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## Article

# Work–Family Conflict and Its Sustainability Implications among Married Immigrants Working in the USA

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**Abstract:** There is a paucity of research on the work and family dynamics of immigrants who arrive in the U.S. on visas. Work–family conflict among immigrants is a sustainability issue because it affects social cohesion, economic vitality, and the overall wellbeing of communities. This study examined work–family conflicts and work–life support among married immigrants ( $n = 182$ ) born abroad but currently holding permanent resident status (also known as ‘green card holders’) in the U.S. Specifically, we examined how work variables (job intensity and work–life support) may either lead to or reduce job burnout, how burnout may be related to work–family conflict, and how these variables influence marital agreement, marital happiness, and job satisfaction. The results suggested that, in general, job factors had direct as well as indirect impacts through burnout, on both work and family outcomes. Job burnout moderated the relationship between work interfering with family and marital agreement. Marital agreement was significantly predicted by multiple variables. Suggestions for future research on this understudied population are offered along with practical and theoretical contributions related to the sustainability of immigrants, their families, and society.

**Keywords:** immigrants; sustainable immigration; work interfering with family; marital happiness; job satisfaction; job intensity; work–life support; burnout; marital agreement



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## 1. Introduction

Over 28 million workers, or 17.4% of the United States (U.S.) workforce, are foreign-born [1]. The place and importance of immigrant workers are evidenced in the *New Colossus* etched in bronze at the base of the Statue of Liberty wherein Lady Liberty proclaims, ‘... Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free; the wretched refuse of your teeming shore... I lift my lamp beside the golden door.’ Despite the role of immigrants in the U.S. and the long history of their contributions to work and the economy, experiences of immigrants are not well represented in work and family research that has focused primarily on Caucasian samples [2,3]. In the past decade, there has been some research attention exploring the experiences of immigrants. A body of research focusing on expatriates (e.g., [4]) offers some insights into the work–family experiences of immigrants. A recent handbook chapter (e.g., [5]), along with a few niche articles and dissertations, touches on specific work and family topics among immigrants (e.g., Harrison et al., 2019 [6]), although much more work is needed.

Work–family conflict among immigrants is a sustainability issue because it impacts social cohesion, economic vitality, and the overall wellbeing of communities. Immigrants

who constantly juggle demanding jobs and familial responsibilities without adequate support systems might experience decreased job performance, lower productivity, and increased susceptibility to health issues, which in turn strain public health resources and services [7]. Their children, when not receiving adequate parental attention due to work stresses, might face academic and behavioral challenges, potentially limiting their future contributions to society [8]. It is therefore crucial to conduct studies so that organizations can make informed decisions to develop and implement policies that will potentially reduce the negative impact of work–family conflict on employees for a more sustainable work performance. Similar arguments have been put forward by researchers in the education domain (e.g., [9]).

Furthermore, when immigrants face work–family conflicts, there is a potential decrease in their economic contributions. Extended work hours or multiple jobs may lead to burnout, affecting their longevity in the workforce and diminishing long-term economic gains [10,11]. From a business perspective, companies that do not recognize these issues may risk higher turnover rates and reduced organizational commitment, which can lead to increased recruitment and training costs [12,13] and decreases in productivity.

With more than one in six U.S. workers being foreign-born, it is essential to understand the experiences of immigrant workers along with their wellbeing and their families [14]. The constraints posed by immigration status on immigrants' work and family lives impede or supersede the premises in the common theoretical frameworks used in work–family research. Those involved in supporting immigrant workers or conducting research in this area of study have to rely on the theoretical premises drawn from research with native-born workers.

The overall goal of this study is to improve understanding of the work and family experiences of married, foreign-born Green Card holders in the United States using a sustainability lens. We aim to promote representativeness in work–family research by addressing the work–family challenges experienced by workers from across the globe. Focusing exclusively on Green Card holders, this paper (1) delineates the variation in burnout, job satisfaction, and marital adjustment attributed to job intensity and workplace supports for the family; (2) tests the potential for work interfering with family to mediate associations of job intensity and workplace supports with burnout, job satisfaction, and marital adjustment; and (3) explores the moderation of hypothesized pathways by both gender and level of acculturation.

### *1.1. Basic Foundations*

There are numerous reasons to believe immigrants' experiences are notably different from those of native-born citizens [5]. Nearly 1.1 million Green Cards were issued in 2018, nearly half of which were issued to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens with another approximately 25% going to individuals with a family sponsor or through employment [15]. Refugees, victims of human trafficking, 'diversity lottery' winners, asylees, etc., also qualify to be beneficiaries of Green Cards who can simultaneously sponsor Green Cards for their family members. This means that though the primary Green Card applicant may sometimes be a professional, his or her family members may be dependent on the primary card holder, at least initially, for financial and acculturation reasons. Educational attainment is not a prerequisite for family-based or 'diversity' Green Cards; it is possible that family members may be dependent on the principal applicant or other social support systems to establish themselves in the U.S. This underlines the importance of refraining from making blanket assumptions that all Green Card holders are educated and fluent in English, and thus, are able to easily assimilate to U.S. culture and the U.S. workforce. These also set them apart from US citizens. While native-born citizens often enjoy the comfort of familiar surroundings, family, and friends, many immigrants have to leave behind familiar settings and relationships from their home country. This physical detachment likely amplifies the myriad cultural, acculturative, social, and interpersonal challenges that

immigrants face [16]. Multiple studies highlight the unique challenges facing immigrant populations [17].

Such findings underscore the importance of examining the work–family dynamics of immigrant populations because generalizing the findings from studies on natives to immigrants may not be accurate.

### 1.2. Theoretical and Empirical Foundations

Grzywacz's and colleagues' [5] framework, developed for studying immigrants' work and family lives, guided this study. The core foundations of the framework lie in the ecology of human development [18]. Drawing on the organismic world view [19] that every organism is actively involved in its survival, the ecology of human development believes humans are agentic in shaping their growth. Development, in turn, is caused by progressively more complex interactions between the individual and the persons, objects, or symbols in the environment [20]. These processes, or specific types of person–environment interactions, drive development, and their form and power depend on individual characteristics (e.g., talents, genetics) and environmental attributes. Logically, this culminates in sustainability issues in the broadest sense.

Grzywacz, Gopalan, and Chavez [5] reasoned that every worker is embedded in specific—albeit interconnected—systems that minimally include 'work' and 'family.' Each system, inclusive of the individual worker/family member, seeks self-maintenance and the ability to produce. The manifestation of self-maintenance and production in the work system is the competitive delivery of goods and services, whereas healthy, functional individuals are the sine qua non, or essential basis, of family self-maintenance and production that are essential for sustainability.

'Demands' and 'resources' are fundamental inputs essential to any system's ability for self-maintenance and production, operating through the individual units in the work and family systems [5]. Demands are conceptualized as external (*vis à vis* the self) attributes that present a risk to an individual's role-related responsibilities within a formalized group, such as a work unit or a family. Resources are conceptualized as external (*vis à vis* the self) or contextual attributes that facilitate individuals' role-related responsibilities within a social group. Grzywacz et al. [5] offered an illustration by saying, 'just as a functional biological or mechanical system needs sufficient resources relative to demands to maintain itself and produce, our model posits that demands and resources contribute to maintenance and production of individual, workplace, and family (dys)function' (p. 469). In the work and family domains, the ultimate outcomes of demands and resources indicative of (dys)functional individual development can be related to one's job satisfaction and marital adjustment. The Grzywacz et al. [5] model proposes that 'demands' and 'resources' in the work or family domain can influence the global work–family experiences that can affect several 'outcomes' in these domains. These paths are moderated by 'niche' variables that include cultural experiences, gender roles, and acculturation.

### 1.3. Current Study

As indicated above, the current study is based on variables and paths proposed in Grzywacz's and colleagues' [5] model. Examples of 'demands' and 'resources' in Grzywacz's model are, respectively, 'job demands' and 'job resources'—both of which are multifaceted concepts. We included 'job intensity,' an example of 'job demands,' and 'work support' as a job resource. Similarly, two examples of 'niche' variables in Grzywacz's model are 'gender' and 'acculturation,'—both of which were also incorporated in our hypothesized model. Finally, 'job satisfaction,' 'marital adjustment,' and 'burnout' were incorporated as outcome variables consistent with Grzywacz's model and used in our model.

While we concur that there are many variables that could function as 'demands' or 'resources' in the 'family' or 'work' or 'personal' domain, we selected the ones that rationally make sense for inclusion in a preliminary study on an under-studied sample. Thus, we posit that 'job intensity' (a 'work' demand) and work–life support (a 'work' resource) are

relevant in shaping working immigrants' experiences of work interfering with family in relation to burnout, job satisfaction, and marital adjustment. While it may be reasonable to assume that immigrant workers' work–family experiences would be comparable to those of their native-born counterparts, we contend that immigration, cultural influences of their country of origin, and acculturation experiences render a set of diverse experiences in the U.S., creating frictions between work and family domains [21]. The nature of work–family experiences of immigrants needs to be examined more fully. Below, we provide clarifications to the main variables in our model.

### 1.3.1. Job Intensity

Job intensity is a multidimensional concept reflecting the relation of activities required by a job (e.g., cognitive or behavioral tasks) to capacities inherent to the job holder (e.g., knowledge, skills) or available tools [22]. This is an apt concept because the ideal scenario is a capacity that is just sufficient to meet the required activities, which is similar to the main driver of human development (i.e., progressively more complex person–environment interactions; Bronfenbrenner and Ceci [20]) underlying our guiding theoretical framework [5]. Job intensity, elevated beyond what an individual can meet, manifests in different forms. For example, time-related indicators, intimating that required activities (i.e., workload) exceed available capacity, include staying late at work and working weekends [23].

The strain resulting from high job intensity that persists over time leaves workers emotionally exhausted [24]. Excessive job intensity is linked with lower job satisfaction and threatens the integrity of worker's marriages [25] because of the additional time consumed (e.g., long work hours) and the resultant strain in one's family life or the physical or emotional strain [26]. These arguments, along with our guiding theoretical framework, lead to the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1a.** *Job intensity is inversely related to marital adjustment.*

**Hypothesis 1b.** *Job intensity is inversely related to job satisfaction.*

**Hypothesis 1c.** *Job intensity is inversely related to emotional burnout.*

**Hypothesis 1d.** *Job intensity is positively related to work interfering with family.*

### 1.3.2. Work–Life Support

Work–life support is an essential organizational resource for immigrant workers. Although family-friendly benefits and work-related support are quite useful, including support for required job activities from supervisors and coworkers [27] is needed for developing professionally *within* the job. However, work–life support is a more inclusive level of support that goes beyond the work role to encompass the life–work continuum [28]. This support has produced positive impacts on expatriates' appraisals of job satisfaction (e.g., [29]), suggesting that they may also be appropriate for immigrant workers in the U.S. Work–life support is valuable for reducing negative repercussions for employees who otherwise may experience work-related strains, including burnout [30] and troubled marriages [31] affecting marital adjustment. These arguments and the theoretical propositions lead us to hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 2a.** *Work–life support is positively related to job satisfaction.*

**Hypothesis 2b.** *Work–life support is positively related to marital adjustment.*

**Hypothesis 2c.** *Work–life support is negatively related to emotional burnout.*

**Hypothesis 2d.** *Work–life support is negatively related to work interfering with family.*

### 1.3.3. Work Interfering with Family

Work interfering with family is a significant dimension of work–family conflict [26]. Job demands, such as a heavy workload, can increase work interfering with family, leading to decreased job satisfaction [32]. Immigrants working in a new culture may take more time to adjust to the work culture and performance expectations in the U.S. It is also possible that devoting more time to work may result in fewer personal resources available to fully meet one's family responsibilities thereby increasing feelings of burnout [33], decreasing marital quality [34,35], and, over time, leading to marital adjustment difficulties for married immigrants. Based on the foregoing arguments and the theoretical premises, we offer the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 3a.** *Work interfering with family is negatively related to job satisfaction.*

**Hypothesis 3b.** *Work interfering with family is negatively related to marital adjustment.*

**Hypothesis 3c.** *Work interfering with family is positively related to burnout.*

### 1.3.4. Mediation of Work Interfering with Family

Work interfering with family has been found to mediate the relationship between workaholism and employee wellbeing [36], between the sense of justice at the workplace and stress [37], and between job demands and the distal outcome of absenteeism [38]. These studies also highlight that a stronger connection between work 'demands' or 'resources' and outcomes mediated through work interfering with family. It is important to test whether such mediation of work interfering with family will exist for the married immigrants as well. Or do they maintain a *segmentation* approach despite workplace challenges (demands) and resources present? We tested whether work interfering with family will act as a mediator in this relationship, also akin to Grzywacz's model [5] that postulates that the demands/resources available in the work/family domain also impact outcomes in these spheres through work–family interface dynamics. These, along with the theoretical tenets, leads to our next two hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 4.** *Work interfering with family will mediate between job intensity and the outcome variables of (a) job satisfaction, (b) marital adjustment, and (c) burnout.*

**Hypothesis 5.** *Work interfering with family will mediate between work–life support and the outcome variables of (a) job satisfaction, (b) marital adjustment, and (c) burnout.*

### 1.3.5. Niche Variables

Grzywacz and colleagues' [5] model suggests that distinct aspects of *niche* variables such as gender and culture (or acculturation) may shape the unfolding of work and family experiences among working immigrants. We included gender and acculturation as measured by number of years in the US in our conceptual model. Gender is commonly believed to be socially and culturally constructed [39], and there is evidence of gender differences in the willingness to accept an international assignment [40]. Others have noted that the gender-role socialization obtained in one country persists after international relocation [41]. So, if sentiments of gender equality are stronger in the United States relative to immigrants' country of origin, the meaning and consequences of job intensity and work–life supports for immigrants' job satisfaction may be useful for immigrant women but benign for immigrant men.

Similarly, acculturation, or the extent to which immigrants take on the cultural views of their host cultures [42], creates a source of between-individual variation in how work and family experiences may be related. Acculturation refers to the cultural behaviors (including learning a novel language or adjusted use of it, values upheld or adjusted, understanding local customs, etc.) that people engage in while adapting to host culture [43].

There is a dearth of studies examining acculturation and the complex intersection of work and family lives in diverse contexts. The current study is novel because it investigates work–family conflict against the backdrop of sustainable employee outcomes (both work and personal), specifically among immigrants. These observations lead us to additional research questions (see Figure 1 for the proposed research model).

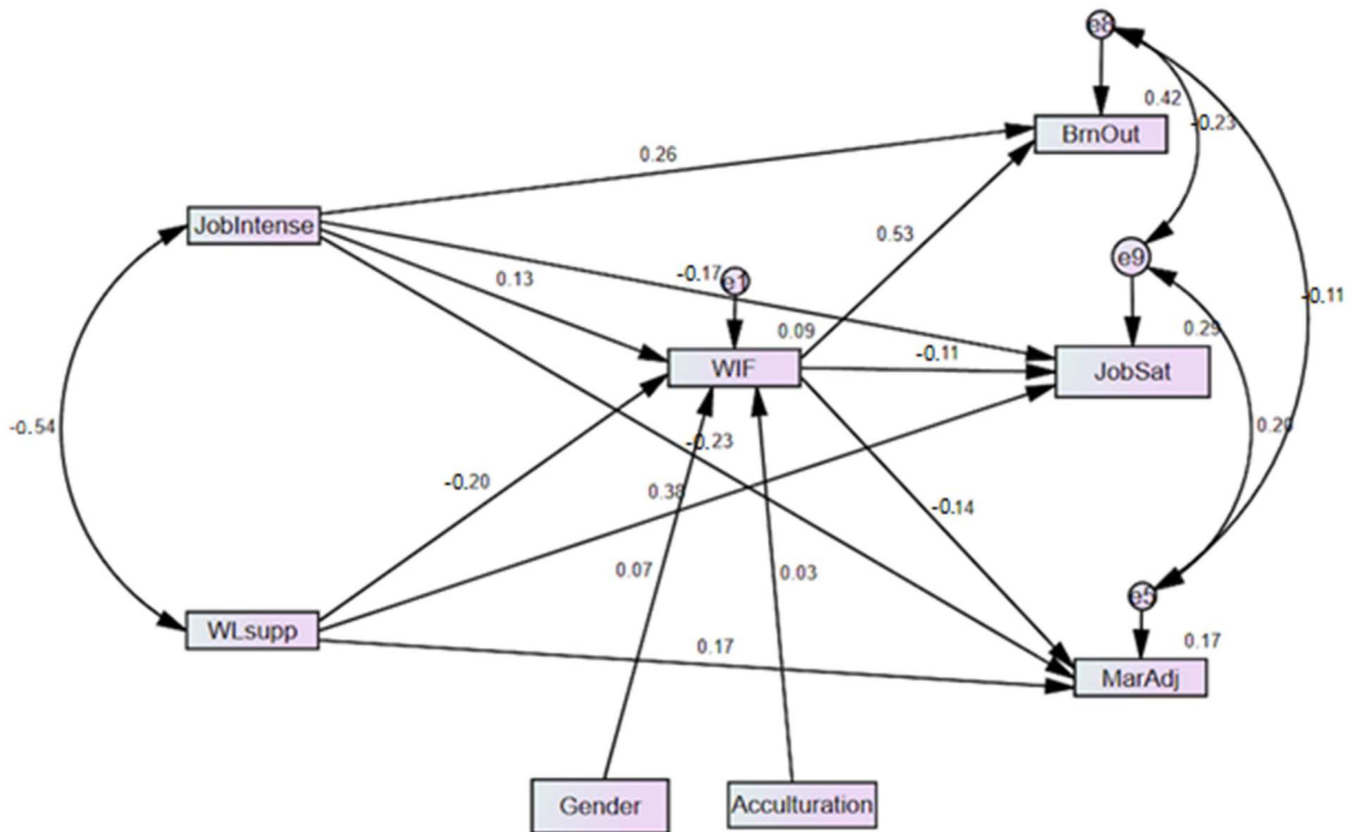


Figure 1. SEM model for married immigrants with path coefficients.

**Research Question 1.** Will the specified model fit differently for immigrant men and women?

**Research Question 2.** Will the specified model fit differently by the level of acculturation as indicated by the number of years in the United States?

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Participants

Participants were 182 married immigrants with Green Cards working in the United States (see Table 1). Of these workers, 59.3% were male and 40.7% were female, with a median age of 35 years ( $M_{Men} = 36.47$ ,  $SD = 7.75$ ;  $M_{Women} = 38.22$ ,  $SD = 8.45$ ). About 74% of the sample had one (41%) or more children (39%). The median time living in the United States was 9 to 10 years, ranging from 1 to 2 years to more than 15 years. About 84% of participants had an immediate family member who was also living in the United States. Nearly 43% have a bachelor's degree with 29% having a master's, doctorate, or professional degree. Many were moderately (18%) or highly fluent (81%) in English. Most of the respondents (76%) worked for private, for-profit companies. The respondents were employed in a range of fields: 37.9% in management or related professions, 24.7% in service, 14.3% in sales, 8.2% in construction, 5.5% in government, 8.2% in production, and the remainder in various other areas. The participants came from a diverse array of countries, including Canada (7%), India (6%), Mexico (13%), the United Kingdom (7%), among others, with a total of 63 different countries represented in the sample.



**Table 1.** Sample demographics ( $n = 182$ ).

Demographic	Groups	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	108	59.3
	Female	74	40.7
Age (Years)	23–29	17	0.09
	30–39	115	0.63
	40–49	36	0.20
	50 or more	14	0.08
Education	High School	21	11.5
	Some college	20	11.0
	Associates	17	9.3
	Bachelor's	78	42.9
	Master's	36	19.8
	JD/MD	3	1.6
Time in U.S. (Years)	Ph.D.	7	3.8
	2–8	59	32.6
	9–11	61	33.7
Children (number)	12 or more	61	33.7
	0	38	20.9
	1	74	40.7
	2	49	26.9
	3	11	6.0
Occupation	4	10	5.5
	Management	69	37.9
	Service	45	24.7
	Sales and Office	26	14.3
	Construction	15	8.2
	Production/		
	Transportation	15	8.2
Government	10	5.5	
	Other	2	1.0

## 2.2. Procedure

A pilot test of the survey was carried out on Amazon Mechanical Turk to ensure that all survey questions were clear and that no changes were needed. After a successful pilot test, the actual survey was launched on Amazon Mechanical Turk, a crowdsourcing marketplace for various business processes, including research surveys. Ethics Board approval was obtained beforehand. Only those who responded 'yes' to the question of whether they were Green Card holders in the U.S. were able to proceed to the remainder of the survey. Attention check questions were embedded in the survey to test for random responses.

## 2.3. Measures

Specific scales are described below.

## 2.4. Demographics

Demographic items were noted above (i.e., age, gender, etc.) under 'participants.' All respondents indicated that they had a Green Card.

## 2.5. Job Intensity

This was measured using two items developed by [44]. The two items are 'I am able to handle the workload on my job'—reversed scored, and 'the stress level in my workplace is manageable.' Reliability of this scale was 0.81.

## 2.6. Work–Life Support

This was measured using six items (i.e., 'My senior management is supportive of work–life harmony in my organization,' 'employees are aware of the work-life initiatives in the organization and make use of them,' 'my direct supervisor is fair and does not show

favoritism in responding to employees' personal or family needs,' 'my direct supervisor is responsive to my needs when I have family or personal matters to take care of,' 'employees are aware of the work-life initiatives in the organization but they are reluctant to use them' (reverse scored), and 'Employees are not aware of the work-life initiatives in the organization' (reverse scored)) rated on a 4-point agreement scale ( $\alpha = 0.84$ ). This scale, used in a Qatar study on work–family interface issues, was developed by El-Kassem [44]. This unifactorial scale included coworker, supervisor, and top management support items.

### 2.7. Burnout

This nine-item scale was based on the emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory [45]. Scale items included 'I feel emotionally drained from my work,' 'I feel used up at the end of workday,' 'I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job,' 'working with people all day is really a strain for me,' 'I feel burned out from my work,' 'I feel frustrated by my job,' 'I feel I'm working too hard on my job,' 'working with people directly puts too much stress on me,' and 'I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.' Items were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always* ( $\alpha = 0.96$ ).

### 2.8. Work Interfering with Family

This four-item scale was adapted from the *National Study for the Changing Workforce* (NSCW) work–family scales administered by the *Society for Human Resource Management* [46]. Responses were made on a 4-point agreement scale ranging from 1 = *rarely/never* to 4 = *very often* ( $\alpha = 0.79$ ). Scale items consisted of 'how often have you NOT had enough time for YOUR FAMILY or other important people in your life because of your job?', 'how often have you NOT had enough time to do THINGS FOR YOURSELF (like exercise, recreation, relaxing, taking up community work, participate in social activities) because of your job?', 'how often have you NOT had the ENERGY to do things with your family or other important people in your life because of your job?', and 'how often has your job kept you from concentrating on important things in your personal/family life?'

### 2.9. Marital Adjustment

This 8-item short form of the Marital Adjustment Scale [47] asked respondents to indicate how much they agreed with their spouse on various issues affecting their marriages (i.e., demonstration of affection, friends, sex relations, conventionality (right, good, or proper conduct), philosophy of life, and ways of dealing with the in-laws). Responses were made on a 6-point agreement scale ranging from 1 = *always disagree* to 6 = *always agree* ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ).

### 2.10. Job Satisfaction

This was assessed using a three-item scale (i.e., 'I am fairly well-satisfied with my work,' 'most days I am enthusiastic about my work,' and 'I find real enjoyment in my work') from [48] and the response scale consisted of a 5-point agreement scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree* ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ).

### 2.11. Data Analysis

AMOS 28 was used to test the model fit (see Figure 1). Multigroup analysis was used to address research questions 1 and 2 to determine whether our proposed model differed by sex of the respondent (RQ1) and respondents' level of acculturation (RQ2), measured by the number of years in the U.S.

Hayes' [49] PROCESS Macro v. 3.5 (Model 4, mediation, using 10,000 boot-strap samples with standardized variables) examined whether work interfering with family mediated the relationships between job intensity and the outcome variables (burnout, job satisfaction and marital adjustment) and also between work–life support and the outcome variables controlling for gender and acculturation.

### 3. Results

Table 2 reports the means, standard deviations, and correlations for the primary study variables.

**Table 2.** Means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations for major study variables.

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Job intensity	1.61	0.66					
2. Work–life support	3.03	0.64	−0.54 **				
3. WIF	2.05	0.64	0.24 **	−0.27 **			
4. Burnout	3.27	1.51	0.39 **	−0.35 **	−0.25 **		
5. Job satisfaction	3.73	0.92	−0.40 **	0.52 **	−0.25 **	−0.41 **	
6. Marital adjustment	4.66	0.89	−0.34 **	0.35 **	−0.23 **	−0.41 **	0.35 **

Note. WIF = work interfering with family. \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ;  $n = 182$ .

#### 3.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 28 using maximum likelihood estimation and 10,000 bootstrap samples to verify the six factors in our model. We estimated all six latent constructs (i.e., job intensity, work–life support, burnout, work interfering with family, marital adjustment, job satisfaction) by allowing their respective measurement items to load as indicators. All the items had significant factor loadings ( $p < 0.001$ ) for their respective latent constructs. A satisfactory model fit exists when the 2/df ratio is below 3.00 (although this measure is sensitive to large sample sizes), values for the comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) are above 0.90, and the value for the standardized root-mean-square (RMSEA) residual is below 0.10 (Kline, 2005 [50]). Additionally, the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA; [51]) assessed the model's lack of fit. For the RMSEA, values of 0.05 or less indicate a close fit, values between 0.05 and 0.08 indicate a reasonable fit, and values between 0.08 and 0.10 indicate a marginal fit (Browne and Cudeck) [51]. The measurement model showed an adequate fit ( $\chi^2 = 710$ ,  $df = 434$ ,  $IFI = 0.928$ ,  $TLI = 0.916$ ,  $CFI = 0.927$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.059$ ).

#### 3.2. Convergent and Discriminant Validity

The convergent and discriminant validity of our six scales was examined using Gaskin's master validity model [52]. The discriminant validity was acceptable for all variables (based on AVE, i.e., average variance explained), being less than MSV (i.e., maximum shared squared variance); however, the convergent validity for work–life support ( $AVE = 0.492$ ) and work interfering with family ( $AVE = 0.480$ ) were just below the recommended 0.50 AVE cutoff [52].

#### 3.3. Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

We tested the overall fit of our structural model using the maximum likelihood method prior to testing our hypotheses. The model fit was  $\chi^2 = 11.77$  and not statistically significant, indicating a good overall fit;  $AGFI = 0.953$ ;  $GFI = 0.984$ ;  $CFI = 1.000$ ,  $RFI = 0.910$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.000$ ; and  $PCLOSE = 0.792$ . The six-factor model (Figure 1) was the best overall fit to the data. All hypotheses were tested using standardized regression coefficients.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that job intensity would be negatively related to marital adjustment (H1a) and job satisfaction (H1b) but positively related to emotional burnout (H1c) and work interfering with family (H1d). Job intensity was significantly negatively related to marital adjustment ( $\beta = -0.23$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.02$ ) and positively related to burnout ( $\beta = 0.26$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) (see Table 3). However, job intensity was not significantly related to work interfering with family ( $\beta = 0.13$ , ns). Thus, H1a, H1b, and H1c were confirmed.

**Table 3.** Standardized regression coefficients for hypothesized relationships.

Variables			Estimates
WIF	<-----	WLSupp	−0.196 *
WIF	<-----	JobIntense	0.131
MarAdj	<-----	WLSupp	0.166 *
MarAdj	<-----	WIF	−0.171 *
BrnOut	<-----	JobIntense	0.265 ***
BrnOut	<-----	WIF	0.530 ***
JobSat	<-----	WLSupp	0.383 ***
JobSat	<-----	WIF	−0.106
JobSat	<-----	JobIntense	−0.174 *
MarAdj	<-----	JobIntense	−0.229 **

Note. WIF = work interfering with family; BrnOut = burnout; JobIntense = job intensity; WLSupp = work–life support; MarAdj = marital adjustment; JS = job satisfaction. Estimates are standardized regression weights from AMOS 28 SEM model. \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

The second hypothesis (H2) examined work support in relation to job satisfaction, marital adjustment, work interfering with family, and emotional burnout. Table 3 shows that work support was significantly and positively related to job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.38$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and work interfering with family ( $\beta = -0.20$ ,  $p < 0.02$ ), supporting hypotheses H2a and H2d.

Our third set of hypotheses (H3) examined work interfering with family in relation to job satisfaction, marital adjustment, and emotional burnout. Table 3 shows that work interfering with family was significantly and negatively related to marital adjustment ( $\beta = -0.17$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and positively and significantly related burnout ( $\beta = 0.53$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting hypotheses H3b and H3c.

The next two sets of hypotheses (H4 and H5) tested the mediating role of work interfering with family on relationships between ‘job intensity’ and outcome variables (H4a, H4b, H4c) and between ‘work support’ and outcome variables (H5a, H5b, H5c). We found that work interfering with family mediated the relationship between job intensity and job satisfaction (H4a; indirect effect =  $-0.05$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , 95% CI =  $[-0.13, -0.01]$ ) while controlling for gender and acculturation. It also mediated the relationship between job intensity and burnout (H4c; indirect effect =  $0.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 95% CI =  $[0.12, 0.49]$ ) while controlling for gender and acculturation. Confidence intervals were based on 5000 bootstrap samples. No mediational impact of work interfering with family was found between work–life support and any of the outcome variables (H5–Hc). We also tested whether work interfering with family moderated any of the hypothesized relationships. No significant interaction effects were found.

Our two research questions had looked at the potential role of ‘gender’ and ‘length of time in the US/acculturation.’ For RQ1 and RQ2, we used the multi-group function in AMOS to determine whether the respondent’s gender or level of acculturation affected our model. Multi-group allows the researcher to identify groups (in this case, gender and acculturation) to test overall differences in the SEM model as well as testing specific paths in the SEM model. For gender, the groups were women and men. No significant differences were found for gender, indicating that gender did not have a statistically significant impact on the model or specific paths within the SEM model.

To test the impact of acculturation on our model, we constructed three ‘acculturation’ groups based on the length of time in the U.S. (1 = 8 years or less,  $n = 60$ ; 2 = 9–15 years,  $n = 61$ ; 3 = more than 15 years,  $n = 61$ ). Although acculturation was not related to overall differences in the SEM model, the job intensity–marital adjustment path was significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The negative relationship between job intensity and marital adjustment increased in strength for each of the three groups. For the 1–8-year group, the relationship was  $r = -0.18$ , indicating no statistical significance; but for the 9–15-year group,  $r = -0.28$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; and for the group residing in the U.S. more than 15 years,  $r = -0.54$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . These relationships controlled for gender.

Further, we conducted a post hoc test using ANOVA to see if there were differences between the three acculturation groups. Overall, we found that acculturation did have an impact such that those who were in the U.S. fewer than 9 years reported that their immigrant status significantly influenced their ability to manage their workload ( $M = 1.89$ ,  $SD = 0.99$  versus  $M = 1.54$ ,  $SD = 0.50$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and stress level ( $M = 1.85$ ,  $SD = 0.36$  versus  $M = 1.64$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) than immigrants who had been in the U.S. for more than 15 years.

#### 4. Discussion

This research explored hypotheses and research questions regarding burnout, job satisfaction, and marital harmony among married immigrants, focusing on potential job-related causes and antecedents. The rising prevalence of immigrant professionals in the U.S., especially their significant contributions in STEM, underscores the importance of studying this population's impact on the sustainable progression of the U.S. economy. Yet, increased job demands for immigrants, particularly job intensity, were found to have a negative relationship with marital adjustment (H1a) and job satisfaction (H1b), but a positive relationship with emotional exhaustion burnout (H1c). Consistent with our research framework [5], heightened job pressures without the necessary resources to manage them can hinder workers' ability to manage demands in other areas of the family-work system. Committing more time to work (i.e., allocating more resources to meet job pressures) results in less energy for the marital relationship, affecting marital adjustment. Burnout could arise from insufficient resources to manage job pressures. For certain immigrants, jobs in a new country might not align with their qualifications or anticipations, creating a misalignment that can drain energy, potentially leading to immigrant burnout over time.

The expected relationship between job intensity and job satisfaction (H1b) was significant at the 0.02 level. Though not as robust as we thought it would be, it still portends the fact that demands in skills and energy at work may have a negative impact on immigrants. Work may provide an indirect route for sustaining one's life and family in a foreign country, but the "*benefits outweigh the costs*" mentality may also explain why 'intensity' does not seem to predict a strong sense of 'dissatisfaction.' We also found no significance for the hypothesized relationship between job intensity and work interfering with family (H1d). This is an interesting finding that needs further exploration. One argument could be that immigrants might be more focused on building a life in the U.S. and that one's job is a primary way of supporting oneself and one's family. Despite there being a likelihood of work demands or job intensity affecting one's family life, immigrants are generally finding resources to cope with job intensity while still meeting their family duties. We did not measure the support at home in this study, which would have enabled us to further clarify why job intensity was not significantly related to work interfering with family.

Our study also highlighted the importance of resource support in the workplace. We found that work-life support was positively associated with job satisfaction (H2a) and work interfering with family (H2d). These findings are consistent with earlier research [29] supporting the theoretical framework underlying this study. Encouragement in completing work-related tasks and recognition of the need for work-life support positively contribute to the worker's sense of agency for the self and family derived from successful attainment of the required role-related responsibilities.

These findings reveal the significant, overarching role of work-life support in one's life, underscoring the sustainability implications of work-life support for immigrants. Sustainable societal structures and practices promote the long-term wellbeing of people, ensuring that they are not just surviving but thriving. Immigrants, when receiving adequate work-life support from their organizations, supervisors, or peers, demonstrate improved control over their personal and professional lives. This not only mitigates the challenges of work with family responsibilities, but also enhances job satisfaction, ultimately benefiting both employers and the wider community. This is particularly vital for immigrant workers who might be struggling with workplace demands while simultaneously aiding their families

in adjusting to a new cultural landscape. Through the lens of the ecological-systems-based interactions posited by Bronfenbrenner and Ceci [20], the proposed theoretical framework supports the idea that fostering these interpersonal and organizational supports is crucial for the sustainable integration of immigrants into society. This not only promotes individual wellbeing but also enhances the collective resilience and adaptability of communities, a key indicator of sustainability.

Functioning in both work and home roles may be salient for the immigrant workers who may feel the familial responsibility of helping family members adjust to the new culture. The ecological-systems-based interactions [20] would be supported by the theoretical framework proposed here. Thus, it is imperative that organizations continue to extend support to immigrants to assist them with acculturation but also in accomplishing desirable outcomes in their work and personal/marital/family lives. Work–life support can also relate to improved marital adjustment and be expected to reduce work pressure and stress on immigrant workers, leading to more energy for family duties as well as experiences of increased job satisfaction. The supportive environment would provide the resources that aid the worker in meeting both maintenance and production responsibilities across work and family settings, thereby aiding them to feel competent in meeting their demands and responsibilities. With this support system, the worker can meet both work and marital role commitments, ultimately leading to a healthier marital adjustment and augmented job satisfaction.

For H3, work interfering with family was negatively related to marital adjustment (H3b) and positively to burnout (H3c). Grzywacz and colleague's [5] immigration model posits that demands associated with one's role in a specific domain could have impact in an individual's functioning and was supported such that emotional fatigue from dealing with job demands might exhaust the individual, leading to lower marital adjustment (H3b) and heightened burnout (H3c). We did not measure immigrants' job tenure or whether their job matched their skill set. We maintain that the challenges of specific work positions would influence both partners' feelings of agency in relation to dealing with work-related challenges. A job that does not align with one's skill set could negatively affect both the worker's and partner's sense of equilibrium in relation to work and marriage, respectively, by influencing their capacity to produce positive outcomes. As such, the impact of job misalignment may be evidenced by results indicating experiences of burnout (i.e., emotional exhaustion). Emotional fatigue would likely reduce immigrant worker confidence, principally if their job was not a match for their skill set or if the job was too routine. It is also feasible that the job held was temporary while they sought a more satisfactory job.

All these may contribute to a sense of frustration or demotivation at work that can affect how immigrants view themselves with respect to meeting their family obligations. It is plausible that traditional gender roles are difficult in their new home (the U.S.) for many immigrants, leading to disappointment and conflict in the family domain. Further, family members might be dependent on the employed immigrant for emotional and acculturation support. Work interfering with family lives may reduce the time and commitment that employed immigrants might otherwise provide to their family. Unfortunately, we did not examine family dynamics in this study, which might have enabled us to offer additional insights about the H3a results. However, as suggested by the Grzywacz et al. [5] model, we note that the maintenance of both work and family systems requires effective functioning at both the individual and the family level.

We observed significant mediation effects for work interfering with family on the relationship between job intensity and job satisfaction (H4a), as well as between job intensity and burnout (H4c). It is vital to comprehend the connection between the work and family interface for immigrants as job intensity affects not only their work domain, but also their family domain. Although we did not measure how job intensity affects family dynamics, the mediation analyses tend to specify that work demands can hypothetically affect job

outcomes for immigrants by deteriorating the impact of work on family and subsequently creating more emotional exhaustion (burnout) and lower work satisfaction.

Gender did not have a bearing on the model or any of the model paths, although we found evidence for acculturation in the inverse relationship between job intensity and marital adjustment, becoming stronger with increasing years of acculturation. This might indicate that, with the increase in the number of years in the U.S., immigrants have acculturated to the U.S. culture by working longer hours and thereby thriving in workplace/professional life competition. As one becomes more adapted to the 'new' culture, it is possibly the case that one's native/original culture tends to exert a lesser influence on the self, including the 'work' and 'family' selves. One becomes more accustomed to putting in extended hours at work, striving for professional success, etc. All these factors might impact marital adjustment.

#### *4.1. Immigrant Workers and Work–Family Interference*

Overall, the results provide mixed evidence as to whether our findings about work and family life based on native-born families in the U.S. hold for immigrant families [53]. The present findings suggest that demands and resources are meaningful correlates of both work interfering with family, as well as the work–family effects of burnout, job satisfaction, and marital adjustment. However, our results also reveal noteworthy departures from other studies on nonimmigrants, as explained above.

#### *4.2. Theoretical and Practical Contributions*

There is a lack of theoretical models explaining immigration in general and, particularly, immigrant's work–family dynamics. Results from this study offer support for the Grzywacz et al. [5] model that guided our study. Generally, the present results suggest that work and family lives among immigrants require more thoughtful consideration and additional empirical study. This paper offers a conceptual framework for hypothesizing comparative work–family studies on immigrant workers from different countries. It also underscores the significance of it providing a comprehensive and sustainable work environment for immigrant employees to ensure their overall wellbeing.

Our research presents several practical considerations, particularly within the context of sustainability and acculturation. Recognizing the infancy of work–family dynamics studies targeting immigrants, we caution against broadly applying findings from studies on U.S. employees to immigrants awaiting citizenship. The pivotal nature of work variables in our research underscores this. It is potentially misleading to assume that concepts like work–life interaction and work–family conflict, prevalent in Western contexts, can be seamlessly transposed onto individuals from diverse backgrounds. Our findings, though rooted in the U.S., emphasize the necessity to adapt corporate work–family programs to address the distinct challenges faced by immigrants. For sustainable integration, tailored work–life support, especially during initial acculturation phases, can act as a significant pillar, reflecting the centrality of employment in both securing immigrant status and ensuring family wellbeing. Such support is necessary for a sustainable adaptation and acculturation to the U.S. that can assist in lessening the negative effects stemming from work–family conflict.

#### *4.3. Limitations*

We included married Green Card holders working across different industries since this was an exploratory study; however, this might have masked differences in industry-specific or even location-related differences. Limitations associated with online surveys may be present, especially regarding English language comprehension, although respondents reported high levels of English fluency. We acknowledge that the common method variance may have affected the results since the data were cross-sectional [54]. We did not collect data on the cultural orientations of the participants or the cultural influences of their country of origin. Though we measured the role of acculturation as a control variable, we

were not able to analyze more culture-specific differences. Such cultural dimensions, added as moderators in our model, would have brought unique contributions to the literature on immigrants. It would be ideal to have secured data on the family dynamics including the support available to the immigrant's spouse or if they were also working. Additional information on the family make-up would have enabled us to understand the work–family context more completely, especially the snowballing effect of work interfering with family with increasing years of life in the US. Finally, there is a dearth of previous research findings on permanent residents in the U.S. to further validate our results. Finally, we included only the 'emotional exhaustion' dimension of burnout in this study as that is the most central one in the concept.

#### 4.4. Future Research

There are several opportunities for future research on immigrant experiences. We did not consider specific immigration routes, which could range from employment to family or marriage, each bringing different professional qualifications and consequent work responsibilities. For instance, immigrants transitioning from a work visa to a Green Card might likely occupy professional roles, given the visa's degree requirement. Knowing such distinctions can better contextualize job demands and available work–life support. Moreover, understanding cultural nuances, family structures, and acculturation processes can shed light on how immigrants manage work and family responsibilities, especially as their tenure in the U.S. extends. Implementing varied data collection methods, like marker variables or a longitudinal approach, could enhance the accuracy and depth of these insights. Exploring the experiences of specific immigrant sub-groups and understanding the broader physical or psychological implications of their work–life interface would not only inform academic discussions but also guide organizations in refining policies tailored for immigrant workers. Given the importance of sustainable assimilation for immigrants, further research should also consider the broader sustainability aspects, examining how adapting and thriving in new environments impact individual wellbeing and community cohesion. Future studies should also include other variables pertaining to immigrants or the remaining dimensions of variables such all the three dimensions of burnout.

## 5. Conclusions

This study considered the work–family dynamics of the immigrants with Green Cards working in the U.S. in the context of sustainability. The results suggest that immigrant respondents consider work as directly affecting their job satisfaction, though not leading to interference with their family/home lives. However, there are intervening variables that originate from an unproductive work environment that leads to negative repercussions in their marriages. Immigrants' perceptions of support received at work tends to have a positive impact on both their jobs *and* family lives (reduced levels of work interfering with family). These findings suggest that immigrants may experience work and family issues differently than native-born American citizens. For a sustainable and inclusive future, further research is needed to understand the interactions between work and family life among the U.S.'s immigrant population. This study has discussed important implications for understanding the unique nuances of immigrant workers in managing their adjustment in the U.S., thus contributing to sustainability initiatives.

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