10.1 Major findings

From previous researches, we found that work-family conflict was caused by demographic factors, workplace stressors/ factors, high performance work practices (HPWPs) etc. Work-family conflict always had effect on individuals specifically on dual career couples/ working couples and thus there were some outcomes as well such as job satisfaction, career satisfaction, life satisfaction, family satisfaction, and intentions to resign etc. Thus, because of some adverse effects of conflicts, need of strategies to manage conflicts were raised. Major findings and implications are presented in the following paragraphs.

10.1.1 The demographic profile

Multiple regression results depicting the impact of personal, spousal, family, child-age, child stage as demographic factors on work-family conflict are presented here in the following paragraphs.

10.1.1.1 Individual Respondents: The Demographic Profile

Out of all nine models, six models showed statistically significant impact of personal demographics on work-family conflict.

- Managers faced comparatively more behaviour-based family to work conflict than non-managers.
- Employees who were working part-time (contract) faced more work to family conflict, time-based work to family conflict, and strain-based work to family conflict than full-time (regular) employees.
- Private sector employees reported more work to family conflict in comparison to those who were working in government sector employees.
- Employees of manufacturing organization faced more family to work conflict and strain-based family to work conflict than service sector employees.
- Professionally qualified respondents faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, and strain-based work to family conflict.
Major Findings and Implications

conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict than those who were not.
• Further, findings indicated that gender, type of company and present boss had no significant impact on overall work-family conflict.

Further, one-way ANOVA was applied to find out the differences between different educational qualifications-wise categories, age categories, and income categories of personal demographics of the work family conflict. Major results are:
• Educational qualifications-wise categories of respondents differed significantly on work to family conflict and strain-based work to family conflict. Further, perusal of means table showed that the conflict was more in case of undergraduates and postgraduates as compared to other categories.
• Further, age categories of respondents differed significantly on time-based family to work conflict and strain-based family to work conflict. Respondents in age group of 55 years or more and 35-44 years faced comparatively more time-based family to work conflict. While respondents in the age group of 25-34 years and 35-44 years faced comparatively more strain-based family to work conflict. However, all age groups have means less than 3.00.
• Income categories of employees differed significantly on all nine dimensions of conflicts, i.e. overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, behaviour-based family to work conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict. Further, perusal of means table showed that on all dimensions of conflicts, conflicts were having an increasing trend with an increase of income. Further, mean scores indicated that conflicts reported were highest among the highest income group.

10.1.1.2 Spouse Respondents: The Demographic Profile

In showing the impact of spousal demographics, out of all nine models, seven models showed statistically significant impact of spousal demographics on work-family conflict.
• Couples who were working in the same organization reported more overall work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based
family to work conflict in comparison to those who were working in different organizations.

- If any spouse of the couple was working in different city faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were working in the same city.
- Respondents whose spouses were part time (contractual) employees suffered more time-based work-family conflict as compared to those whose spouses were in full-time jobs.
- Employees whose spouses were working in MNCs suffered more behaviour-based work-family conflict as compared to those whose spouses were working with Indian companies.
- Results revealed that respondents whose spouses were professionally qualified faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict than those who were not.
- Further, findings indicated that designation, sector of the company, and nature of the company had no significant impact on overall work-family conflict and any other dimension of work-family conflict.

Further, one-way ANOVA was done to find out the differences between different educational qualifications-wise categories, age categories, and income categories of spousal demographics on work-family conflict.

- Educational qualifications-wise categories of respondents’ spouses differed significantly on work to family conflict and strain-based work to family conflict. Further, means table showed that respondent whose spouses were 10th standard faced comparatively more work to family conflict followed by those who were undergraduates and postgraduates. Similarly, in case of strain-based work to family conflict respondents whose spouses were 10th standard faced comparatively more conflict followed by those who were undergraduates.
- Although, educational qualifications-wise categories of respondents’ spouses did not differ significantly on time-based work to family conflict, but very interestingly mean scores indicated that respondents of all categories uniformly faced this conflict.
• Income categories of respondents’ spouses differed significantly on all nine dimensions of work-family conflict, i.e. overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, behaviour-based family to work conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict except time-based work to family conflict. Further, perusal of means table showed that among all dimensions of conflicts, on an average with an increased income conflicts were also increased.
• Age categories of spousal demographics did not have differing impact of conflicts.

10.1.1.3 Family: The Demographic Profile

Out of all nine models showing impacts of family demographic factors of work-family conflict, eight models showed statistically significant impact of family demographics on work-family conflict.
• Couples who lived in nuclear family suffered a more overall work to family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work, strain-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict as compared to those who lived in a joint family.
• Couples who had children faced more time-based family to work conflict than those who did not had.
• If help for children was hired, in that case, respondent reported more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour based family to work conflict than those who had no help for children.
• If couples had elders at home, then suffered more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.
• Couples who had hired help for their elders at home faced lesser strain-based work to family conflict than those who had no help.
• In case of emergency, couples who had help reported more behaviour-based work to family conflict than others.
Major Findings and Implications

- Findings revealed that if one of the spouses had not taken leave in case of emergencies faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and lesser behaviour-based family to work conflict, than those who had taken.

10.1.1.4 Child Age: The Demographic Profile

All nine models showed statistically significant impact of child-age demographics on work-family conflict.

- Couples with children in 0-4 years age group had suffered more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.
- Those couples who had children in 5-11 years age group had more time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.
- Couples with children in 12-17 years age group had suffered a lesser overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.
- Those couples who had children in 18-22 years age group had more behaviour-based work to family conflict and behaviour-based family to work conflict.
- Similarly, couples who had children in 23 years and above age group had faced more time-based work to family conflict.

10.1.1.5 Child Stage: The Demographic Profile

Multiple regression results depicting the impact of child stage as demographic factors on work-family conflict are presented here.

- Couples with children in pre-school stage had suffered more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.
• Those who had children in primary school had faced more time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.

• Couples with children in high school had suffered more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.

• Respondents who had their children at senior secondary level faced lesser behaviour-based work to family conflict. While, those who had their children in college faced more behaviour-based work to family conflict.

• Couples with children in university/masters had suffered more time-based family to work conflict.

• Middle school stage children and those who were in job did not have any impact on work-family conflict.

10.1.1.6 Child Number: The Demographic Profile

One-way ANOVA was applied to find out the differences between different child number categories on work family conflict. Results showed that child-number wise categories of respondents differed significantly on overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict. Means table showed that among all significant effects couples with none or one child faced more conflicts than others.

10.1.2 Workplace Factors/ Stressors

All nine models showed statistically significant impact of workplace factors/stressors on work-family conflict. The major findings are hereunder:

• Presence of supervisory support helped to reduce work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and time-based family to work conflict.

• The competence of employees, reduced the time-based work to family conflict.

• Respondents who had no ambiguity in their respective roles faced lesser overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.

• Employees who had organizational employee control faced more time-based work to family conflict.
• Findings revealed that respondents who were able to manage their personal time faced lesser overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and time-based family to work conflict.

• While, those who were able to manage their family time faced lesser overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.

• Respondents who were practicing overtime facility faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.

• Executives who had flexibility to start and finish their working day faced lesser behaviour-based family to work conflict.

• Couples those had arguments over various issues faced an increased time-based family to work conflict.

• The presence of female stereotypes enhanced overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.

• Similarly, the presence of male stereotypes enhanced overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and time-based family to work conflict.

• Co-worker support, self employee control, job autonomy, overtime facility and travel did not have any effect on work-family conflict.

• Couples who worked in same organization reported more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict in comparison to those who were working in different organizations.
Major Findings and Implications

- If any spouse of the couple was working in different city faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict, than those who were working in the same city.

- Couples who lived in nuclear family suffered more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict as compared to those who lived in a joint family.

- Gender and type of company had no significant impact on work-family conflict of dual career couples.

10.1.3 High Performance Work Practices (HPWPis)

The following points present the major findings of the impact of high performance work practices on work-family conflict among dual-career couples/working couples

- Development and flexibility factor accentuated family to work conflict and time-based family to work conflict.
- The results highlighted that co-workers’ support helped to reduce strain-based family to work conflict.
- Presence of supervisory support helped to reduce overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and time-based family to work conflict.
- The competence of the employees reduced overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.
- Employees who had self employee control faced comparatively lesser overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and time-based family to work conflict than those who had organizational employee control.
- Further findings revealed that respondents who practiced overtime faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, and behaviour-based work to family conflict.
Major Findings and Implications

- Executives who had flexibility to start and finish their working day faced lesser family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict.
- Discrimination or unfairness by supervisor towards employees enhanced the overall work-family conflict, work-to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict and behaviour-based family to work conflict.
- Work and organizational culture, reward and financial benefits, organizational employee control, job autonomy, and overtime facility did not have any significant impact on conflicts.
- Further, respondents who were employed in MNCs faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were employed in Indian companies.
- Couples who work in the same organization reported more overall work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict in comparison to those who were working in different organizations.
- If any spouse of the couple was working in different city faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, and behaviour-based work to family conflict than those who were working in the same city.
- Couples who lived in nuclear family suffered more family to work and behaviour-based family to work conflict as compared to those who lived in a joint family.
- Findings indicated that gender had no significant impact on work-family conflict.

10.1.4 Work and Family Outcomes

Major findings are as follows:
- The presence of time-based work to family conflict had an increasing impact on intentions to resign, and it had a negative impact on job satisfaction of the employees.
Major Findings and Implications

- If employees faced strain-based work to family conflict in that case they reported lower career satisfaction and life satisfaction.
- Also, if they faced behaviour-based work to family conflict than career satisfaction, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction were decreased significantly.
- Against the trend, due to time-based family to work conflict respondents had an increase in life satisfaction and job satisfaction but intentions to resign increased.
- Same was the case with respondents who suffered from strain-based family to work conflict and behaviour-based family to work conflict that had an increasing impact on career satisfaction.
- Respondents who were employed in MNCs had comparatively more job satisfaction and family satisfaction than those who were employed in Indian companies.
- Couples who lived in nuclear family had more family satisfaction as compared to those who lived in a joint family.
- Findings indicated that gender, spousal working organization, and location of the spousal working organization had no significant impact on work and family outcomes.

Next, regressions were applied to find out the impact of work to family conflict and family to work conflict on work and family outcomes. All regression models showing the impact of work to family conflict and family to work conflict on work and family outcomes were statistically significant. The findings are:

- Presence of work to family conflict had decreasing impact on career satisfaction, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, family satisfaction, and increasing impact on intentions to resign.
- Employees who were suffering from family to work conflict reported an increase in career satisfaction and life satisfaction.
- Respondents who were employed in MNCs had comparatively more family satisfaction than those who were employed in Indian companies.
- Couples who lived in nuclear family had more job satisfaction and family satisfaction as compared to those who lived in a joint family.
Major Findings and Implications

- Findings indicated that gender, spousal working organization, and location of the spousal working organization had no significant impact on work-family outcomes.

Finally, regressions were applied to find the impact of overall work-family conflict on work and family outcomes. Results showed that out of all regression models were statistically significant except life satisfaction.

- The results of the study indicated that presence of overall work-family conflict had decreasing impact on career satisfaction, job satisfaction, family satisfaction, and increasing impact on intentions to resign.
- Overall work-family conflict did not have any impact on life satisfaction.
- Respondents who were employed in MNCs had comparatively more job satisfaction and family satisfaction than those who were employed in Indian companies.
- Couples who lived in nuclear family had more family satisfaction as compared to those who lived in a joint family.
- Findings indicated that gender, spousal working organization and location of the spousal working organization had no significant impact work-family outcomes.

10.1.5 Strategies to Manage

First, regressions were applied to find out the impact of dependent care policies on work-family conflict. The major findings are presented below:

- Couples who had an access to parenting seminars and assistance (counselling) faced more time-based family to work conflict than those who did not have an access of the same.
- Employees who were using child care centers reported more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict as compared to those who were not used the same.
- Couples who were not using sick child care center services faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-
Major Findings and Implications

Based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were using the same.

- Respondents who had taken child care subsidies/loan reported more family to work conflict and strain-based family to work conflict as compared to others who had not taken these subsidies/loan. This shows that taking subsidies induced financial stress among dual career couples.

- Couples who were employed in the same organization and had an access of dependent care policies faced comparatively more family to work conflict than those who were employed in different organizations.

- Couples who were working in different cities and had an access of dependent care policies faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were working in same city.

- Couples who lived in nuclear families and had an access to dependent care policies faced more family to work and strain-based family to work conflict than those who lived in joint families.

- Gender and type of company had no significant impact on work-family conflict.

Next regression was applied to find out the impact of flexible scheduling practices on work-family conflict. The major findings are listed below:

- Couples who had taken personal/dependent care time (small increments of time off during work hours to attend personal or family needs) faced more time-based family to work conflict as compared to those who had not taken the same.

- Employees who used flexi time facility reported more behaviour-based work to family conflict than those who had not used flexi time.

- Couples who did not had an access of telecommuting faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict in comparison to those who had accessed the same.

- An employee who had not used time-off volunteering service faced more time-based work to family conflict than those who used the same.
The beta value of paid family leaves service did not show any significant impact on work-family conflict.

Couples who were employed in the same organization and had access to flexible scheduling practices faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were employed in different organizations.

Couples who were working in different cities and had access to flexible scheduling practices faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were working in the same city.

Couples who lived in nuclear families and had access to flexible scheduling practices faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who lived in joint families.

Gender and type of company had no significant impact on work-family conflict.

Further, regression was applied to find out the impact of career development benefits on work-family conflict. The major findings are as follows:

- Couples who were not using education and training facilities faced more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, time-based work to family conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.

- Respondents who had access to career development services and plans reported more family to work conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict as compared to others who had not accessed the same.

- Tuition reimbursement provisions did not show any significant impact on work-family conflict.

- Couples who were employed in the same organization and had access to career development benefits faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, and strain-based family to work conflict.
Major Findings and Implications

conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were employed in different organizations.

- Couples who were working in different cities and had an access of career development benefits faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were working in same city.

- Couples who lived in nuclear families and had an access to career development benefits faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who lived in joint families.

- Employees working in MNCs and had an access to career development benefits faced more behaviour-based work to family conflict than those who were employed in Indian companies.

- Gender had no significant impact on work-family conflict.

Finally, regression was done to find the impact of flexible technology use practices on work-family conflict of dual career couples. The major findings are as follows:

- Respondents who used beepers faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who did not use the same.

- Couples who had an access of cellular phones faced more behaviour-based work to family conflict and behaviour-based family to work conflict in comparison to those who had no access of the same.

- Employees who did not had an access of fax machines reported more family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict as compared to those who had an access of fax machines.

- Respondents who had no access of portable computers faced more behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who used portable computers.

- Employees who had no access of home computer faced more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict,
stain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict as compared to those who used home computers.

- However, use of emails did not show any significant impact on work-family conflict.

- Couples who were employed in same organization and had an access of flexible technology faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, family to work conflict, strain-based work to family conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, time-based family to work conflict, strain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were employed in different organizations.

- Couples who were working in different cities and had an access of flexible technology faced comparatively more overall work-family conflict, work to family conflict, family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who were working in same city.

- Couples who lived in nuclear families and had an access to flexible technology faced more family to work conflict, behaviour-based work to family conflict, stain-based family to work conflict, and behaviour-based family to work conflict than those who lived in joint families.

- Gender and type of company had no significant impact on work-family conflict.

## 10.2 Implications, Limitations, and Future Research Directions

### 10.2.1 Implications and Recommendations

With an increasing number of dual career couples/ working couples as compared to traditional couples in India, there is a need to emphasize on managing human resources in a way to achieve competitive advantage. The better management of human resources will result in better outcomes, improved performance, and enhanced productivity. The retention and satisfaction of employees depend upon type of problems faced by employees and their solutions provided by organizations. So, this study on management of work-family conflict also has managerial and policy implications for the organizations, policy makers, HR managers, and working couples. Companies can certainly make significant improvement in their performance by helping them to reduce work-family conflict faced by them. Consistent with the
findings of Galinsky et.al. (1996), this study informs both researchers and organizational leaders that work and family conflict is not exclusively a problem of a particular set of employees. It is clear from this study that employees with all types of family, situations, demographics, and can experience high levels of work and family conflicts.

Employees who are working with Indian companies reported lesser conflicts than those working in MNCs. Thus, MNCs have to learn those practices that Indian companies are practicing and which are helping them in reduction of conflicts among employees. Further, to learn Indian HR practices, MNCs also have to understand the Indian cultural ethos. Dual career couples, if stay in nuclear families can reduce conflicts by arranging some help like maids for the child, caretaker for elders, helper for household tasks, etc. Lockwood (2003) has suggested an employee assistance program (EAP) that can play an important role in an organization’s eldercare program. Some of the lesser-known benefits of an EAP are referrals to community programs and contacts regarding eldercare issues effectively. The fact that couples have none or only one child may have an effect on how the couples view work-to-family conflict. For dual career couples, the emotionally involved care of dependent children is a risk to family well-being. Therefore, family policies should provide support to executives for managing work-family conflict.

In Finland, part-time work was encouraged in place of dual-earners’ employment, and there should be a better availability of shorter or longer breaks depending on one’s’ life situations. As well as having children, taking care of aging parents or other dependent relatives in the context of full-time employment is stressful and companies are not supporting by providing work-family policies so far (Ojala et.al., 2014). Employed parents with limited social networks must expand their social support network to seek greater levels of emotional and instrumental social support. Further, supportive spouse is also essential to cope with their dual domain responsibilities. Therefore, couples need to realize the importance of providing one another with emotional and instrumental support.

Based on the major dimensions involved in the present study, the academics could also encourage public awareness regarding the work-life balance issues faced by women managers/entrepreneurs, hopefully rendering societal attitudes toward them more favourable. Also, employers have to rethink over the issue and to ensure
safe working arrangements for employees and policies need to be reconsidered and redesigned. Government can also intervene and make policies which focus on how working women with children can be supported by promoting job positions that suit their career preferences rather than offering benefits that will continue to encourage gender inequalities in the labour market.

Results indicate that supervisory support could help in balancing work-family conflict. So, top administrators and immediate supervisors should practice a supportive leadership style when their subordinates work under stressful conditions resulting from work-family conflict (Hsu, 2011). Managers/supervisors should act as gatekeepers to formal organizational policies, e.g. accesses to benefits and to informal practices e.g. control over work hours. So, for doing so it is important that they may be provided with guidance on how to be supportive and tolerant of their employees’ family commitments. Supervisors should also take some time to listen to employees’ family-related problems, and may even offer advice to employees on how to more effectively balance work and family responsibilities (Fiksenbaum, 2014). Also, there are many managers who do not have prior experience with dual career issues often find it difficult to show understanding of their special needs. Hence, management trainings may be necessary to increase managers’ understanding of the inherent difficulties of the dual-career lifestyle in order to increase their sympathy and responsiveness. Moreover, workshops for dual-career couples may also assist dual-careerists in developing effective coping strategies to deal with conflicts.

Forret and de Janasz (2004) have found that mentors played an important role in the development of a positive work–family culture (Fiksenbaum, 2014). For example, in a study done by Nielson et.al. (2001), it was reported that individuals with mentors reported significantly less work-family conflict, particularly family-work conflict than others. So, mentoring facilities should be provided to employees to manage work-family conflict. Job competency of employees helped employees in reduction of conflicts. Therefore, for further improvement, organizations should reverse their policy of “doing things by the book” and encourage and reward employees for imaginative ideas and to initiate. Thus, organizations should give authority to employees to take their decisions (Yavas, 1999; Yavas et.al., 2003).

Overtime had a significant impact on enhancing conflicts among dual career couples. Thus, organizations should adopt effective policy measures in order to
prevent deterioration of quality of work and living standards of dual career couples because of conflicts that appear due to extra hours of work. These corrective policies should focus less on defining new standards that limit the length of daily or weekly overtime hours and more on facilitating a legal right and workplace norm permitting employees to refuse willingly and without penalty mandatory overtime, particularly that with little advance notice (Burawoy et.al., 2001; Berg et.al., 2004; Burgoon and Baxandall 2004; Negrey 2004; Golden and Tuers, 2008). Employers, managers and supervisors should be trained in supportive behaviour through a combination of training in general sensitivity to work–family employee issues along with optimized use of resources.

Out of thirteen HPWPs, eight HPWPs had significant impact on work-family conflict among dual-career couples. Practices like co-worker support, supervisory support, job competence, self employee control and flexibility in working hours helped employees in reduction of work-family conflict. On the other hand, presence of development and flexibility, practicing overtime, and discrimination in treatment enhanced work-family conflict among dual career couples. Thus, employers need to identify the suitable HPWPs carefully and methodically for the organization so that work-family conflict can be reduced. Further, organizations must modify and devise HR practices like informal organizational culture, flexibility policies, financial support to workers, supervisory support (Chou and Cheung, 2013; Kossek, 2006; Hopkins, 2005; Bond et.al., 2002; Block et.al., 2004) to make employee themselves supportive and these practices also help employees in reduction of work-family conflict.

Specifically, discrimination by managers was found that created conflicts very significant. Organizations and managers must work on the issue of fair treatment of subordinates. Fair treatment of employees will be helpful in reducing the work family conflict among them (White et.al., 2003). Very interestingly, self employee control practices/facilities were helpful in reducing work-family conflict as found in this study. It means employers were not able to introduce effective organizational employee control practices that could reduce the work-family conflict. So, employers must introduce the control practices/strategies with full support of employees in order to get benefit. Batt and Valcour (2003) also suggested that control over managing
work and family demands was related to the idea of integrating work and family demands in a controlled manner.

In the work environment, dual-career employee status implies the need for greater employer sensitivity and awareness of the conflicting demands of work and family so that employees may become more effective both at work and at home. Policies and programs are required to help employees to reduce the amount of conflict and the resulting stress they experience when they try to juggle the demands of work and home responsibilities (Thomas and Ganster, 1995). Higgins et.al. (1992) found that the conflict between work and family roles reduces employees’ perceptions of quality of work life and the quality of family life which, in turn, can impact work-family outcomes of dual career couples like productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. Kopelman et.al. (1983) suggested that coping behaviour might mediate the relationship between work-family conflict and family satisfaction and other studies suggested that effective coping with inter-role conflict is an important source of life satisfaction (Hall, 1973; Beutell and Greenhaus, 1982).

Management of every organization should embrace a vision for the organization that supports work–family balance. Supportive work practices like flexible work options (e.g. Flexitime, compressed work weeks, home telecommuting) as well as assistance for child and dependent care, employee support program (e.g. counselling) and career path alternatives (Bardoel et.al., 1998) are therefore crucial to minimise stress, maximize employees’ sense of control over their lives, sustain manageable career progression, and at the same time balance career and family demands. Such practices have been found to be associated with lower levels of work-family conflict and job dissatisfaction (Thomas and Ganster, 1995) as well as higher organizational commitment and job satisfaction for those having family responsibilities (Scandura and Lankau, 1997). Organizations must desire to have highly engaged and satisfied employees because previous researches have demonstrated that an engaged workforce improves business outcomes and reduces labor costs as compared to disengaged ones (Kahn 1990; Saks 2006). In favor of this, Saks (2006) has pointed out that more and more employees of the U.S. are ‘disengaged’ and costing ‘U.S. businesses $300 billion a year in lost productivity’.

Strategies like sick child care centers, telecommuting, time off for volunteering, education and training facility, use of fax machines, use of portable and
home computers helped to reduce work-family conflict among dual career couples. Thus, use of these strategies must be encouraged and made more effective. Managers can provide a supportive environment that permits flexibility in schedules, telecommuting options, personal time off, on-site child care, and other family-focused programs to positively impact work performance and reduce the stress and conflict between work and home. Likewise, programs that facilitate psychological detachment of employees who are dealing with potential work and family conflicts can be introduced such as leisure activities, workshops about time management and relaxation (Moreno et al., 2009; Fox and Dwyer, 1999, Thompson et al., 1999). Organizations need to create a climate where employees do not fear bringing up a family conflict (Lambert et al., 2007). Creating a climate that employees perceive as supportive should facilitate easy and effective use of work-family benefits. Policy makers should differentiate between work to family conflict and family to work conflict as each type of conflict may require a unique intervention (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005). Supervisors should also pay attention to the effects of quantity of the workload, work variability, and frequency of stressful events on workers.

Kansas (2010) had also suggested some creative but untested work-family conflict ideas for employees that will help in dealing with conflicts like flexible schedules, including flex hours (adjusting start/end of day), flex/compressed work weeks, flex locations (working from home or satellite office), flex summers, short-term flexible hours policy, flex careers i.e. extended time off for personal reasons, maintaining connection through a mentor. Another one can be wellness or career scorecard as a discussion tool for supervisors and workers. Internal social networks, i.e. forum, blog, mentor, and coaches for working parents may be useful for managing work-life balance. Also, wellness/resource room for meditation, prayer, back-up child care, and recycled maternity clothes could also help working couples in managing work-life conflict. However, developing and implementing strategies that address work-family conflict have limited value unless a strategic business approach is taken (Russell and Bowman, 2000). In other words, it is important for both employees and companies to connect work-family issues with the strategic business needs (Bardoel et al., 2000).

Lockwood (2003) proposed the concept of total life planning represents a paradigm shift in our society. From these programs, employees can assess their
available choices to improve balance in their lives and develop an individualized life plan ... the most successful programs set a goal-oriented environment with a meaningful and transformational component for each individual employee (Traynor, 1999). Major benefits of this program were renewed employee energy, enthusiasm for work, and increased productivity. Total life planning programs may be offered in conjunction with benefits such as health, life, and disability insurance, or on a standalone basis. However, not all organizations may wish to consider total life planning, as it brings topics into the workplace that have traditionally been considered private. Voydanoff (2005) suggested two types of adaptive strategies: increasing resources (e.g., hire household services) and decreasing demands (e.g., cut paid work hours) and both might had an increasing impact on work-family balance. Two other studies had also empirically tested linkages between adaptive strategies and work-family balance (Keene and Quadagno, 2004; Milkie and Peltola, 1999).

Further, findings and conclusions of our study themselves are implications and suggestive for future research and researchers.

10.2.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this research was limited to a small sample, the findings of the study were nevertheless important. This study had identified some demographic factors, workplace factors, and HR practices those increased work-family conflict among dual career couples. No doubt, this study is an important and almost first study on dual career couples in India on such issues and that scale. A potential limitation of this study was that only dual career couples were taken. Thus, further research can be conducted by adding few more facets to this dimension. It can be applied on a larger scale to have more generalized results.

Despite the different sources, different timing of data collection, and high alpha values of data, a potential limitation of this study was that the data were collected by using the same construct (using self-completion questionnaires) with same method. The relationships among the variables and sub-scales could be influenced by common method variance. Podsakoff and Organ (1986) recommend that researchers should at least report results from a test of single-factor hypothesis as an explanation of inter-correlation of the variables. Harman’s one factor test on HR practices, employee control, and time management construct showed that the first factor of each scale accounted for only 38.141%, 47.306%, and 47.086% of the
covariance among the measures, respectively. So, authors like Podsakoff et.al. (2003) and Podsakoff and Organ (1986) suggested that a common method variance is not a severe issue. However, factor analysis was not applied to work-family conflict scale, i.e. 18 statements because they were clubbed or merged for analysis as stated by Carlson et.al. (2000).

Another limitation was that the data were collected mainly from north India, which could have been collected from the wider area. The study could, however, be extended cross culturally in order to have more generalized conclusions. Researches may be taken up to cover a wider area and more respondents with cross cultural extensions. The study has covered only dual career couples, future researchers may take up others too, like traditional couples, unmarried respondents, etc.