes, including withdrawal behaviors and strain (Meyer et al., 1993; Francis and Lingard, 2004). Normative commitment, grounded in moral obligation and socialization processes, occupies a more complex position, with empirical findings suggesting context-specific effects shaped by cultural and organizational norms (Allen and Meyer, 1996). In work–family research, employees who experience high levels of conflict often report weakened emotional attachment to their organizations, although findings regarding the strength and direction of these relationships remain mixed (Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Agarwal et al., 1999). Social Exchange Theory further enriches this perspective by emphasizing reciprocity in employee–organization relationships. According to this theory, favorable treatment by organizations—such as supportive policies, rewards or perceived fairness—elicits reciprocal attitudes in the form of stronger organizational commitment (Gould-Williams, 2007; Newman and Sheikh, 2012). Employees who perceive that their organization values their contributions and well-being are more likely to develop affective and normative commitment, thereby sustaining effort and loyalty even under demanding conditions (De Clerq and Ruis, 2007; Williamson et al., 2009). However, social exchange processes may operate differently when high rewards are accompanied by increased workload and role pressure, as is often the case in the IT sector, potentially exacerbating work–family conflict despite strong organizational ties. Gender represents an additional critical lens through which work–family dynamics and

organizational commitment must be examined. Prior research on gender differences in organizational commitment has produced inconsistent findings, with some studies reporting higher commitment among women, others among men, and several indicating no significant differences (Aven et al., 1993; Konya et al., 2016). These inconsistencies suggest that gender effects may not manifest at the level of mean differences but may instead influence how employees experience and respond to organizational attitudes under conditions of role conflict. Social role theory suggests that women are more likely to experience heightened sensitivity to work–family tensions due to socially prescribed caregiving responsibilities and normative expectations surrounding family roles (Eagly, 1987; Hochschild and Machung, 2012).

In developing economies such as India, traditional gender norms often assign primary caregiving responsibilities to women while positioning men as primary earners, potentially intensifying gendered experiences of work–family conflict (Akanji et al., 2020; Masood and Nisar, 2020). Within the IT sector—characterized by long working hours, continuous skill demands and male-dominated occupational cultures—these gendered dynamics may be particularly salient. Yet, empirical research examining how gender shapes the relationship between organizational commitment and work–family conflict in the Indian IT context remains limited.

Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the influence of organizational commitment dimensions on work–family conflict among IT employees in India and examines the moderating role of gender. Drawing on Conservation of Resources theory and Social Exchange Theory, this study advances existing literature by moving beyond mean-level gender comparisons to explore how gender conditions the commitment–work–family conflict relationship. By focusing on a high-growth, technology-intensive sector within an emerging economy, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of work–family dynamics and offers insights relevant for theory development and human resource practice.

Statement of the Research Problem

Despite extensive research on work–family conflict and organizational commitment, existing studies have predominantly examined these constructs in isolation or focused on Western organizational contexts. Limited attention has been paid to how the multidimensional nature of organizational commitment—affective, continuance and normative—differentially influences work–family conflict in technology-intensive work environments. Moreover, prior research has produced inconsistent findings regarding gender differences in work–family dynamics, with most studies relying on mean-level comparisons rather than examining gender as a moderating mechanism. This limitation is particularly salient in the Indian IT sector, where long working hours, continuous skill demands and pervasive ICT use intensify work–family boundary blurring, while gendered role expectations remain deeply embedded. Consequently, there is insufficient empirical understanding of how distinct forms of organizational commitment function as resources or stressors in shaping work–family conflict, and how these relationships vary by gender in emerging economy contexts. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the relationship between organizational commitment dimensions and work–family conflict among IT employees in India, with particular attention to the moderating role of gender, drawing on Conservation of Resources theory and Social Exchange Theory.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Conservation of Resources theory and work–family conflict

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides a foundational lens for understanding stress processes arising from competing role demands. According to COR theory, individuals strive to acquire, retain and protect valued resources, such as time, energy, emotional stability and social support (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). Stress is experienced when these resources are threatened, lost or insufficient to meet situational demands. Within the work–family interface, work–family conflict represents a salient form of resource depletion, as resources expended to meet work

demands reduce individuals' capacity to fulfil family responsibilities (Halbesleben et al., 2014). COR theory further emphasizes that resource loss is disproportionately more impactful than resource gain, often triggering loss spirals whereby initial depletion increases vulnerability to subsequent losses (Hobfoll, 2001). In technology-intensive work environments, such as the IT sector, prolonged working hours, constant connectivity and continuous learning requirements accelerate the consumption of personal resources. These conditions heighten the likelihood that employees experience work demands as intrusive, thereby intensifying work–family conflict. From a COR perspective, employees' attitudes toward their organization—particularly their levels of organizational commitment—may function either as resource buffers that mitigate strain or as additional demands that exacerbate resource loss.

2.2 Organizational commitment and work–family conflict

Organizational commitment reflects the psychological bond between employees and their organization and shapes how individuals interpret and respond to work demands (Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer and Allen, 1991). The three-component model conceptualizes commitment as affective, continuance and normative, each grounded in distinct motivational processes and associated with different behavioral consequences.

2.2.1 Affective commitment and work–family conflict

Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Employees with strong affective commitment are motivated to contribute to organizational goals because they genuinely value membership in the organization. From a COR perspective, affective commitment may operate as a psychological resource that enhances resilience by fostering positive emotions, meaning and a sense of purpose at work. Empirical research suggests that affective commitment is associated with higher job satisfaction, reduced strain and greater well-being (Meyer et al., 1993; Francis and Lingard, 2004). Employees who are emotionally attached to their organization may

perceive work demands as more meaningful and less threatening, thereby reducing the extent to which work interferes with family life. Accordingly, affective commitment is expected to mitigate work–family conflict by buffering the negative effects of resource depletion.

H1: Affective commitment is negatively related to work–family conflict.

2.2.2 Continuance commitment and work–family conflict

Continuance commitment reflects employees' perceived costs associated with leaving the organization, such as loss of income, benefits or career opportunities (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Unlike affective commitment, continuance commitment is grounded in necessity rather than desire and is often associated with less favorable attitudinal outcomes.

From a COR perspective, continuance commitment may represent a form of constrained resource investment. Employees who remain with an organization primarily due to perceived costs may feel trapped in demanding roles, intensifying stress and resource loss. Prior studies have linked continuance commitment to strain, emotional exhaustion and negative work attitudes (Meyer et al., 1993; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007). In the IT context, where work demands are high and mobility pressures are strong, continuance commitment may amplify work–family conflict by prolonging exposure to resource-draining conditions.

H2: Continuance commitment is positively related to work–family conflict.

2.2.3 Normative commitment and work–family conflict

Normative commitment reflects a sense of moral obligation to remain with the organization, often shaped by socialization processes, cultural norms and reciprocity expectations (Allen and Meyer, 1996). The relationship between normative commitment and work–family conflict is theoretically complex. On one hand, normative commitment may act as a psychological resource by providing meaning and

moral justification for work investment. On the other hand, a strong sense of obligation may intensify role pressures, increasing strain when work demands encroach on family life. Empirical findings regarding normative commitment have been mixed, suggesting that its effects are contingent on contextual and individual factors (Meyer et al., 2002). In collectivist and high-context cultures, such as India, moral obligation to the organization may be more salient, potentially shaping employees' tolerance of work demands. Given these competing mechanisms, the direct relationship between normative commitment and work–family conflict remains theoretically ambiguous.

H3: Normative commitment is significantly related to work–family conflict.

2.3 Moderating role of gender

Gender plays a critical role in shaping how employees experience work demands and manage competing role expectations. Social role theory suggests that men and women internalise different normative expectations regarding work and family responsibilities, which influence their responses to role conflict (Eagly, 1987). Women are more likely to assume primary caregiving responsibilities, increasing their sensitivity to work demands that encroach on family life, particularly in traditional socio-cultural contexts.

From a COR perspective, gender may condition how organizational commitment functions as a resource. Commitment dimensions that operate as buffers for one gender may not confer the same benefits for the other. Social Exchange Theory further suggests that women may respond more strongly to normative expectations and perceived obligations due to socialization processes that emphasize reciprocity and loyalty (Gould-Williams, 2007; Newman and Sheikh, 2012). As a result, normative commitment may serve as a protective resource for women by legitimizing work investment and reducing internal role conflict, whereas its effects may be weaker or absent for men.

Building on these theoretical arguments, this study proposes that gender moderates the relationship

between organizational commitment dimensions and work–family conflict.

H4a: Gender moderates the relationship between affective commitment and work–family conflict.

H4b: Gender moderates the relationship between continuance commitment and work–family conflict.

H4c: Gender moderates the relationship between normative commitment and work–family conflict.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design and sample

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the relationship between organizational commitment and work–family conflict and to assess the moderating role of gender among employees in the Indian information technology (IT) sector. Data were collected from employees working in IT firms across Gujarat using a structured questionnaire. Respondents were drawn from diverse organizational contexts, including service-based and product-based IT companies, and represented a range of hierarchical levels. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity to minimize social desirability bias and encourage honest responses. Total questionnaire distributed were 700. After data screening procedures, including the removal of incomplete responses and extreme outliers, the final sample consisted of 645 respondents, which exceeds recommended thresholds for multivariate statistical analysis. The sample included both male and female employees, enabling meaningful examination of gender-based moderation effects. The demographic profile reflected variation in marital status, spouse employment status, organizational hierarchy and company type, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings within the Indian IT context.

3.2 Measure

All study constructs were measured using established and widely validated scales drawn from prior research.

Responses to all items were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), unless otherwise specified. Work–family conflict (WFC) was measured using the 10-item scale developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996), which captures the extent to which work-related demands interfere with family responsibilities. Sample items include: "The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life" and "I have to put off doing things at home because of demands on my time at work." The scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency in the present study, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.925, exceeding recommended reliability thresholds above 0.7. Organizational commitment was assessed using the three-component model proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991), comprising affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment was measured using 8 items capturing employees' emotional attachment to and identification with the organization. A sample item is: "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization." The scale exhibited high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.918. Continuance commitment was assessed using 6 items reflecting perceived costs associated with leaving the organization. A representative item is: "It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to." The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.858. Normative commitment was measured using 6 items capturing a sense of moral obligation to remain with the organization. A sample item is: "I believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization." This scale demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.825.

Gender was included as a moderator and coded as a binary variable (0 = male, 1 = female). Of the total respondents, 56.6% were male and 43.4% were female, indicating a moderately male-dominated sample. Consistent with prior work–family research, several control variables were included to account for contextual influences on work–family conflict. These included marital status, spouse employment status, company type (service-based or product-based IT firm), and organizational hierarchy level. These variables have been shown in previous studies to influence work–family experiences and were therefore controlled for in the regression analyses.

3.3 Data analysis strategy

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were screened for missing values and outliers. Univariate outliers were identified using standardized z-scores (±3.29), and extreme cases were removed. Descriptive statistics were examined to ensure that the data met assumptions of normality and that no anomalous values were present. Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of all multi-item scales. Pearson correlation analysis was subsequently conducted to examine bivariate relationships among the study variables and to assess potential multicollinearity. To test the study hypotheses, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was employed. Work–family conflict was specified as the dependent variable. In the first step, control variables were entered. In the second step, the main effects of affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment and gender were included. In the final step, interaction terms between gender and each organizational commitment dimension were entered to test moderation effects. All continuous predictor variables were mean-centered prior to creating interaction terms to reduce multicollinearity.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 1. The mean score for work–family conflict (WFC) was 2.59 (SD = 0.87), indicating a moderate level of interference between work and family roles among the respondents. Among the organizational commitment dimensions, affective commitment recorded the highest mean (M = 3.59, SD = 0.89), followed by normative commitment (M = 3.43, SD = 0.84), while continuance commitment exhibited a moderate mean

level (M = 3.20, SD = 0.86). Correlation analysis showed that work–family conflict was negatively and significantly related to affective commitment and normative commitment, whereas its association with continuance commitment was weak and non-significant. The intercorrelations among affective,

continuance, and normative commitment were moderate and below commonly accepted thresholds, indicating no serious multicollinearity concerns. These results provided preliminary support for the hypothesized relationships and justified the inclusion of all predictors in the regression models.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Work–Family Conflict (WFC)	2.59	0.87	1			
2. Affective Commitment (AC)	3.59	0.89	−.271**	1		
3. Continuance Commitment (CC)	3.2	0.86	−.026	.436**	1	
4. Normative Commitment (NC)	3.43	0.84	−.146**	.631**	.500**	1
5. Gender	1.43	0.5	0.055	−.074	−.039	−.065

Note: N = 645.
Gender coded as 1 = Male, 2 = Female.
** p < .01 (two-tailed).
Source (s): Author's own creation/work
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations) for Study Variables

4.2 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

To test the hypothesized relationships and examine the moderating role of gender, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was employed. Work–family conflict was specified as the dependent variable. Control variables were entered in Model 1, the main predictors were introduced in Model 2, and interaction terms were added in Model 3. This stepwise approach enabled assessment of the incremental explanatory power of organizational commitment dimensions and gender-based moderation effects.

Model 1: Control Variables. In Model 1, demographic and organizational control variables—marital status, spouse employment status, company type, and organizational hierarchy level—were entered. As reported in Table 2, the control variables collectively explained a small but statistically significant proportion of variance in work–family conflict (R^2 = 0.018, p < 0.05). Among the controls, spouse employment status emerged as a significant predictor of work–family conflict, suggesting that household employment arrangements and family structure influence employees' work–family experiences. Overall, the findings indicate that contextual and demographic factors play a limited yet meaningful role in shaping work–family conflict.

Model 2: Main Effects of Organizational Commitment and Gender. Model 2 introduced the main effects of affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, and gender. The inclusion of these variables resulted in a substantial and statistically significant improvement in model fit (ΔR^2 = 0.077, p < 0.001), increasing the explained variance in work–family conflict to 9.6 percent. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, affective commitment was negatively related to work–family conflict (B = −0.308, p < 0.001), indicating that employees with stronger emotional attachment to their organization experienced lower levels of interference between work and family roles. This finding suggests that affective commitment functions as a psychological resource that helps employees manage competing role demands. In line with Hypothesis 2, continuance commitment was positively associated with work–family conflict (B = 0.113, p < 0.05), implying that attachment driven by perceived costs of leaving the organization may intensify strain rather than alleviate it. Normative commitment did not exhibit a significant direct relationship with work–family conflict, providing no support for Hypothesis 3. Additionally, gender did not show a significant main effect, indicating no mean-level differences in work–family conflict between male and female employees.

Model 3: Moderating Role of Gender. In Model 3, interaction terms between gender and each dimension of organizational commitment were entered to test moderation effects. The inclusion of interaction terms resulted in a further significant increase in explained variance (ΔR^2 = 0.038, p < 0.001), raising the total variance explained to 13.4 per cent. As shown in Table 2, the interaction between normative commitment and gender was statistically significant and negative (B = −0.349, p < 0.01), providing support for Hypothesis 4c. This result indicates that gender moderates the relationship between normative commitment and work–family conflict. Specifically, higher levels of normative commitment were associated with lower work–family conflict among female employees, whereas this relationship was weaker and non-significant among male employees. In contrast, the interaction terms involving affective commitment and gender and continuance commitment and gender were not significant, offering no support for Hypotheses 4a and 4b. These findings suggest that while affective and continuance commitment exert direct effects on work–family conflict, their influence does not differ by gender.

Table 2- Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results Predicting Work–Family Conflict

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Controls			
Marital status	−0.170 (0.086)*	−0.169 (0.086)*	−0.143 (0.084)
Spouse employed	−0.284 (0.096)**	−0.257 (0.100)*	−0.221 (0.099)*
Company type	0.014 (0.047)	0.024 (0.045)	0.029 (0.044)
Organizational hierarchy level	0.114 (0.064)	0.034 (0.063)	0.007 (0.062)
Main effects			
Affective commitment (AC)	—	−0.308 (0.049)***	−0.170 (0.146)
Continuance commitment (CC)	—	0.113 (0.045)*	0.100 (0.133)
Normative commitment (NC)	—	0.002 (0.054)	0.485 (0.160)**
Gender	—	−0.014 (0.073)	−0.012 (0.071)
Interaction effects			
AC × Gender	—	—	−0.105 (0.097)
CC × Gender	—	—	0.015 (0.092)
NC × Gender	—	—	−0.349 (0.106)**
Model statistics			
R^2	0.018	0.096	0.134
ΔR^2	0.018*	0.077***	0.038***
F	3.003*	13.619***	9.283***
N	645	645	645

Note(s):1. Unstandardized coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses.
2. * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001.
3. All continuous predictors were mean-centered prior to creating interaction terms.
4. Gender coded as 0 = male, 1 = female.
Source (s): Author's own creation/work

V.   DISCUSSION

The present study set out to examine the relationship between organizational commitment and work–family conflict (WFC) among IT employees in India and to investigate the moderating role of gender in shaping these relationships. Drawing on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Social Exchange Theory, the findings offer nuanced insights into how different forms of organizational commitment function as either protective resources or sources of strain in a technology-intensive work environment.

Organizational commitment and work–family conflict

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, affective commitment was found to be negatively associated with work–family conflict. This finding aligns with prior research suggesting that emotional attachment to the organization serves as a psychological resource that enhances employees' capacity to manage competing role demands. From a COR perspective, affective commitment may replenish depleted emotional resources by fostering a sense of purpose, belonging and intrinsic motivation, thereby mitigating the stress associated with high work demands. Employees who identify strongly with their organization may interpret work pressures as meaningful rather than threatening, reducing the extent to which work interferes with family life. This result also resonates with Social Exchange Theory, which posits that positive socio-emotional exchanges between employees and organizations cultivate reciprocal attitudes. When employees perceive the organization as supportive and valuable, they are more likely to reciprocate with loyalty and engagement, which may translate into more adaptive coping strategies in the face of work–family pressures. In the IT context, where employees are routinely exposed to time pressure, continuous learning requirements and technology-enabled availability, affective commitment appears to function as a critical buffer against work–family conflict. In contrast, continuance commitment exhibited a positive relationship with work–family conflict, supporting Hypothesis 2. This finding underscores the distinction between different motivational bases of commitment. Continuance commitment reflects a cost-based attachment in which employees remain with the organization due to perceived losses associated with leaving rather than genuine attachment. From a COR standpoint, such attachment may exacerbate resource loss by prolonging exposure to demanding work conditions without corresponding psychological rewards. Employees who feel constrained to remain in high-pressure roles may experience heightened stress and reduced control, intensifying interference between work and family domains.

This result is particularly salient in the Indian IT sector, where job mobility is often accompanied by uncertainty and high switching costs. Employees driven by continuance commitment may experience a sense of entrapment, which amplifies the strain associated with long working hours and unpredictable workloads. The finding reinforces prior arguments that not all forms of commitment are equally beneficial and that continuance commitment may carry hidden costs for employee well-being. Normative commitment did not demonstrate a significant direct relationship with work–family conflict, providing no support for Hypothesis 3. This non-significant main effect suggests that moral obligation to the organization does not uniformly influence employees' experience of work–family conflict. Rather than functioning as a stable resource or stressor, normative commitment may operate in more contingent ways, shaped by contextual and individual factors. This ambiguity is consistent with earlier research that has reported mixed findings regarding the outcomes of normative commitment, particularly in culturally diverse settings.

Moderating role of gender

A key contribution of this study lies in its examination of gender as a moderating variable. While gender did not exhibit a significant main effect on work–family conflict, the interaction analysis revealed a significant moderating effect of gender on the relationship between normative commitment and work–family conflict, supporting Hypothesis 4c. Specifically, higher normative commitment was associated with lower work–family conflict among female employees, whereas this relationship was weaker and non-significant for male employees. This finding advances the work–family literature by demonstrating that gender differences may not manifest as mean-level disparities but rather as differences in how organizational attitudes translate into work–family outcomes. From a COR perspective, normative commitment appears to function as a gender-contingent resource. For women, a sense of moral obligation to the organization may legitimize work investment and reduce internal role conflict, thereby conserving emotional resources. In contexts where women face competing expectations from work and family domains, normative commitment may help reconcile these roles by providing a coherent moral framework for prioritizing work demands when necessary. In contrast, men's work–family conflict appears less influenced by moral obligation to the

organization, potentially reflecting gendered socialization processes that normalize prioritization of work roles. The absence of moderation effects for affective and continuance commitment suggests that these dimensions exert more universal effects across genders.

VI.   THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings contribute to theory in several important ways. First, by integrating COR theory with the multidimensional conceptualization of organizational commitment, the study demonstrates that commitment dimensions function differently as resources within the work–family interface. Affective commitment emerges as a resource gain mechanism, continuance commitment as a resource drain, and normative commitment as a context-dependent resource. Second, the study extends COR theory by highlighting gender as a critical boundary condition that shapes how resources are mobilized and experienced. Rather than assuming uniform resource processes, the findings underscore the need to consider social identities and cultural norms when applying resource-based theories to work–family research. Third, the results enrich Social Exchange Theory by illustrating that reciprocity mechanisms operate differently across commitment dimensions and genders. Normative commitment, rooted in obligation and reciprocity, appears particularly sensitive to gendered expectations, offering a more nuanced understanding of exchange relationships in contemporary organizations.

Practical implications

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that organizations should adopt differentiated strategies when addressing work–family conflict. Strengthening affective commitment through supportive leadership, meaningful work design and recognition may help reduce work–family conflict across the workforce. At the same time, reliance on continuance-based retention strategies may inadvertently intensify strain, highlighting the need for HR policies that go beyond cost-based attachment. The gendered role of normative commitment indicates that organizations should be attentive to how moral and normative

expectations are communicated and experienced. Gender-sensitive interventions that acknowledge women's dual role pressures and leverage supportive normative climates may contribute to more sustainable work–family outcomes in the IT sector.

VII.   MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for managers and human resource professionals operating in the IT sector. First, the strong negative association between affective commitment and work–family conflict suggests that organizations should prioritize strategies that foster emotional attachment rather than reliance on cost-based retention mechanisms. Practices such as supportive leadership, meaningful job design, recognition of employee contributions and opportunities for professional growth can strengthen affective commitment and help employees cope more effectively with competing work and family demands. Second, the positive relationship between continuance commitment and work–family conflict highlights the potential risks of retention strategies that emphasize switching costs, such as long notice periods or benefits tied exclusively to tenure. While such practices may reduce turnover in the short term, they may inadvertently intensify employee strain and undermine long-term well-being. Managers should therefore balance retention mechanisms with initiatives that enhance employee autonomy and perceived choice. Third, the gendered moderating role of normative commitment suggests that moral obligation to the organization operates differently for men and women. For female employees, normative commitment appears to function as a protective resource that reduces work–family conflict. Organizations can leverage this insight by cultivating supportive normative climates that emphasize mutual care, fairness and reciprocity, while simultaneously avoiding implicit expectations that disproportionately burden women with work responsibilities. Fourth, gender-sensitive human resource policies are critical in addressing work–family conflict in the IT sector. Flexible work arrangements, realistic workload planning and supportive supervisory practices can help ensure that normative expectations do not

translate into excessive role pressure, particularly for women navigating dual work and family responsibilities. Finally, managers should recognize that work–family conflict is not solely an individual issue but is shaped by organizational cultures and commitment structures. By aligning organizational values with employee well-being and acknowledging gendered experiences, IT firms can foster more sustainable and inclusive work environments.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite its contributions, the present study has several limitations that should be acknowledged and that offer directions for future research. First, the study employed a cross-sectional research design, which limits the ability to draw causal inferences regarding the relationships between organizational commitment and work–family conflict. Although the theoretical framework grounded in Conservation of Resources and Social Exchange theories provides a strong basis for the proposed relationships, future studies could adopt longitudinal or time-lagged designs to capture changes in commitment and work–family conflict over time and to better establish causal directionality. The study focused exclusively on employees within the Indian IT sector. Although this context is theoretically and practically relevant given the sector's intensive work demands and rapid technological change, the generalizability of the findings to other industries or cultural contexts may be limited. Future research could replicate the study in other technology-driven sectors or compare findings across countries to examine how cultural norms and institutional contexts shape the commitment–work–family conflict relationship. Fourth, gender was treated as a binary variable in the present study. While this approach is consistent with much of the existing work–family literature, it may not fully capture the complexity of gender identities and experiences in contemporary workplaces. Future studies could adopt more inclusive conceptualizations of gender and explore how intersecting identities such as age, parental status or career stage interact with organizational commitment to influence work–family dynamics. Finally, future research could extend the present model by examining additional moderators or mediators, such as perceived

organizational support, leadership styles or job autonomy, to further elucidate the mechanisms through which organizational commitment influences work–family conflict. Such extensions would deepen understanding of how organizational contexts can be designed to support employee well-being in high-demand work environments.

IX. CONCLUSION

The increasing intensity and complexity of work in the information technology sector have heightened the importance of understanding factors that shape employees' work–family experiences. Drawing on Conservation of Resources theory and Social Exchange Theory, this study examined the relationships between organizational commitment dimensions and work–family conflict and investigated the moderating role of gender among IT employees in India. The findings demonstrate that organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct with differential implications for work–family conflict. Affective commitment emerged as a protective resource that reduces work–family conflict, whereas continuance commitment intensified conflict, highlighting the potential costs of cost-based attachment to organizations. Although normative commitment did not exhibit a direct effect, its relationship with work–family conflict was contingent on gender, underscoring the importance of examining conditional processes rather than relying solely on mean-level comparisons. By revealing the gendered role of normative commitment, the study advances theoretical understanding of how organizational attitudes interact with social identities to shape work–family outcomes. The findings underscore the need for organizations to move beyond one-size-fits-all approaches and adopt gender-sensitive strategies that acknowledge diverse experiences of work and family integration. Overall, this study contributes to the work–family and organizational commitment literature by offering a nuanced, theory-driven examination of commitment dynamics in a technology-intensive and culturally distinctive context. It highlights the critical role of organizational commitment not only in shaping employee attachment but also in influencing the sustainability of work–family balance in contemporary organizations.

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