

# Exploring the Link between Work-Family Conflict and Workplace Deviant Behaviour among Police Personnel: The Mediating Role of Psychosocial Work Factors

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## Abstract

This study examines the impact of Work-Family Conflict (WFC) and Family-Work Conflict (FWC) on Workplace Deviant Behaviour (WDB) and the mediating role of psychosocial work factors (PWFs) among personnel of the Ghana Police Service, underpinned by the Situational Action Theory (SAT) and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected from 412 police personnel using structured questionnaires. Findings revealed a counter-intuitive effect: WFC negatively predicted WDB, contrary to patterns typically reported in literature. In contrast, FWC positively predicted WDB. Support from superiors and coworkers, empowering and fair leadership, and innovative climate partially mediated the relationship between WFC and WDB, while support from friends and social climate showed no mediation but significant moderation effects. Furthermore, social climate partially mediated the relationship between FWC and WDB. The study extends literature by examining both directions of WFC and their behavioural consequences within a non-Western, high-stress occupational setting. It also highlights the protective role of PWFs in mitigating WDB, offering practical insights for leadership and policy interventions in law enforcement agencies.

**Key words:** Work-Family Conflict, Workplace Deviant Behaviour, Psychosocial Work Factors, Situational Action Theory (SAT), Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, Ghana Police Service.

## Introduction

With today's family structure becoming more egalitarian coupled with smaller family sizes, dual-

earner households, and longer hours at work (Xin, Zheng & Xin, 2020), work-family conflict (WFC) remains an essential issue at the workplace and particularly for police personnel because the contemporary police officer juggle family and work responsibilities which consequently lead to role conflict and necessitate work and family imbalance (Bowen & Zhang, 2020; Nohe et al., 2015). WFC is the psychological strain resulting from the conflicting demands of work and family roles (Aboobaker, Manoj & Zakkariya, 2019). This conflict arises when the responsibilities of one domain interfere significantly with those of the other (Nohe, Meier, Sonntag & Michel, 2015), making it difficult for individuals to fulfil their roles at work and home (Altura, Rao & Virick, 2021; Labrague, Ballad & Fronda, 2021). This family and work imbalance occasions WFC and family-work conflict (FWC).

WFC exists when an employee's work activities and stress prevent them from performing their family obligations, leading to consequential impact on personal, work-related and non-work-related outcomes (Netemeyer, Boles & McMurrian, 1996). The inability to perform family obligations due to work roles leads to poor life and job satisfaction, high turnover, and poor psychological and physical well-being (Viegas & Henriques, 2021). Furthermore, employee motivation and engagement diminish, and the stress induced by the conflict can lead to negative job attitudes (Misfin, Singh & Phoolka, 2024). FWC occurs when family responsibilities and demands hinder work obligations (Ahmad & Islam, 2019). Thus, FWC occurs when family obligations, such as caregiving or household duties, create challenges in meeting work expectations, leading to reduced productivity or workplace stress. Past studies indicate that FWC negatively affects emotional health, physical well-

being, and life satisfaction, ultimately lowering productivity and job performance (Singh & Nayak, 2015; Tsang, Liu & Nguyen, 2023).

An, Liu, Sun and Liu (2020) note that when employees struggle to balance their work and family responsibilities, they are more likely to engage in behaviours that deviate from acceptable standard organisational norms. Workplace deviant behavior (WDB) refers to voluntary actions by employees that violate organizational norms, policies, or expectations and thereby threaten the well-being of the organization, its members, or both (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Such behaviours may be interpersonal, directed toward other individuals or organizational, directed toward the institution itself. WDB is intentional, discretionary, and represents a departure from accepted standards of conduct within the workplace and includes behaviours like making fun of co-workers, stealing, wasting resources, and causing intentional errors (Marasi, Bennett & Budden, 2018). WDB poses a severe threat to service delivery in both the public and private sectors. WDB, including actions like stealing, hostility towards colleagues, and withholding effort, has significant impacts on organisations in the form of corporate scandals and corruption (Bennett, Marasi & Locklear, 2018). The demanding and complex nature of law enforcement work, combined with increasing workplace pressures and low remuneration, exacerbate engagement in workplace deviance (López-Cabarcos, López-Caralleira & Ferro-Soto, 2023).

Globally, there has been an increasing concern regarding police misconduct because of the surge in corruption, excessive use of coercive power, and misuse of authority (Boateng, Makin, Abess & Wu, 2019). In Ghana, police misconduct remains a canker bedevilling the Ghana

Police Service (GPS) (Boateng et al., 2019). With a long history of corruption, abuse of authority, misapplication of rules, and use of brutal force, efforts must be made to determine the antecedents of these WDB among personnel (Boateng et al., 2019; Afro Barometer Survey, 2014).

Past studies have also confirmed the negative impact of WFC on employee deviance. However, these studies have mainly focused on employees in the banking, healthcare, and educational sectors (e.g., Gamor, Amissah, Amissah & Nartey, 2018; Kissi-Abrokwah, Andoh-Robertson, Tutu-Danquah & Agbesi, 2015), with limited attention given to police officers, especially in Ghana. This study addresses this gap by examining the impact of WFC on WDB among police personnel in Ghana. Integrating the Situational Action Theory (SAT) and the COR Theory, this study, helps in clarifying the significance of personal resources in mitigating the impact of WFC on WDB.

## Literature Review

The SAT emphasises that crime occurs when an individual with a certain propensity for criminal behaviour encounters a situation that provides the opportunity or motivation to commit a crime (Opp, 2020; Wikström & Kroneberg, 2021). Central to SAT are the concepts of moral action, where behaviour is guided by an individual's moral values, and the moral filter, which determines whether a person perceives an action as right or wrong (Opp, 2020). The theory also highlights the significance of situational contexts and social controls, which can either inhibit or facilitate criminal behaviour, depending on how they interact with individual propensities.

Ametorwo, Ofori, Annor and Dartey-Baah (2021) examined the relationship between WFC and organisational and interpersonal

deviance among Ghanaian bank employees and found that both WFC and FWC conflict predicted WDB, highlighting that dynamic employee behaviour and environmental changes could alter these relationships over time.

Chen, Zhang, Wang & Zheng (2020) also explored the impact of WFC on emotional responses, workplace deviance, and well-being among construction professionals and discovered a positive correlation between WFC and criminal behaviour and a negative correlation with job satisfaction. The study also found that WFC had different effects on attitudes and behaviour than family conflicts, underscoring the complex nature of these relationships.

Furthermore, Faiz, Rubbab and Kayani (2020) investigated the relationship between WFC and WDB and found via a structural equation modelling of time-lagged design data from 147 nurses that WFC is indirectly, yet positively, associated with WDB, with stress and burnout acting as sequential mediators. The study highlighted how WFC triggers stress, which then leads to burnout, resulting in WDB, emphasizing the pathway from conflict to WDB. Based on the above review, the study hypothesises that:

*H1: WFC will have a positive impact WDB among police personnel.*

Farooq et al. (2023) explored non-work factors and their impact on WDB using the Gioia qualitative research approach among 25 employees from public and private organisations in Pakistan. The study found commuting factors (e.g., traffic issues and road conflicts), social factors (e.g., FWC and strained relationships), and individual lifestyle factors (e.g., attitude, physical inactivity, and sleep deprivation) as significant contributors to WDB.

Moreover, Lin and Bai (2023) applied the

COR theory to develop and test a dual spillover spiralling model, which examines how family incivility influences WDB. Using a three-wave survey of 455 employees and their co-workers across 60 teams, they found that family incivility increases WDB by escalating FWC (resource loss spiral) and reducing family-to-work enrichment (resource gain spiral). However, these negative effects were weakened when supervisors exhibited family-supportive behaviours. The current study, therefore, predicts that:

*H2: FWC will have a positive impact on WDB among police personnel.*

### ***The Role of Psychosocial Work Factors***

Psychosocial work factors refer to the psychological and social conditions within the workplace that influence employee well-being, motivation, and behaviour. These factors encompass elements such as leadership style, social support, workplace culture, and job demands, all of which can significantly shape how employees experience and cope with stress and how individual and workplace factors contribute to deviant behaviours (Rugulies, 2019). Thus, Dipboye (2018) asserts that common stressors in the environment that can trigger stress responses include lack of social support, work overload, limited control or autonomy, role stress, injustice, workplace politics, shift work, interpersonal conflicts, downsizing, and WFCs, and employees who perceive a lack of support from coworkers, supervisors, or the organisation are vulnerable to stress. The COR theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how stress arises when individuals perceive a threat or loss of valuable resources. The theory posits that individuals are motivated to acquire, retain, and protect resources they value, with a natural tendency to be more

sensitive to resource loss than to resource gain (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Holmgreen et al., 2017). Stress arises when key resources are threatened, lost, or when significant effort is made without gaining necessary resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

COR theory also suggests that individuals not only utilise key resources to cope with stress but also to build a reserve of resources for future challenges, such that the acquisition and retention of personal, social, and material resources give individuals, families, and organisations a sense of capability in managing stressful situations (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Sonnentag, 2018). Therefore, PWFs such as support from supervisors, coworkers, friends, and relatives, as well as fair and empowering leadership, help employees cope with work and family interference, build a reserve of resources for future challenges, and enhance employees' sense of capability in managing stress and consequently reducing deviant behaviours (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Liao et al., 2019).

Imam et al. (2025) examined how supervisor incivility in the banking sector leads to increased employee interpersonal deviance toward customers and coworkers, as well as elevated WFC and found that supervisor hostility triggers a chain reaction where employees who experience incivility are more likely to engage in deviant behaviours and experience greater WFC. Siddiqi et al. (2025) examined the impact of perceived supervisory and coworker support on WFC among nurses in Bangladesh, using a sample of 386 nurses from five selected hospitals and found that both supervisory and coworker support significantly reduce WFC.

Additionally, Schneider and Weigl (2018), in a systematic review, synthesised quantitative evidence on how PWFs affect the mental well-being of emergency

department providers. Among the three broad categories (i.e., patient/task-related, social, and organisational factors), workplace psychosocial factors such as peer support, leadership structures, and reward systems showed some of the strongest associations with both positive well-being outcomes and reduced affective symptoms. Based on these findings, this study hypothesizes that:

*H3: Psychosocial work factors will mediate the impact of WFC on Workplace Deviant Behaviour*

*H4: Psychosocial work factors will mediate the impact of FWC on Workplace Deviant Behaviour*

### Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional design to collect quantitative data from personnel of the GPS. The population for this study was police officers of the Greater

Regional Command of the GPS. The Greater Accra Regional Command of the Service plays a critical role in law enforcement within the country's most urbanised and densely populated region, making it a strategically important and high-demand jurisdiction. The Command, headquartered at Accra Central near Tudu and Kantamanto, comprises 14 Police Divisions, 43 Districts, and 108 Police Stations and Posts (GPS, 2017).

The respondents in this study were selected using the simple random technique. Using statistical power analysis to ensure adequate representation for meaningful analysis, data was collected from 412 police officers across various districts and the headquarters of the Greater Accra Regional Police Command. The demographic details of the respondents are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Participant Demographics (N=412)**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	147	35.7
Male	265	64.3
<b>Age</b>		
20-29 years	108	26.1
30-39 years	165	40.2
40-49 years	117	28.5
50-59 years	22	5.2
<b>Education Qualification</b>		
SSCE / WASSCE	129	31.3
Diploma/ HND	103	25.0
First Degree	135	32.8
Masters	45	10.9
<b>Tenure</b>		
Less than 5 years	63	15.3
5- 10 years	148	36.1
11-19 years	111	26.9
20- 29 years	81	19.7
30 years and above	9	2.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	135	32.8
Married	253	61.4
Separated/ divorced	22	5.3
Widowed	2	0.5

### **Data collection instrument**

WFC and FWC were assessed with the Work-Family Conflict and Family-Work Conflict Scales developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996). The scale is a 10-item scale answered on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" (scored as 6) to "Strongly Disagree" (scored as 1) with a Cronbach's alpha of .82 to .90 (Netemeyer et al. 1996). Sample items on the scale include "*The demands of my work interfere with my family life*" and "*Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties*". The present study found Cronbach's alpha of .92 and .88 for the Work-Family Conflict and Family-Work Conflict scales, respectively.

Workplace Deviant Behaviour (WDB) among police personnel was assessed using the 8-item Workplace Deviant Behaviour Scale (WDBS) developed by Aquino et al. (1999). The items on WDBS were answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Never" (scored as 1) to "More than 20 times" (scored as 5). A sample item on the WDBS is "*Purposely ignored my boss' or supervisor's instructions*". Aquino et al. (1999) report Cronbach's alpha of .73 for the WDBS. The present study found a Cronbach's alpha of .74 for the WDBS.

Support from superiors, support from coworkers, support from friends and relatives, empowering leadership, fair leadership, social climate, and innovative climate (i.e., psychosocial work factors) were assessed using seven (7) subscales from the General Nordic Questionnaire for Psychological and Social Factors at Work (QPS(Nordic)) developed by Wannstrom et al. (2009). Wannstrom et al. (2009) report a Cronbach alpha of .86, .84, .77, .86, .79, .80, and .69 for the support from superiors (three items) support from coworkers (two items), support from friends and relatives (three items), empowering leadership (three items), fair leadership (three items), social

climate (three items), and innovative climate (three items), respectively. All the items on these items (e.g. "*My immediate superiors treat the workers fairly and equally*" and "*I can talk with my spouse or any other close person about my work-related problems*") were answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Very seldom" (scored as 1) to "Very often" (scored as 5). The present study found a Cronbach's alpha of .82, .70, .70, and .84, .70, .80 and .78 for the support from superiors, support from coworkers, support from friends and relatives, empowering leadership, fair leadership, social climate, and innovative climate, respectively.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Prior to the commencement of data collection, an introductory letter from the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) was submitted to the National Police Headquarters to request official clearance. Following approval, the Director-General (Human Resources) issued a clearance letter introducing the research team and encouraging personnel to participate in the study. The researchers personally delivered this letter along with the survey instruments to selected police stations. Participants were allowed to complete the questionnaires at their convenience, and the completed forms were collected on a predetermined date agreed upon during the initial delivery. Data collection took place between June 5 and August 4, 2023.

### **Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27.0. To explore the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable, linear regression analysis was employed. Additionally, mediation analysis was carried out using Process Macro Version 4.2, developed by

Andrew F. Hayes (2022). Harman's single-factor test showed that the first unrotated factor accounted for only 20.1% of the variance, far below the 50% threshold, indicating that common method bias is not a significant concern in this study.

## Results

The descriptive statistics showed that WFC recorded the highest mean ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD$

$= 1.73$ ), indicating that participants experienced considerable interference from work demands on family life. FWC was moderate ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ), suggesting a relatively lower spillover from family responsibilities to work.

Table 2: Correlation Among Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Work-Family Conflict	1									
2. Family-Work Conflict		.50**								
3. Workplace Deviant Behaviour			-.11*	.05						
4. Support from Superior				-.12*	-.03	-				
						.20**				
5. Support from Coworkers					-.06	-.06	-	.46**		
							.25**			
6. Support from Friends and Relatives						-.01	0.03	-.12*	.32**	.70**
7. Empowering Leadership							-.05	-	.67**	.46**
								.15**		.36**
8. Fair Leadership									-.07	.61**
										.44**
										.43**
										.70**
9. Social Climate										.59**
10. Innovative Climate										
11. Psychosocial Work Factors										

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

WDB had a low mean ( $M = 1.58$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ), reflecting generally low levels of misconduct among respondents while the composite PWFs mean ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ) reflects a generally favourable but varied psychosocial environment across the organizations studied.

Results of the Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, presented in Table 2 showed that WDB has significant negative correlations with several PWFs: support from superiors ( $r = -.20$ ), coworker support ( $r = -.25$ ), empowering leadership ( $r = -.15$ ), social climate ( $r = -.20$ ), and innovative climate ( $r = -.19$ ). This indicates that employees who perceive greater support, fair treatment, and a positive working environment are less likely to engage in WDB. However, the correlation between fair leadership and deviant behaviour was not statistically significant ( $r = -.07$ ). Additionally, WFC and FWC showed a moderate positive correlation ( $r = .50$ ), indicating that individuals who experience more conflict from work interfering with family are also likely to report more family-related pressures affecting their work. WFC had a significant negative correlation with WDB ( $r = -.11$ ) while FWC had a positive but non-significant correlation with WDB ( $r = .05$ ).

The correlation matrix (Table 2) further revealed that WFC is significantly and negatively related to empowering leadership ( $r = -.12$ ,  $p = .00$ ) and fair leadership ( $r = -.19$ ,  $p = .00$ ). WFC also showed small, negative correlations with support from superiors ( $r = -.12$ ,  $p = .02$ ), coworkers ( $r = -.06$ ,  $p = .20$ ), and innovative climate ( $r = -.09$ ,  $p = .07$ ). Its correlation with support from friends and family was negligible and non-significant ( $r = -.01$ ,  $p = .80$ ), indicating minimal influence from external social support. In contrast, FWC demonstrated weaker and

mostly non-significant negative correlations with empowering leadership ( $r = -.05$ ,  $p = .35$ ), fair leadership ( $r = .05$ ,  $p = .30$ ), support from superiors ( $r = -.03$ ,  $p = .50$ ), coworker support ( $r = -.06$ ,  $p = .24$ ), and innovative climate ( $r = .03$ ,  $p = .55$ ). However, FWC showed a small but significant positive correlation with social climate ( $r = .20$ ,  $p = .00$ ).

### ***Hypotheses Testing***

To examine the impact of the independent variables (WFC and FWC) on the outcome variable (deviant behaviour), a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to investigate the effects of WFC and FWC on WDB among police personnel, while controlling for demographic variables (marital status, gender, rank, education, tenure, and age). In Step 1, demographic factors did not significantly predict WDB,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(6, 405) = 1.02$ ,  $p = .41$ . In Step 2, the inclusion of WFC resulted in a small increase in explained variance,  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ,  $F$  change ( $1, 404$ ) = 3.77,  $p = .05$ , which was marginal and did not reach statistical significance. In Step 3, however, the addition of FWC significantly improved the model,  $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $F$  change ( $1, 403$ ) = 7.38,  $p = .01$ . The final model accounted for 4.1% of the variance in WDB (Adjusted  $R^2 = .02$ ), with the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.57) suggesting no major concerns with autocorrelation.

The 3-step hierarchical multiple regression, presented in Table 3, showed in Step 1 that the demographic controls did not significantly predict WDB, explaining only 2% of the variance ( $R^2 = .02$ ).

Table 3: Hierarchical Regression Predicting Deviant Behaviour

Predictor	Step 1 $\beta$	Step 2 $\beta$	Step 3 $\beta$
<b>Control Variables</b>			
Gender of respondents	-.02	-.02	-.01
Age of respondent	.07	.08	.14
Educational background	.01	.01	.01
Tenure	-.16	-.17	-.21*
Position rank	-.06	-.06	-.04
Marital status	.01	.00	.03
<b>Main Predictors</b>			
FWC	—	.07	.16**
WFC	—	-.10	-.18**

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

In Step 2, when FWC was introduced, it did not significantly predict WDB ( $\beta = .07$ ; Table 3), and the increase in variance explained was negligible. In contrast, when WFC was entered, it had a marginal negative effect on WDB ( $\beta = -.10$ ,  $p = .05$ ; Table 3), suggesting that higher WFC was weakly associated with lower deviance, although the effect fell short of conventional significance.

In Step 3, both WFC and FWC were entered simultaneously. At this stage, the model improved significantly ( $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $p < .01$ ), explaining 4.1% of the variance in WDB. Specifically, WFC emerged as a significant negative predictor ( $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Table 3), contrary to H1, which had posited that WFC would have a significant positive impact on WDB. Conversely, FWC emerged as a significant positive predictor of WDB ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Table 3), supporting H2. The results largely provided support for hypothesis three, which proposed that PWFs would mediate the impact of WFC on deviant behaviours. First, support from superiors significantly mediated the relationship between WFC and WDB. The mediation analysis revealed a significant indirect effect of WFC on

deviant behaviour through support from superiors (Effect Size = .01, LLCI = .00, ULCI = .02, Table 4) with the direct effect of WFC on deviant behaviour remaining significant (Effect Size = -.04,  $p = .01$ , Table 4), indicating the presence of partial mediation. Support from coworkers also significantly mediated the relationship between WFC and WDB. The mediation analysis revealed a partial mediation effect with a significant indirect effect of WFC on deviant behaviour through coworker support (Effect Size = .01, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .02, Table 4), and a significant direct effect of WFC on deviant behaviour (Effect Size = -.04,  $p = .01$ , Table 4). The findings also showed that empowering leadership significantly mediates the relationship between WFC and WDB. The mediation analysis demonstrated partial mediation, with a significant indirect effect of WFC on deviant behaviour through empowering leadership (Effect Size = .01, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .01, Table 4) and a significant direct effect of WFC on deviant behaviour (Effect Size = -.04,  $p = .01$ , Table 4).

Table 4: Mediation Results for Psychosocial Work Factors in the Relationship Between Work-Family Conflict and Workplace Deviant Behaviour

Mediator		Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	95% Interval Upper)	Confidence (Lower)	T-Statistic	Mediation Conclusion
Support from Superior (SS)	from	-.04	.01	.00 – .02		-2.72	Partial Mediation
Support from Coworkers (C-W)	from	-.04	.01	.00 – .02		-2.58	Partial Mediation
Empowering Leadership (EL)		-.04	.01	.00 – .01		-2.61	Partial Mediation
Fair Leadership (FL)		-.04	.01	.00 – .01		-2.50	Partial Mediation
Innovative Climate (IC)	Climate	-.04	.01	.00 – .01		-2.56	Partial Mediation
Support from Friends & Relatives (FnR)		-.03	.00	.00 – .00		-0.25	No Mediation
Social Climate (SC)		-.03	.00	-.01 – .00		1.17	No Mediation

Fair leadership also had a significant mediation effect on the relationship between WFC and WDB. The significant direct effect of WFC on WDB (Effect Size = -.04,  $p = .01$ , Table 4) as well as the significant indirect effect (Effect Size = .01, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .01, Table 4) indicates partial mediation, emphasizing that WFC may increase WDB by undermining perceptions of fair leadership. The results also demonstrated that innovative climate partially mediates the relationship between WFC and WDB. While WFC had a significant direct effect on WDB (Effect Size = -.04,  $p = .01$ , Table 4), the indirect effect through innovative climate was also significant (Effect Size = .01, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .01, Table 4), suggesting that WFC increases WDB in part by diminishing perceptions of an innovative climate.

In relation to the mediation effect of Support from Friends and Relatives on the

WFC-WDB relationship, the results indicated non-mediation (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .00, Table 4). However, a moderation effect was discovered with a significant interaction effect (Effect Size = .04,  $p = .03$ , LLCI = .00, ULCI = .07, Table 5), indicating that the strength of the relationship between WFC and WDB depends on the level of support individuals receive from their networks. Similarly, the results did not support the mediation role of social climate in the relationship between WFC and WDB (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = -.01, BootULCI = .00, Table 4). However, it significantly moderated the impact of WFC on WDB with a significant interaction effect (Effect Size = -.05,  $p = .01$ , LLCI = -.08, ULCI = -.01, Table 5) which suggests that when social climate is strong, the influence of WFC on deviant acts is reduced, highlighting its protective role in workplace dynamics.

Table 5: Moderation Results for the Role of Support from Friends and Relatives (FnR) and Social Climate (SC) on the Relationship between Work-Family Conflict (WFC) and Workplace Deviant Behaviour (WDB)

Model	Coefficients	T	Sig.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.38	10.15	.00	1.92	2.84
Work-Family Conflict	-.15	-2.70	.01	-.26	-.04
Support from friends and relatives	-.20	-2.99	.00	-.34	-.07
Interaction Term (WFC x FnR)	.04	2.16	.03	.00	.07
Constant	1.59	6.73	.00	1.13	2.05
Work-Family Conflict	.12	1.95	.05	.00	.23
Social Climate	.04	.52	.60	-.10	.18
Interaction term ( WFC x SC)	-.05	-2.55	.01	-.08	-.01

Table 6: Mediation Results for the Role of Psychosocial Work Factors in the Relationship Between Family-Work Conflict and Workplace Deviant Behaviour

Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	95% Confidence Interval (Lower–Upper)	T-Statistic	Mediation Conclusion	
.02	.00	.00 – .01	.94	No Mediation	
.01	.01	.00 – .02	.79	No Mediation	
.02	.00	-.01 – .00	1.15	No Mediation	
.02	.00	.00 – .01	.92	No Mediation	
.04	-.05	-.03 – -.01	1.94	Partial Mediation	
Fair Leadership (FL)	.02	.00	-.01 – .00	1.05	No Mediation
Innovative Climate (IC)	.02	.00	-.01 – .01	.06	No Mediation

Hypothesis four, which predicted that PWFs would mediate the impact of FWC on WDBs largely not supported by the results, although social climate partially mediated the relationship between FWC and WDB. The indirect effect of FWC on WDB through social climate was

statistically significant (Effect Size =  $-.02$ , BootLLCI =  $-.03$ , BootULCI =  $-.01$ , Table 6), while the direct effect also remained marginally significant (Effect Size =  $.04$ ,  $p = .05$ , Table 6). This suggests that although FWC directly contributes to WDB, part of its influence operates indirectly by

diminishing perceptions of a positive social climate, which otherwise acts as a protective factor against deviant acts.

Although support from superiors had a significant negative effect on WDB (Effect Size = -.10,  $p = .00$ ), the indirect effect of FWC on WDB through superior support was not significant (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .01, Table 6). The direct effect of FWC on WDB was also not significant (Effect Size = .02,  $p = .35$ , Table 6), indicating no meaningful mediation. Furthermore, though the indirect effect of FWC on WDB through coworker support was statistically significant (Effect Size = .01, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .02, Table 6), the effect size was negligible while, the direct effect of FWC on WDB insignificant (Effect Size = .01,  $p = .43$ , Table 6), co-worker support does not serve as a substantial mediator in the relationship between FWC and WDB. Support from friends and relatives did not show any mediation effect either in the relationship between FWC and WDB. The indirect effect of FWC on WDB through support from friends and relatives was not

significant (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = -.01, BootULCI = .00, Table 6). Similarly, the direct effect of FWC on WDB was also not significant (Effect Size = .02,  $p = .25$ , Table 6).

Since the indirect effect of FWC on WDB through empowering leadership was not significant (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = .00, BootULCI = .01, Table 6), and the direct effect of FWC on WDB was also not significant (Effect Size = .02,  $p = .36$ , Table 6), the results indicate that empowering leadership does not significantly mediate the relationship between FWC and WDB in this model. However, while fair leadership did not also show a significant mediation effect on the FWC-WDB relationship (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = -.01, BootULCI = .00, Table 6), the results demonstrate that fair leadership significantly moderates the impact of FWC on WDB. The significant interaction term (Effect Size = -.07,  $p = .00$ , LLCI = -.12, ULCI = -.03, Table 7) indicates that higher levels of fair leadership may weaken the positive relationship between FWC and WDB, suggesting a buffering effect.

Table 7: Moderation results for the role of Fair Leadership (FL) and Innovative Climate (IC) on the relationship between Family-Work Conflict (FWC) and Workplace Deviant Behaviour (WDB)

Model	Coefficients	T	Sig.	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.94	3.94	.00	.47	1.42
Family-Work Conflict	.27	3.60	.00	.12	.42
Fair Leadership	.17	2.42	.02	.03	.31
Interaction Term (FWC x FL)	-.07	-3.42	.00	-.12	-.03
Constant	1.40	6.03	.00	.94	1.86
Family-Work Conflict	.18	2.56	.01	.04	.32
Innovative Climate	.03	.46	.65	-.09	.15
Interaction Term (FWC x IC)	-.04	-2.33	.02	-.08	-.01

Similarly, although the indirect effect of innovative climate on the FWC-WDB relationship was insignificant (Effect Size = .00, BootLLCI = -.01, BootULCI = .01, Table 6), the findings show that innovative climate significantly moderates the impact of FWC on WDB. The significant interaction term (Effect Size = -.04,  $p = .02$ , LLCI = -.08, ULCI = -.01, Table 7) reveals a buffering effect, where a stronger innovative climate weakens the positive impact of FWC on WDB (Effect Size = .18,  $p = .01$ , Table 7).

### Findings and Discussions

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between WFC, FWC, and interpersonal WDB among police personnel in Ghana, while also exploring the mediating roles of PWFs.

Control variable estimations showed that demographic characteristics, including gender, age, education, marital status, tenure, and rank, have no significant impact on either WFC or FWC. This suggests that, within the GPS, experiences of work-family interference are largely shaped by structural and occupational demands rather than by personal or demographic differences since police work is characterized by highly standardized schedules, unpredictable duties, and uniform exposure to operational stressors, which may attenuate demographic variation in WFC and FWC (Akoensi & Annor, 2021; Shockley et al. 2017).

Contrary to the first hypothesis (H1), the study found that WFC had a significant negative relationship with WDB. This surprising finding challenges the widely held assumption that increased WFC directly escalates workplace misconduct (Faiz et al., 2020; Ametorwo et al., 2021).

This could be attributed to the highly regulated and disciplined structure of police work which may compel officers to

maintain professional conduct. Conversely, in organisations with robust accountability systems, officers are more likely to conform to professional standards, regardless of personal stressors, ultimately decreasing WDB (Huff et al., 2018). Additionally, Miao and Wang (2017) emphasize the complex nature of WFC, which can yield both beneficial and detrimental effects depending on the context. Their study revealed that while professional control can intensify the stress caused by WFC, it may also enhance compliance with job responsibilities and reduce unethical behaviour. Specifically, the strict paramilitary structure of the GPS emphasises discipline and obedience, deterring deviance even under heightened work demands (Akoensi & Annor, 2021; Akoensi, 2018). Hence, the strict institutional culture and high cost of misconduct can reduce situational inducements for rule-breaking even under stress (Opp, 2020; Wikström & Kroneberg, 2021).

In contrast, hypothesis two (H2) was supported, as FWC exhibited a significant positive relationship with deviant workplace behaviour ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Table 3). This finding aligns with previous research such as those of Lin and Bai (2023) and Jiang, Chen, Ning and Liu (2022) that suggests family obligations disrupting work responsibilities may increase stress, leading to counterproductive work behaviour. From the SAT perspective, FWC may create conditions that weaken an individual's moral filter-the cognitive mechanism that guides rule-consistent behaviour (Wikström & Kroneberg, 2021). Heightened stress and emotional pressure stemming from family-related demands may impair one's capacity for self-regulation, thereby increasing the likelihood of perceiving deviant actions as viable or justifiable solutions in the moment (Opp,

2020). Thus, FWC may not merely add stress but may also alter the individual-environment interaction in ways that make deviance more situationally attractive or less morally inhibited, consistent with SAT's core propositions.

The mediating role of PWFs was partially confirmed across both WFC and FWC conditions. Support from superiors and coworkers, empowering leadership, fair leadership and innovative climate all partially mediated the relationship between WFC and WDB indicating their mitigating effects. Grounded in COR Theory, the findings underscore the critical role of coworker support in mitigating stress-induced deviant behaviour by helping individuals conserve and replenish valuable emotional and social resources. In high-stress environments such as policing, where WFC depletes key resources like time, energy, and emotional well-being, peer support acts as a protective buffer. This aligns with Hobfoll et al. (2018) and Holmgreen et al. (2017), who emphasise that resource loss is more salient than gain, making supportive work relationships vital in preserving well-being. Therefore, fostering strong coworker support can be a strategic intervention to reduce WFC and promote healthier, more adaptive workplace behaviours.

The findings are also consistent with Siddiqi et al. (2025), who found that coworker support reduces WFC and its associated risks among nurses. This study reinforces the importance of coworker relationships as a valuable psychosocial resource. Moreover, although support from friends and relatives and social climate did not show significant mediation effects, their significant moderating roles reinforce the findings of Sonnentag (2018) and Rodríguez et al. (2024), which emphasize the importance of external social networks and workplace climate in providing

emotional resources that help employees manage WFC. The absence of significant mediation may be attributed to the indirect nature of these supports in influencing core stress outcomes. Unlike immediate workplace support, such as that from supervisors or coworkers, external social support and organisational climate may not directly alter the internal cognitive-emotional processes through which WFC leads to outcomes like WDB or strain (Hobfoll et al., 2018). As noted by Anand and Vohra (2022), in collectivist cultures (like Ghana), where familial and professional roles are closely intertwined, support from close relations plays a vital role in managing WFC. Their study, however, showed that while perceived supervisor and coworker support significantly predicted WFC, broader organisational support and family role overload had no significant impact, highlighting the particular importance of immediate and relational workplace support in shaping WFC experiences in collectivist settings.

In the case of FWC, PWFs played a more limited mediation role with only social climate showing a significant mediation effect. This suggests that while FWC is a significant antecedent to deviance, it is more resistant to traditional PWFs. This may be because family-originating pressures are harder for the organisation to control directly. For instance, Lee and Lee (2021) noted that despite increasing attention to work-family balance in South Korea, improvements remain limited, partly due to an overly organisation-centred approach. Their study highlighted the often-overlooked negative effects of excessive organisational commitment (OC), including WFC, work-life imbalance, stress, and poor health, revealing that while moderate OC can be beneficial, excessively

high OC results in negative spillover from work to family life. They highlight the need for organisations to support employees in balancing family roles without compromising their strong commitment to work.

The protective role of social climate however indicates that FWC can erode perceptions of a positive social environment, which otherwise reduces negative behaviours. This aligns with prior studies, such as Kalinienė et al. (2021) who emphasised the importance of supportive organisational climates in reducing stress-related outcomes. Moreover, both fair leadership and an innovative climate significantly moderated the impact of FWC on WDB, reinforcing evidence from studies like Siddiqi et al. (2025) and Brewer et al. (2023) that highlight the buffering effects of equitable leadership and adaptive, resource-rich environments.

Overall, these results support the broader theoretical view that while resource depletion from WFC and FWC can lead to stress and potentially WDB, the presence of psychosocial work resources can meaningfully mitigate these effects. These findings echo the assertions of Schneider and Weigl (2018), who argue that constructive leadership, paired with strong organisational support, is key to preserving employee well-being and mitigating negative behavioural outcomes.

### Implications of the Study

The findings of this study carry several important implications for policy, leadership practice, and organisational interventions, particularly within the context of high-stress professions such as law enforcement. Theoretically, the findings of this study extend the COR theory by demonstrating how resource loss through WFC and FWC can manifest in negative workplace outcomes such as

WDB, particularly within high-stress occupational contexts like policing. The evidence that WFC has a significant but negative relationship with deviance contradicts conventional expectations and highlights the complex interplay between institutional regulation and personal stress responses. This paradox reinforces the argument by Miao and Wang (2017) that contextual factors, such as strong professional control systems, can shape how individuals react to resource loss. Moreover, the findings underscore the role of institutional discipline and accountability appears to moderate typical COR theory dynamics, showing that not all resource losses automatically lead to deviance, depending on the organisational context (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

Additionally, the partial mediating and moderating role of PWFs emphasise the value of resource clusters that help individuals cope with stress (Hobfoll et al., 2018). These findings advance COR theory by empirically illustrating how organisational and social support systems can serve as protective buffers against deviant outcomes in the presence of WFC. However, the diminished buffering effect of these same resources on FWC-related deviance suggests that COR theory must account for the origin of conflict (work versus family) and the boundaries of organisational influence. As Lee and Lee (2021) noted, organisational strategies that focus solely on internal dynamics may be insufficient to mitigate the external pressures stemming from family demands. Thus, the study contributes to theoretical refinement by highlighting the asymmetry in how work- and family-originating conflicts interact with resource availability and a need for models that incorporate the domain-specific nature of resource threats and the context-sensitive efficacy of organisational supports.

Practically, the differential impact of WFC and FWC on WDB reveals that while FWC has a stronger direct and positive impact on deviance. This suggests that interventions aimed at improving work-life balance must address both directions of conflict and not solely focus on work-related demands.

The significant mediating and moderating roles of PWFs underscore their importance as organisational resources. These factors not only reduce the direct effects of WFC and FWC on WDB but also enhance employees' resilience by preserving emotional and social resources, as supported by COR theory. Organizations, especially within the public sector, should therefore invest in building supportive workplace environments, including strong peer networks, transparent and fair leadership practices, and cultures that encourage innovation and employee autonomy. The protective role of fair leadership and innovative climate in buffering the effects of FWC on deviance offers actionable insights for leadership development. Leaders should be trained to demonstrate fairness, supportiveness, and flexibility in managing employee concerns, particularly those involving family responsibilities to strengthen trust and morale and mitigate stress-induced WDBs. The study also recommends that organisational strategies targeting work-family integration should be holistic, encompassing both internal workplace dynamics (e.g., leadership, coworker relations, and climate) and external support systems (e.g., family outreach, counselling services). Especially in settings like the GPS, where the demands of the job often conflict with personal life, structured programs such as flexible scheduling, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and wellness initiatives can play a critical role in reducing deviance and promoting well-being.

## Conclusions

The findings present a nuanced understanding of how conflict across work and family domains influences workplace behaviour in a highly structured and disciplined professional environment. Contrary to initial expectations, WFC demonstrated a significant negative relationship with interpersonal WDB. This unexpected finding suggests that within the rigid institutional framework of the GPS, officers may suppress deviant tendencies despite experiencing personal stress, potentially due to heightened professional accountability and discipline. In contrast, FWC had a significant positive relationship with deviance, affirming that family-related stressors are more likely to spill over into work settings, thereby increasing the risk of interpersonal misconduct.

PWFs played a partial mediating role, especially in the WFC context. Support from coworkers, empowering and fair leadership, and an innovative climate were effective in buffering the negative consequences of WFC on interpersonal behaviour. These findings validate the COR theory, which posits that access to social and emotional resources can mitigate stress-induced outcomes like deviance. However, in the case of FWC, most psychosocial factors showed limited mediation effects, implying that family-based stressors are less amenable to workplace interventions. Nonetheless, the partial mediation of social climate and the moderating effects of fair leadership and innovation-oriented environments suggest that fostering a supportive and equitable work culture can reduce the behavioural impact of FWC.

In sum, the study underscores the importance of context in understanding WFC and FWC. It highlights the differential influence of work- and family-originating conflicts on WDB and the

crucial role of immediate workplace support systems. These findings contribute to the broader literature by demonstrating that while structured environments may suppress deviant responses to WFC, FWC remains a significant risk factor for interpersonal WDB.

### Limitations and suggestions for future research

Although the study offers important insights into the link between WFC and interpersonal WDB, its cross-sectional design restricts the ability to establish causality, as it captures data at a single point in time and does not reflect how these relationships may change over time. This approach overlooks the dynamic and evolving nature of WFC and its behavioural consequences. Future studies could employ

longitudinal methods to capture the nature of WFC and FWC and their impact on WDB over time to provide a clearer understanding of causal relationships and how fluctuations in PWFs influence behavioural outcomes across different life circumstances.

Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported measures introduces the risk of biases such as social desirability or memory recall errors, which may influence the accuracy of the responses. Future research could consider using multi-source data, such as supervisor or peer evaluations, alongside self-reports. Incorporating objective behavioural measures or administrative records could also help mitigate biases like social desirability and enhance the validity of the findings.

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