



Exploring the coping strategies used by South African Hindu mothers to manage work-family conflict

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of the Degree of Master of Organisational Psychology

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The highest result of education is tolerance – Hellen Keller.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the experiences of employed South African Hindu mothers. The purpose of the exploration was to better understand the coping strategies that these mothers used to deal with their work and family role expectations. South African Hindu mothers are a subset of people who originate from traditional or collectivistic, cultural backgrounds, yet, live in a society in which workplaces subscribe to mainly, Western business practices. By exploring the coping strategies of this collectivistic cultural group in South Africa, the implications are relevant to what is known about coping with work and family demands. Secondary analysis of qualitative data led to the findings of this research. Twenty, unstructured, in-depth interviews allowed participants to share their stories as they wanted. From these stories, findings were that South African Hindu mothers used internal psychological processes, and, external processes to cope with their family and work demands. Internal processes included, reappraising the challenges of holding multiple roles, acceptance of Indian ideals, and, feelings of guilt that lead to overcompensation. External processes included coping using social support, and, managing life roles through structure, prioritisation, organising, flexible work and choosing alternative career paths. The research considers the influence of cultural norms and traditions juxtaposed by a modern way of living in relation to coping with the demands of work and family expectations. Future studies may benefit from building knowledge on how collectivism shapes coping and what is known about coping for additional, collectivistic cultural groups, particularly, within the South African context.

Key words: coping strategies, work and family roles, collectivism, South African Hindu mothers, secondary analysis of qualitative data.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Combining work and family duties has become an important matter especially as women increasingly enter the labour market globally (Putnik, Houkes, Jansen, Nijhuis & Kant, 2018). What is known about the fulfilment of work and family roles is that these dual demands may cause conflict and stress which produces negative outcomes for individuals (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). There is some understanding of how white middle class samples in the United States cope with work-family conflict (Blair-Loy, 2001; Galovan, Fackrell, Buswell, Jones, Hill, & Carroll, 2010). In the South African Indian context, there has been some exploration of women's perceptions of support from their husbands (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016) and on strategies used by South African Indian women to reconcile tensions between their identities (Carrim, 2012; Carrim, 2018; Mazibulo & Govender, 2017). However, little research on how women from traditional, collectivistic cultural groups cope with work-family conflict in the South African context exists.

The entry of women in the workforce is especially marked in the South African context with the onset of democracy in 1994 and resulting laws to redress past racial and gender discrimination. One traditional group that benefits from these progressive laws in South Africa are Hindu women. The increase of their participation in South African organisations is interesting because most South African workplaces are guided by Western management practices emphasising Anglo values of individual performance and freedom of expression yet these women are expected to fulfil traditional family roles in a culture that values strong familial connections and deference. Furthermore, Hinduism promotes that mothers are responsible for the successful upkeep of the family and home life (Singh, 2011). This study therefore explores how Hindu mothers working in South African organisations cope with their dual commitments of work and family.

Given that the South African population comprises many ethnic groups which hold traditional cultural values that may be divergent from those in the workplace. Hindu mothers, in this study, serve as one example of such a subgroup whose coping strategies for dealing with work-family conflict should be explored. Accordingly, this study addresses the call for more research to be done outside the Western context to build a comprehensive understanding of work and family role interactions in the context of diversity (Putnik et al., 2018).

Research Aims

This study sets out to explore the coping strategies used by traditional Hindu mothers for managing their dual demands from work and family in the South African context. Understanding coping in terms of work and family roles is relevant because it provides insight into what strategies and methods these individuals develop to manage stressors by leveraging available resources (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Kovacs, 2007).

Previous research suggests that women with strong racial or ethnic identities are required to navigate between two distinctly different spheres of life because their work and family roles are based on potentially contrasting principles, such as individualistic work roles with collectivistic family roles (Auster, 2001; Bell, 1990). Auster (2001) argues that additional stress may arise as a result of conflicting demands between the two cultures and roles. For example, because collectivistic culture places greater emphasis on the family role, individuals may anticipate working longer hours so that they are able to sufficiently provide for their family (Galovan et al., 2010). Yet, compromising on family time due to work role fulfilment may increase strain within the family (Erarslan-Baskurt & Aycan, 2017).

The emphasis of familial duties of mothers, even for working mothers, is common across a variety of ethnic minority groups such as Latino women in the United States of America, Sikh and Muslim mothers in the United Kingdom and Malaysia (Achour, Grine & Roslan Mohd Nor; 2015; Earle, Joshi, Geronimo & Acevedo-Garcia; 2014; Kaur Rana, Kagan, Lewis & Rout, 1998; Moen & Yu, 2000). Aligned to the interpretations of Achour et al. (2015) and Kaur Rana et al. (1998), the primary duties of Hindu mothers are embedded within the family sphere or domain (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017).

Prior research conducted in India, a collectivistic and predominantly Hindu society, indicated that maintaining strong familial connections increased the likelihood of stress between work and family roles; where fulfilling expectations from extended families was shown to increase stress among employed women (Buddhapriya, 2009; Valk and Srinivasan, 2011). For over 150 years, Indians have dispersed to South Africa and hence being part of a diaspora adds a further layer of complexity in understanding the coping strategies of Hindu mothers in South Africa in dealing with their dual demands of work and family.

Research Question

What are the coping strategies that Hindu mothers in South Africa use to manage the demands of work and family?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Combining work and family duties has become an important matter especially as women increasingly enter the labour market globally (Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020; Putnik et al., 2018). What is known about the fulfilment of work and family roles is that these dual demands may cause conflict and stress which produces negative outcomes for individuals (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). While there is some understanding of how white middle class samples in the United States cope with work-family conflict (Blair-Loy, 2001; Galovan et al., 2010) there is very little research on how other cultural groups may cope (French, Dumani, Allen & Shockley, 2018; Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020).

The entry of women in the workforce is especially marked in the South African context with the onset of democracy in 1994 (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016; Jaga, Arabandi, Bagraim & Mdlongwa, 2018) and resulting laws to redress past racial and gender discrimination. One traditional group that benefits from these progressive laws in South Africa are Hindu women. The increase of their participation in South African organisations is interesting because most South African workplaces are guided by Western management practices emphasising Anglo values of individual performance and freedom of expression, yet these women are expected to fulfil traditional family roles in a culture that values strong familial connections and deference. Furthermore, Hinduism promotes that mothers are responsible for the successful upkeep of the family and home life (Singh, 2011). This study therefore explores how Hindu mothers working in South African organisations cope with their dual commitments of work and family. Given that the South African population comprises a number of distinct cultural groups that hold traditional cultural values that may be distinct from those in the workplace, in this study Hindu mothers serve as one example of such a subgroup whose coping strategies for dealing with work-family conflict should be explored. Accordingly, this study addresses the call for more research to be done outside the Western context to build a comprehensive understanding of work and family role interactions in the context of diversity (Putnik et al., 2018).

Coping with Work-Family Conflict (WFC)

Introduction to coping.

Coping is a “response aimed at diminishing the physical, emotional and psychological burden that is linked to stressful life events and daily hassles” (Snyder, 1999, p. 5). Coping strategies are the reactions of an individual that effectively lessen the adverse impact of an

unwanted circumstance i.e. reduces the burden that the person experiences. Coping strategies are the efforts a person makes (cognitive and behavioural) to manage taxing demands - which are seen as exceeding a person's capacity of resources - to minimise damage from the stressors of life (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Thus, coping strategies typically involve conscious and direct tactics to address problems induced by stress or trauma (Achour, Grine & Roslan Modh Nor, 2015; Snyder, 1999; Thompson, Fiorillo, Rothbaum, Ressler & Michopoulos, 2018).

Coping theory.

Coping efforts are the cognitive and behavioural strides a person takes to deal with demands or expectations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Simply, it is the things that people do to minimise damage from the stressors of life (Aryee et al., 1999; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Consensus of this definition is evidenced by Supe (1998) who added that coping strategies are the constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts of a person to handle internal or external demands that are taxing and beyond the person's resources. Thus, coping strategies typically involve a conscious and direct tactic to address problems (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2007).

Coping with work and family roles is an important part of life for many working people because it allows individuals to develop strategies and methods to manage stressors through resources that are available to them (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Kovacs, 2007). In terms of personal resources, Pearlin, and Schooler (1978) draw distinctions between the three categories of resources available to people: social resources, psychological resources and specific coping resources. Social resources are characterised by interpersonal networks including family, friends and community members (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Psychological resources are the personality characteristics that people utilise to deal with stressors from events or objects in their environment (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). It is worthwhile to note that psychological resources may represent some of the things that someone is, regardless of the roles they fulfil. For example, "Psychological resources include personal skills and abilities, and environmental resources reflect institutional, ethical, and emotional access to the social environment" (Hakobyan & Khachatryan, 2018, p. 171). Specific coping resources are the thoughts, behaviours and perceptions that people engage in when dealing with their life stressor. Pearlin and Schooler offered insights as to what personal resources are available for someone to leverage and provided a base-line for future research on coping.

Associated to, but distinct from, Pearlin's and Schooler's (1978) assertions on resources is Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resource (COR) theory. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) laid foundational understanding and explained the types of resources that people use to deal with stress. Building on this, Hobfoll's (1989) COR theory provides a framework which is useful in understanding the dynamics that exist between environmental demands and resource availability. COR theory suggests that a person tends to acquire and conserve resources which they may deem essential for engaging with their environment (Hobfoll, 1989). These resources can be personal features of an individual, time, energy, family members and work colleagues that are valued by the individual and necessary for their survival. Stress arises when conditions within the environment threaten the loss or reduction of resources, or, when the resources spent fail to deliver the expected gains (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). Thus, when resources are depleted or spent, additional stress arises for the individuals as they navigate their work and family roles. For work-family research, the dynamic between gaining and maintaining resources versus using or spending resources to deal with role expectations has implications for how people cope with their roles.

Given that the stressors of work-family conflict WFC are social in origin, understanding coping is essential to appreciate the impact of society's expectations on people and workplaces (Pearlin, & Schooler, 1978). Furthermore, a stable relationship between work and family roles, minimises the level of role interference and decreases levels of stress which ultimately, promotes health and well-being of working individuals (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). So by understanding coping for working people, organisations and leaders in society would be provided with insights that allow them to make decisions and take actions to help people cope and minimise their stress i.e. help people be better adjusted members of their communities.

Siebert (1974) asserted that there are sufficient compensations or coping strategies for researchers to consider instead of focusing on the reasons for dysfunction in multiple roles. Since Siebert's assertion on the study of WFC, the association between WFC and coping remains under-researched. Kalliath and Kalliath (2014) echo that despite the study of WFC in working populations i.e. studies about the causes or precursors of WFC, what has remained relatively unexplored is how workers cope with the demands of their roles. A contrasting view is provided by Aazami, Shamsuddin and Akmal (2015), arguing that research on coping strategies is not a new concept, and, that many theories have attempted to distinguish the various nuances of coping strategies. Perhaps a more balanced evaluation of extant research is

that the general, stress-reducing properties of coping have been determined (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) but the specific, unique styles that reduce levels of conflict (and are effective) have not yet been identified (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). If effective coping strategies are suggested to be associated with reduced levels of perceived WFC (Aryee et al., 1999; Baltes, Zhdanova & Clark, 2011) then what remains to be understood is which strategies are effective at reducing perceived WFC for people. In other words, the ways of coping that would lessen perceived WFC remains unclear and more work is needed to determine tangible interventions that workplaces and society can implement to minimise WFC.

In minimising WFC, firstly, an understanding of how stress is coped with is needed. From the definition of coping, two concepts (which are central to any psychological stress theory) are: appraisal i.e. the person's evaluation of the importance of what is happening for their well-being; and, coping i.e. the person's efforts in action and thought to deal with particular demands (Krohne, 2002). Additionally, the outcomes of these processes imply that cognitive appraisal and coping behaviours of an individual may have an effect on how they experience WFC (Krohne, 2002; Pearlin, & Schooler, 1978). This is important because it demonstrates that individual differences influence how WFC is perceived and managed by employees.

Coping with Work-Family Roles

Work-family conflict.

WFC is defined as “a form of interrole conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). In particular, WFC arises when: time spent to fulfil the expectations of one role makes it difficult to fulfil the expectations of another role; strain experienced in one role hinders the fulfilment in another role; and; the behaviours required by one role make it difficult to fulfil the expectations of another (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The concept of WFC follows on from the work of Goode (1960) who introduced the term “role strain”, affirming that people are likely to experience strain as it is ever-present in social relations. Sieber (1974) built on the concept of role strain or role conflict by highlighting its existence regardless of time pressures i.e. that conflict is not bound to transient features of an individual. The model of WFC proposed by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), suggests that

role expectations and therefore WFC are exaggerated or worsened when an individual's principal life roles are work and family, and, when there are enduring negative consequences for a failure to meet role expectations or demands.

Feelings of conflict are likely as a result of an imbalance between the demands of a person's roles and the finite resources available to them to fulfil these roles (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005). Given the rapidly changing work environment which is blurring boundaries between work and family life; as work life pervades home life, little time is left for the nurturing and development of family relationships (Kalliath, Kalliath & Singh, 2011). And this is a possible source of stress and therefore conflict between a person's family role expectations and their work role expectations i.e. work life takes up too much time from fulfilling family role responsibilities.

Theories of work-family conflict.

Frone (2003) reported that whilst many theories have been used to explain the effects of WFC including: congruence, integrative, compensation, resource drain, segmentation and role theories; the most common for the work-family interface is a derivative from the role theory perspective (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). There are two components of role theory namely, enrichment and scarcity (Achour et al., 2015). The assumption of the scarcity component of the role strain theory assumes that individuals have a finite amount of resources (psychological and physiological) available to use on role performance (Achour et al., 2015; Kuntari, Janssens & Ginting, 2017). When a person has too many roles and expectations to fulfil, inter-role conflict i.e. interference from one role contributes to another role not being fulfilled, is unavoidable (Kuntari et al. 2017).

Directionality.

There are two types of WFC or sources of inter-role conflict, i.e. work roles and responsibilities interfering with family (WIF) or work-to-family conflict, and, family role and responsibilities interfering with work (FIW) or family-to-work conflict (Kuntari et al., 2017; Poelmans, O'Driscoll & Beham, 2005; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). The bi-directional nature of WFC, could perhaps be influenced by changes in life stage and individual circumstances. For example, a person who has children may experience WIF or work-to family conflict if they are expected to work a longer work shift but also are expected to be home before

their children go to bed so that they can help the children with homework. Alternatively, a person may experience family-to-work conflict or FIW when they are expected to care for their sick, elderly family member but miss out on an important work event. Based on the idea that individuals may experience WFC differently, Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) have suggested that future studies should examine the extent to which specific subgroups, experience different pressures. Specifically, future studies should explore the differences in how coping strategies lessen WFC from person to person (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Dimensionality.

Dimensionality refers to the number of variables or factors that are applied when measuring a construct (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2007). Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian (1996) highlighted that future WFC studies interested in understanding WIF and FIW conflicts should take on a multidimensional approach. They suggested that by taking a multi-dimensional approach, more insights could be gathered into how distinct aspects of WIF and FIW relate to a person's behaviour at work and their family environments (Netemeyer, et al., 1996). Taking into account the bi-directional conceptualisation of WFC (WIF and FIW), Guangdong, Duan, Zuo, Yang, and Wen used four dimensions to make up their WFC (2016). The model serves as a summary of role strain and expectation. It explains that work pressure and work involvement contribute to WIF, and that, family pressure and family involvement contributed to FIW (Guangdong et al., 2016). The simplistic view of WFC and its dimensions is consistent across other WFC studies (Aazami et al., 2015; Abeysekera & Gahan, 2019; Aryee et al., 1999; Guangdong et al., 2016; Kuntari et al., 2017). Thus, by exploring the dimensions of role involvement and role expectations (role stressors), it is likely that the understanding of coping with work and family roles will improve.

Coping with WFC: Prior Studies

Coping strategies.

On the topic of conceptualisation, the studies that have examined the effects of coping on WFC are inconsistent according to Aazami et al. (2015). This is partly due to the broad conceptualisation of coping strategies versus the development of a coping-specific taxonomy e.g. for the context of WFC. Coping strategies are defined independently of their effects or outcomes i.e. they refer to efforts to deal with role demands regardless of the successfulness of the efforts (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The pursuit of understanding coping is not useful unless

it is clear that coping efforts or coping strategies can be shown as beneficial for those using the coping strategy. In addition, coping itself does not indicate whether results significantly reduce the negative effects of the stressor, nor does coping imply that healthy behaviours are being used by a person (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). To explain further, what follows is a representation and discussion of some existing conceptualised coping strategies.

There is overlap in the literature around classifications of coping strategies with the three most common classifications including: cognitive versus behavioural, approach versus avoidance and, emotion-focused versus problem-focused (Aazami et al., 2015). In 1984, Lazarus and Folkman drew distinction between emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies. Emotion-focused strategies meant a person would regulate (via cognitive manipulations) their experienced emotions as a result of stress i.e. positive thinking or reframing; and; problem-focused strategies meant that a person would undertake constructive efforts such as identifying the problem to rectify (eliminate or circumvent) the source of their stress (Baltes et al., 2011; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Some scholars have criticised the strategies proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) because these strategies (emotion-focused and problem-focused) are reactive and follow once a stress has already been experienced, as opposed to, being proactive strategies that take place prior to the person experiencing the stressful occurrence (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009). However, the propositions of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) align to the views of Pearlin and Schooler (1978) which identified 17 coping strategies in their study (to be seen as a sampling rather than an exhaustive set) and categorised into the following three categories: responses that change the situation out of which stressful experience arise; responses that control the meaning of the stressful experience after it occurs but before the emergence of stress and; responses that function more for the control of stress itself after it has emerged. In comparison, to the reactive strategies, proactive coping is defined as ‘a multi-dimensional, forward-looking strategy, integrating processes of personal quality-of-life management with those of self-regulatory goal attainment’ (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009, p. 30).

Additional critique of the coping strategies proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) lie in the conception or origin of the strategies. Krohne’s (2002) criticism is how the coping strategies are formed; indicating that measurement of coping, by way of these categories, is only loosely related to the two basic coping functions (emotion-focused and problem-focused),

Furthermore, Lazarus and Folkman advocated a subjective orientation in the conceptualisation of stress which is centred on individual lenses rather than a systems-theory orientation (Krohne, 2002). This is problematic as it does not account for the broader context in which a person experiences stressors e.g. nationality, traditional background, societal factors. Additionally, the evaluation of the stress process should include variables (subjective and objective) like: “constraints, temporal aspects, or social support network” (Krohne, 2002, p. 15169) and responses should be measured at different levels. Krohne’s critiques suggest that more work is needed in order to understand coping and specifically, to better understand coping holistically rather than from an individual perspective.

There were however, prior studies that attempted to categorise types of coping strategies in the context of WFC which were not necessarily reactive coping strategies e.g. Hall (1972), named three types of coping strategies: structural role redefinition, which involves changing external, structurally imposed expectations; personal role definition, altering one’s expectations and perceptions of own behaviour, and; reactive role behaviour, trying to discover methods that meet all role expectations. Hall’s types of coping strategies draw attention to the lack of consensus about the conceptualisation of coping with WFC. Despite including proactive strategies e.g. changing role expectations, Hall’s coping strategies fail to consider the influence of greater environmental factors i.e. nationality, cultural norms etc. Within literature on WFC and coping strategies what seems common in the critique is the manner in which conceptualisation occurs.

Alternative critiques of coping strategy conceptualisation include those of Skinner, Edge, Altman and Sherwood (2003) who argued that it is better to classify coping strategies on the basis of their adaptation process i.e. every way of coping can be classified either adaptive or maladaptive based largely on the following three main criteria: long-term consequences, the individual’s subjective experience and, their current characteristics. Aazami et al. (2015) too, mentioned the pitfalls of reliance on researchers’ professional framings of coping strategies, theorising that it may be more useful to adopt an empirically driven bottom-up approach to develop a more sophisticated and detailed measure. A bottom-up approach would mean using research methodologies that place the lived experiences of individuals at the source of data collection and analysis i.e. seeking first-hand, detailed accounts of what coping means for people rather than inadvertently imposing empirical beliefs on participants. Given the nature

of conducting bottom-up research (time-consuming and expensive), perhaps more future studies could consider the merit of adopting other, lesser utilised research methodologies. Within literature on WFC and coping strategies it is noted that alternative methods should be used in future studies (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Nie, Lämsä & Pučėtaite, 2018).

Avoidance is another form of coping strategy that has received some attention over the last few decades, however, findings show that it isn't a dominant coping strategy (Aazami et al., 2015). This type of strategy is fairly simple in that it involves avoiding a stressor in order to not feel strained by it (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). Similarly, personality traits related to coping strategies have appeared in the literature over a few decades (Baltes et al., 2011; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978; Somech and Drach-Zahavy, 2007). Despite the existence of simplified coping strategies within WFC and coping literature e.g. avoidance, it is important to note that whilst various ideas about coping have been explored yet there is little consensus as to which strategies are most useful for people across contexts.

Other more expansive models, such as the SOC (selection, optimisation and compensation) Model, as proposed by Baltes et al. (2011) indicated that individuals who used SOC strategies were more inclined to effectively deal with stressful circumstances and demands. The model is made up of the following strategies: firstly, selection which are the elective and non-elective choices a person makes to identify goals, outcomes, alternative contexts and goal structures (Baltes et al.). Second, optimisation i.e. enhancing existing resources and practices (Baltes et al.). Lastly, compensation which is the acquisition of alternative means to achieve goals when resources are limited, lost or, in circumstances of overload (Baltes et al.). The model proposed by Baltes et al. is based on an individual's choices and does not account for broader contextual factors that may influence the individual's choices.

Prior research by Sieber (1974) also honed in on coping with WFC from an individual perspective but considered the influence of perceived social ranking on how a person copes with role expectations. Sieber (1974) suggested that social prestige may lead to a degree of cognitive compensation and, therefore, may be a strategy that individuals leverage in coping with their roles. Sieber proposed that "individuals are often esteemed solely by virtue of their possessing a wide repertoire of roles." (p. 577) i.e. that holding many roles is seen as a privileged social position to aspire to. Other examples of compensation in the family schema

include outsourcing parts of the family role responsibilities i.e. employment of a caregiver or, buying takeout instead of preparing meals (Baltes et al., 2011). By an individual leveraging additional sources of support, it is highlighted that the role of others is important for how people cope with their roles i.e. by using others for support it is clear that coping with WFC is more than relying solely on one's own resources and efforts.

In contrast, to the view that holding more roles i.e. responsibilities is prestigious, Cooklin et al. (2016) showed that for some women, selecting to hold less responsibility serves as a way of coping. Cooklin et al. (2016) found that within most couple families paid work and care-giving continues to be divided along gendered lines i.e. within Australia, the bulk of employed mothers work part-time as their way of coping with WFC. In particular, Australian mothers (the majority of whom work part-time) are more likely to limit their workforce participation to meet the needs of their children, (Cha, 2010; Cooklin et al., 2016). Considering the negative implications of part-time work for women, such as reduced lifetime earnings, lesser opportunity to progress upwards and overall financial security, Cooklin et al. (2016) posited that job security (secure remuneration and commitment from employer) may relieve the stresses of work and caregiving roles.

Coping strategies are significant to lessen the conflict women experience between work and home responsibilities (Aazami et al., 2015). But, women may have access to different opportunities or resources to minimise or resolve their WFC when compared to men (Cooklin et al., 2016). An example of these resources includes, access and availability to family-friendly provisions from their employer e.g. flexible work schedules. According to Moen and Yu (2000), women may attempt to reduce possible family-to-work (FTW) stress by delaying marriage and childbearing, as well as, having fewer children.

The literature on coping strategies suggests that there are many ways in which a person can use strategies in order to deal with the demands and pressures of the roles they hold in work and family life. A person's habitual ways of coping alludes to their specific coping style (Carver & Scheier, 1994; Delahaij & van Dam, 2016). Therefore, collections of coping strategies used by people to cope with WFC may be considered as coping styles.

Coping Styles

Coping styles overview.

Coping styles are the collections of coping strategies which become a person's preferred overall approach to coping. Coping strategies are the activities or thoughts a person has in dealing with stress (Encyclopedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2007). Baltes et al. (2011) stated that researchers are interested in the methods that people use to deal with WFC, throughout a variety of: contexts and relationships of relevant variables. This serves as an indication of the level of awareness that WFC and coping researchers have around the broadness of factors that influence coping, and, the need to build and improve theories that inform amelioration of the effects of role conflict and stress. Rotondo, Carlson, and Kincaid (2003) showed that they too have this awareness, indicating that no coping style is completely appropriate and mentioning that some may work better with particular types of conflict, or, within a particular context i.e. culture or values (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

The extant literature on WFC and coping indicate that collections of coping strategies may constitute, coping styles. For instance, Aazami et al. (2015) identified two coping styles, and, Somech & Drach-Zahavy (2007) described eight coping styles. Both studies grouped coping strategies in a comprehensible manner to classify differences but also similarities between coping techniques.

Coping styles according to Aazami et al., (2015).

Aazami et al. (2015) highlighted that little attention has been given to the mediating role of behavioural coping in the relationship between WFC and psychological wellbeing. As a result, they conducted a self-report survey study with a sample of 429 working women in Malaysia and classified two styles of coping: adaptive and maladaptive. Adaptive coping strategies counteract the adverse effects of strain, facilitating the fulfilment of roles (Aazami et al., 2015). In contrast, maladaptive coping strategies are those that increase strain and may contribute to a decline in role fulfilment (Aazami et al., 2015). Their findings were that employees who used an adaptive coping style in stressful circumstances (to deal with WFC) were not effective, instead, results showed that conflicting demands led to recurrent use of a maladaptive coping style (Aazami et al., 2015). Moreover, results showed that women who used maladaptive styles to cope were more likely to endure poor mental health outcomes (Aazami et al., 2015)

Coping styles according to Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007).

Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) identified gaps in the understanding of coping styles. Specifically, clarification of the unique styles that a person uses to deal with WFC had hardly been detailed and those styles associated with lower levels of conflict had also not been identified (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). To address this gap, their multimethod study sampled Israeli employed parents who have spouses. In Study 1, Somech and Drach-Zahavy conducted semi-structured interviews with 266 participants to develop a quantitative measure by qualitatively coding data for specific bidirectional coping strategies - for work interference with family (WIF) and for family interference with work (FIW). The findings of eight coping strategies (super at home, good enough at home, delegation at home, priorities at home, super at work, good enough at work, delegation at work, and priorities at work) were then applied to Study 2 to examine the usefulness of these coping strategies in decreasing WFC with respect to sex and gender role ideology (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

In Study 2, 679 participants completed self-report surveys and the data were then statistically analysed via hierarchical regression to assess for any moderating effects. The results of Study 2 showed a moderating effect of sex and gender role ideology (defined as an individual's attitudes to how the roles of men and women should be shaped according to their sex) in the relationship between coping strategy and WFC (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2016). Because traditional gender role ideology is sex-based i.e. a woman's role is to fulfil family duties and a man's role is to be a provider by fulfilling work duties (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). The moderating effect found showed that depending on whether a man or woman identified with traditional gender role ideology or not, their coping strategy either alleviated or worsened the WFC they felt.

In other words, the effectiveness of a coping style may depend on the gender role ideology (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). For example, for traditional women, any strategy that enables them to fulfil their perceived primary role of mothers and wives and maintain high standards at home may be a useful tactic to lessen WFC, while this tactic is less successful for women with less traditional gender role ideology (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). As non-traditional employed parents do not believe in the isolation of roles based on sex and hold the roles of women and men equal both in the home and work domains (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Social support.

Social support involves the interpersonal interactions between people in which individuals receive instrumental, emotional, informational, and appraisal support from another (House, 1981). In 1985, Cohen and Wills pointed out that social support had gained interest as a topic of research due to the belief that social support assisted with improving well-being. Social support theory as defined by Cohen and Wills (1985) suggested that social support can be viewed as a resource (psychological or material) that a person may leverage that enables them to safeguard valued resources and mitigate strain (French et al., 2018; Hobfoll, 1989). Cohen and Wills introduced a typology that was admittedly non-exhaustive but this typology also included four types of social support namely: esteem or emotional support, informational support, social companionship or affiliation, and, instrumental or tangible aid (1985). Emotional support involves someone being appreciated for who they are and experiences (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Informational support is guidance and advice (Cohen & Wills). Instrumental support is tangible aid and service (Cohen & Wills). What differs then between House and Cohen and Wills typologies is vary is that House refers to appraisal support, but Cohen and Wills refer to affiliation. Appraisal support is when an appraisal is offered to a person that helps them reconsider their ability to deal with the stressor they are facing e.g. a friend could remind them that they have raised a child whilst working full-time already, so raising another whilst working will be achievable. Whilst there are differences in social support typology what is important is that social support takes on various forms and may come from different sources (internal and external to an individual).

The potential social support sources a person may access include a variety from both work and family domains i.e. colleague, manager, organisation, family members, spouse (Ford, Heinen & Langkamer, 2007; Nohe & Sonntag, 2018). Social support serves as an integral theoretical mechanism for coping with life stressors or reducing strain that arise from life roles (French et al., 2018). Prior meta-analyses, provided an incomplete assessment of broad sources of support e.g. organisational culture versus, specific sources of support (e.g. supervisor support (French et al., 2018) yet, social support including support from supervisors and fellow employees have been leveraged by individuals to buffer the relationship between WFC and psychological strain as seen in a few studies (Aryee et al., 1999; Kalliath and Kalliath, 2014; Reddick, Rochlen, Grasso, Reilly & Spikes, 2012; Viswesvaran, Sanchez & Fisher, 1999). Interestingly, the results of French et al.'s (2018) meta-analysis suggested that "organisational support may be the most important source of support overall" (p.1).

The value of social support in work-family research has been noted as a significant coping resource that may reduce the adverse effects of WFC (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). Social support at work and at home is a form of coping that mitigates against negative consequences of WFC i.e. stress and strain (Nohe & Sonntag, 2018; Pluut, Ilies, Curseu & Liu, 2014) by providing relief to individuals in dealing with the demands of their roles. To date, research on the moderating, mitigating effects of social support on individuals' strain has produced inconsistent, weak and conflicting results possibly due to the variations and lack of consistency across the conceptualisation of coping strategies i.e. if the definitions between studies are varied, it is possible that research on moderating and mitigating effects of social support produced inconsistent results (French et al., 2018; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

The concept of utilising different social groups as a buffer is supported many researchers; (Ford et al., 2007; French et al., 2018; Nohe & Sonntag, 2018; Pluut et al. 2014). It was Sieber (1974) who suggested that individuals may compensate for any shortcomings in one social realm by falling back or relying on the other relationships for support. These relationships provide an individual with “compensatory affection, moral support, emergency resources and perhaps even assistance for a renewal of effort in the original role” (Sieber, 1974, p. 573). It is possible that the use of social buffers may be a coping strategy regardless of personal differences, so long as an individual has relationships in multiple social groups to lean on and draw support from.

A commonly cited relationship that is relied on for support is that between a spouse and the person experiencing WFC (Abeysekera & Gahan, 2019; Aryee et al., 1999; French et al., 2018; Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020; Reddick et al., 2012; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Spousal support is simply the forms of social support that comes from one's spouse i.e. spousal support can be emotional or instrumental.

The idea that spousal support is useful for coping with role pressures has been discussed for many years. Holahan and Gilbert suggested that spousal support is an important factor in alleviating WFC in 1979. Then, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) also supported the positive effects of spousal support in reducing WFC. However, more recently, contrasting views from Cooklin et al. (2016) suggested a confounding relationship in relation to spousal support, whereby, it is a key resource for families, but within the relationship can drive WFC. Given

the lack of clarity as to how spousal support either helps or worsens the WFC that people experience more studies could be done to explore the role of spousal support for coping with WFC (Aryee et al. 1999; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Pluut et al., 2018).

Beyond spousal support, researchers have indicated that there is a need to explore the role of culture and societal influence on WFC and coping (French et al, 2018; Aryee et al., 1999). To address this call, a qualitative study by Achour et al. (2015) explored the causes of WFC for academic Muslim women in Malaysia and the coping strategies that they used to manage their role expectations. The study found and categorised social coping strategies such as relying on social groups i.e. friends, family members, and, spouses. In addition, Achour et al., (2015) also found and categorised professional and religious coping strategies. The relevance of these strategies presented by Achour et al. is that they draw attention to the impact of religion, culture and tradition on how individuals cope with WFC. In the Malaysian context, Aqeel and Achour (2011) specified religiosity as a coping strategy critical to dealing with stress. Explained further, Aqeel and Achour (2011) suggested that by placing one's faith in a higher power (God), believing that the stresses a person faces are part of God's plan for them and by following religious teachings and practices, a person is able to cope with their role expectations, Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) believed that parents may develop separate strategies to cope with work demands and family demands, but, considering the findings of Achour et al. (2015) it may be that parents use strategies to cope with role demands simultaneously e.g. faith, prayer, gratefulness, spousal support. The findings and suggestions above again point to the importance of understanding coping with WFC from a more holistic perspective i.e. contextual, cultural and societal factors instead of solely focusing on individual features that shape how people cope with their work and family roles.

Culture's Influence on Coping with WFC

Coping with WFC amongst ethnic minorities.

The importance of context and cultural differences.

Work and family roles are embedded in various contexts including national, socio-economic and cultural (Abeysekera & Gahan, 2019). Contexts vary from person to person so by understanding the influences of these contexts on people, there would be an improved empirical understanding of how people deal with their roles, and subsequently, insight about

how WFC can be addressed in organisations. Additionally, challenges in meeting work and family demands concurrently are widespread, hence, the increased scholarly recognition that cultural context in particular influences how these challenges manifest through their effect on individual cultural values (Ollier-Malaterre and Foucreault, 2017). By creating empirical understanding about the influence of cultural context on WFC and coping, researchers are able to suggest through their findings what can practically be done to assist and alleviate pressures that people face in dealing with their roles. By simply creating awareness and delving into what is unknown or less understood, future studies have the potential to shift how WFC and coping is managed within organisations and society.

WFC and its associated stressors, are important to members of multicultural minority groups because the sources of their stress are universal and arise from the individual level (as part of the subgroup and its associated values and traditions) but are compounded at a social and systemic level (Encyclopedia of Multicultural Psychology, 2006; Fearfull & Kamenou, 2010; Kaur Rana, Kagan, Lewis, & Rout, 1998). Furthermore, individuals who have scarcer coping resources, are exposed to a greater stress burden due to the cumulative and enduring effects of multicultural stressors. For example, if a person is raised within a traditional, collectivistic home where there are many family members to fulfil household responsibilities then leaves their home to embark on a career journey in a new city by themselves, they may no longer have access to the same coping resources (instrumental support) but might still be expected to fulfil home roles e.g. cleaning and meal preparation for themselves. Over time, they may experience an increased stress burden because they are trying to uphold and fulfil family role expectations in tandem with work role expectations minus some of the support that they once had.

For instance, within the USA, ethnic minority groups i.e. diaspora groups may face discrimination and barriers to social mobility resulting in their absorption into disadvantaged sectors of the population over time and generations (Earle, Joshi, Geronimo & Acevedo-Garcia, 2014). The long-term consequences of inequalities between employed parent groups, based on economic theory and data, are not confined to the health and well-being of employees but more grimly, the well-being of their children (Earle et al., 2014). Researchers and organisations alike have an obligation to understand the coping strategies that address problems of inequality, given the severity of the possible consequences for diaspora minority groups. Fearfull and

Kamenou (2010) support the concern for generating discussion and action around the lack of sameness in minority groups i.e. exploring different workplace experiences and approaches to develop coping strategies so that minority groups are helped with how they cope with their roles.

In comparison to working mothers in the USA, Israeli mothers seemed to experience more WFC but the extent to which burnout occurs was buffered by their stronger social support and more effective methods of coping than those of US mothers (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Israel is a collectivistic society that respects traditional family values (Kurman, 2001). For instance, Etzion and Bailyn (1994) found that the notion of career takes on a negative connotation among women in Israel (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Culture provides individuals with “powerful normative evaluations...in addition to ordering cognition” (Blair-Loy, 2001, p. 689). Because cultural norms underpin the way in which individuals experience the work–family interface (Aryee, Fields, & Luk, 1999), ethnic minorities and their respective cultures, traditions and practices are of interest in understanding the nuances of the work-family interface model and may assist organisations in better supporting employees in coping with WFC.

Religious differences (linked to cultural practices) across ethnic minorities also bear consequences for employees and how they manage role demands to address WFC. Noor (2004) noted that well-being is associated to Islam (as it is with all other religious faiths) because of: the guidance it provides on how to live life; the support and comfort it offers in difficult, as well as, good times, and; the meaning and sense of identity it gives to individuals. Muslims have relied on God as a coping strategy to cope with difficulties to achieve well-being, for centuries according to Ghazali (2001). The best manner to manage life’s difficulties is through religious coping strategies because these techniques assist mental welfare (Abi-Hashem, 2007). In alignment with preceding postulations of the salience of religious coping strategies, Achour et al. (2015) too showed that religiosity addressed work demands and family duties i.e. religiosity served as a coping strategy.

This means that ethnic community relations may: provide a foundation of support and inspiration, as well as, be a source of diverse knowledge, skills and coping techniques (Auster, 2001). Hence the need for organisational management to recognise the cultural values that are significant to specific individuals within their workplaces. By understanding the influence of cultural values on how employees fulfil their roles, organisations may facilitate favourable workplace outcomes i.e. improved organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Galovan et al., 2010; Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). Minorities are considered to “bridge diverse social circles and develop networks that not only crisscross racial boundaries but also are both external and internal” to the organisation (Ibarra, 1995, p. 696–697). Thus, for South African workplaces and organisational practices, understanding ethnic minorities may help to overcome historical racial boundaries and strengthen ethnic connections across the diverse South African employment landscapes.

Historically, the role and dynamics of race and ethnicity have not been given sufficient attention within the field of Industrial-Organisational Psychology, predominantly due to research focus on dominant groups (typically Whites) within organisations (APA Handbook of Multicultural Psychology, 2014). The question that needs to be asked, however, is whether existing theories and practices may be misleading and culturally inappropriate. Within the South African context, this research addresses the need to evaluate coping from a cultural perspective that is not clearly Western nor collectivistic and contribute toward a more holistic view of WFC. Literature suggests that women with strong racial or ethnic identities are obligated to navigate between two distinctly different spheres of life; that of the governing white, male culture in their job role, as well as, a personal life rooted in a racial and ethnic community (Auster, 2001; Bell, 1990). What this reveals is that navigating between a collectivistic family sphere and a Western, workplace sphere may create additional stress and role strain resulting from conflicting demands between the two cultures (Auster, 2001).

Gender role beliefs and coping with WFC.

Although more women have joined the paid workforce, literature on the work-family interface confirms that women maintain their duty of caregiving within their family roles (Abeysekera & Gahan, 2019; Auster, 2001; Blair-Loy, 2001; Daly et al., 2008; Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). Moreover, even with the increasing level of education in women, and increased

awareness of sex-role equality (factors that have affected women's participation in the workforce), it is improbable that the shown stresses inherent in families (dual-earner and single-parent) will dissipate (Aryee et al., 1999; Perry-Jenkins, 2020). Despite the changes in women's participation in the workforce and increased educational levels, the stresses of home and family life have not shifted which is why there is a need to explore the experiences of employed women. Specifically, the experiences of working mothers in terms of coping with these stressors, because women are more likely than men to experience WFC (Abeysekera & Gahan, 2019).

The opportunities for parents to anticipate or alleviate WFC continue to be shaped by gendered expectations about the roles of mothers and fathers, both at work and in the family (Cooklin et al., 2016). Kuntari et al. (2017) highlighted that in accordance with traditional gender role attitudes, "men value their work role as more important than their family role, and women perceive their family role as more important than their work role" (p. 141). But for women who accept a traditional view that their primary role is to be a good wife and mother, they may draw on this perception as a coping resource i.e. gratification when dealing with the sometimes conflicting demands of work and family roles (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

The findings of Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) suggested that when working mothers believe their primary role to be caregivers and wives, and, they consider work to detract from their family responsibilities, they will experience stress. These findings were supported by Achour et al. (2015). These findings suggest that because society still criticises mothers based on their ability to provide a good family environment and upholds their primary role as being parent and spouse i.e. running the household (Duxbury & Higgins, 1994; Nie et al., 2018), their obligations and commitment to work are possibly adversely impacted (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). So for traditional women, who consider their main role in life to be caregivers and homemakers, any coping strategy that enables them meeting these expectations and sustaining high standards at home may serve as an effective method to lessen WFC (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Moen and Yu (2000) reported the manner in which gender shapes coping strategies as a striking feature of their findings. Similarly, Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) found moderating relationships of sex and gender role ideology between coping style and WFC i.e. traditional gender role ideology is sex based, with a wife responsible for homemaking and caregiving and a husband assuming the breadwinner's role (Higgins, Duxbury, & Lee, 1994; Calvo-Salguero, Maria & Lecea, 2010; Kuntari et al., 2017). Moen and Yu (2000) found that the coping strategies and work conditions of dual-earner couples are gendered, specifically where the nature of the relationship between the spouses are neo-traditional (husbands work in professional and/or long-hour roles and wives work fewer hours, frequently in non-professional jobs). Even with the increase in men's participation with family roles (specifically caring for children), Perry-Jenkins and Gerstel (2020) showed that "despite the increase in men's participation we uncovered no study of dual-earner families where men did more than women" (p.426).

It is evident that gender plays a significant role on the likelihood of holding a work role that enables an employed parent to support their family well (Earle et al., 2014). This is important because even women in dual-earner families report more role stress and lesser levels of coping (Moen & Yu, 2000; Kuntari et al. 2018). This could be due to evidence of the gender pay-gap between men and women a result of which is that dual earner families may prioritise a man's participation in the workforce as it pays better (Charlesworth et al., 2011; Holt & Lewis, 2011).

Aryee et al. (1999) offered insight into WFC for dual-earner families and discussed the applicability of Pleck's (1987) US-based research findings to the Hong Kong context in that dual-earner families are placed in a position of less bargaining power with their employers, have fewer resources to assist with work-family interface roles and, are likely to experience more adverse economic consequences when a wife leaves the workforce. Further similarity is drawn between the two contexts in terms of what types of additional support are utilised to deal with the demands of work and family life. The crux of what help is accessed is based on economic freedom of families. In the absence of paid, live-in support, the help from extended family, neighbours or own resourcefulness are relied on to cope with demands of roles (Aryee et al., 1999, Moen & Yu, 2000). These findings demonstrate the importance of understanding coping for families that are vulnerable in terms of access to sources of social support.

Gender role beliefs within collectivistic communities.

One of the limitations in existing literature is the Eurocentric idea of family which overlooks the significance of extended families (Kaur Rana et. al, 1998; Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020). Taking this into account, there is a need to broaden the study of WFC to factor in ethnicity and gender (Fearfull & Kamenou, 2010; Kaur Rana et. al, 1998; Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020). For instance, Asian women, even when living in a nuclear family are likely to experience pressure from relatives and community members (Kaur Rana et. al, 1998). Thus, it is almost certain that women's experiences of the work-family interface are impacted by their upbringing within a collectivistic family (Aazami et al., 2015; Ahmed & Carrim, 2016; Kaur Rana et. al, 1998).

For Israeli, Jewish working mothers, their appraisals of spousal support and the type of marital relationship they have (equalitarian or traditional) are equally important to their health and wellbeing as what they experience in their lives (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) highlight the significance of individual differences in coping with WFC and draw attention to personality types, spousal support and type of marriage. Specifically, emotional support from a spouse served as a significant source of gratification for both women of traditional and equalitarian (believe in role equality in marital life) views (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Achour et al. 2015).

Considering the traditional nature of Indian families, findings of a qualitative study of couples in India from four occupational groups, Kalliath et al. (2011) showed that support from family, especially spousal support, played a significant role in providing a sense of security and stability in the home realm, and assisted in minimising WFC especially among women. These findings could be seen as a reinforcement of traditional Indian familial norms where women are submissive to the men as part of the patriarchal order in which they exist (Singh, 2011). However, past research has recognised the stress-buffering role of spousal support (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983; Pluut et al., 2018; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007) outside of this patriarchal society. Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) proposed that a supportive husband whose sex-role attitudes are proliberal or non-traditional would buffer his wife from the demands of work and family roles. This view was then supported by Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) and Pluut et al. (2018).

Within Asian culture and communities, gender inequalities are reinforced through the expectations and treatment of men and women which is evidenced by the differences in expectations and pressures placed on Asian women in contrast to those placed on men (Kaur Rana et al., 1998). For instance, women are expected to primarily fulfil family roles including cooking, cleaning, caregiving of children and elders but men are not. This is significant in terms of what coping strategies people use based on gender beliefs i.e. non-traditional men and traditional women share some coping strategies to address WFC (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Collectivism.

Collectivistic cultures are those which place value in honouring the expectations of family and community i.e. it is the tendency to identify and abide with a broader social group to be accepted (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016; Kaur Rana et al., 1998). Whilst some research has looked at WFC and coping for collectivistic groups, it is noted that these are too few (Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020). Prior WFC research within collectivistic societies indicated that maintaining strong familial connections increased the likelihood of WFC; particularly in India, where fulfilling expectations from extended families has been demonstrated to increase strain among employed women (Buddhapriya, 2009; Valk and Srinivasan, 2011). Which is why more studies are needed to explore the manner in which the diaspora deal with WFC. This may improve interventions that can be implemented by organisations.

Given that research about WFC and coping in different cultures (including collectivistic cultures) should shed light on the similarities and variances in coping strategies, Achour et al (2015) have suggested that future studies that look specifically at the impact of religion and spirituality on coping. Their study highlighted that in the Islamic text, the Qur'an, it is stated that the husband is responsible for the leadership and protection of the family (Qur'an, 2:23; Achour et al., 2015). Females, according to Islamic law, do not have to support themselves nor have financial obligations to their family (Achour et al., 2015). Similarly, within Malaysian culture (which is closely related to Islamic culture) if a woman is married, it is her role to manage the household (Achour et al., 2015). Furthermore, if a woman does work, it is her role to ensure smooth family maintenance and fulfil her work duties (Achour et al., 2015). This raises questions about what impact the role of religion has in terms of coping with WFC if a woman's primary role is within the family sphere.

Supposedly, any job that prevents a woman from fulfilling her Islamic obligations should not be considered (Achour et al., 2015). However, Islamically, as long as their Islamic ethics and propriety are observed, women may pursue any economic activity of their choosing (Achour et al., 2015). If they do participate in economic activity, their primary role as wife and mother must be upheld (Achour et al., 2015). This signals the order of priorities for role duties and raises the question of how these predefined expectations influence working ethnic minority mothers in terms of coping. And if according to religious beliefs, a woman must prioritise family role fulfilment, could religious beliefs serve as a coping strategy i.e. subscription to religious beliefs prevents and protects a woman from any additional feelings of stress that would arise from holding a work role?

Similarly, in Hong Kong, despite socioeconomic development, traditional Confucian values (the family is the fundamental unit of society i.e. the maintenance and preservation of household takes precedence over individual needs) prescribe that the work roles are split so that men are primarily concerned with the role of breadwinner whilst women are concerned with the role of homemaker and child caregiver, even when women engage in paid work. Interestingly, Blair-Loy (2001) confirmed that the expectations of women even within the Western context prescribe that women's family commitments supersedes any other responsibility including paid work. So by conducting more studies about WFC and coping, the exact differences between western, individualistic groups and collectivistic groups will be made more clear.

Perry-Jenkins and Gerstel (2020) have encouraged researchers to understand the influence of ethnic and cultural differences. They have called for studies to: explain the sources of differences between groups (individualistic, Western groups and collectivistic groups), and, to understand what sustains these differences. It is not enough to note that there are differences instead, understanding is needed about the influence of family beliefs and organisational practices in how people cope with their role expectations (Perry-Jenkins & Gerstel, 2020). Furthermore, considering the impact of globalisation on collectivistic groups (Shah & Rajadhyaksha, 2016) i.e. the shifting of cultural values due to Western organisational practices being increasingly present within collectivistic societies, more research is needed to help people understand WFC and coping given their circumstances.

Present work-family research has largely reflected by Western Euro-America samples (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). This is problematic because it has painted an incomplete picture of the work-family interface. In countries like South Africa, where there are a number of ethnic groups that are traditionally collectivistic in nature i.e. for whom the family unit, and, upholding the traditions of the family unit, are important; there is a need to explore WFC and coping given the nuances of South African society (Jaga & Bagraim, 2015). South African organisations tend to operate in accordance with Western corporate ideals despite the fact that South African society is comprised of a mixture of different cultural groups (collectivistic included). One group of interest is South African Indians who form part of the Indian diaspora and have been in South Africa since 1860.

South African Indians.

Carrim (2012) noted that most research on WFC in South Africa has focused on the challenges that black and white women face, with South African Indian women being considered a sub-set of black women. Yet, because of South Africa's history, the lives and experiences of South African Indian women cannot be compared and grouped together with non-white women (Mazibuko & Govender, 2017).

South Africa is a unique society in that previous political reign legislated divides between people and segregated them on the basis of race. Due to the now abolished Group Areas Act (1950), South Africans were geographically grouped into locations so that people of the same racial group lived in the same locations. Furthermore, the history of South African Indians has been shaped by the fact that the group has belonged to the Indian diaspora since 1860. This means that South African Indians are of interest based on their history within South African but also because of their cultural ties to Indian ways of living i.e. collectivistic culture.

South African Indian Hindus.

“The Indian culture has been classified as being collective in nature, wherein members of the group abide by the customs of the social group in order to be accepted” (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016). South African Hindus in particular hold strong collective identity in relation to family and deeply-rooted traditional gender beliefs (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). Hence, studies related to how South African Hindus experience WFC and cope with their family and work

roles are important to develop understanding of WFC and coping, overall. It is possible that existing work-family frameworks may not suffice given the samples from which they were derived (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017).

The primary duties of Hindu mothers are embedded within the family schema or domain (Achour et al., 2015; Jaga & Bagraim, 2017; Kaur Rana et al. 1998). According to Singh (2011), a mother's responsibility to raise good children and guide them in cultural and religious practices is emphasised in Hindu scriptures. Additionally, within Asian cultures women are assigned a secondary and subservient position within authoritarian and patriarchal family structures, and, this allocation is legitimised through the proclamation that it is part of the culture (Kaur Rana et. al, 1998)

Hindu mothers of diaspora communities (like other ethnic minority groups) are especially predisposed to experience pressure from family and their community pressure to uphold their cultural identity, particularly when dominant practices (cultural and traditional) are significantly different from those in India (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017; Khokher & Beauregard, 2013). Furthermore, in South Africa, the predominance of Euro-American management practices means that organisations promote individual achievement, gender equality and freedom of speech as cultural values (Inkeles, 1983; Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). This means that for South African Hindu mothers who work, there is a contradiction between work and family values i.e. family roles value collectivism and work roles value individualism.

Since the birth of South Africa's democracy more women have been able to enter paid work roles (Carrim, 2012; Jaga et al., 2018; Mazibuko & Govender, 2017). South African Hindu women too have followed the trend by entering paid work roles, and, their participation has meaningfully challenged the traditional Hindu family system (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017; Singh, 2011). Not much is known about the coping experiences of "ethnic minority sub-groups, across diverse cultural contexts, such as experiences of Hindu mothers in South Africa" (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017, p. 1086). This means that future studies should consider exploring the experiences of working South African Hindu women in order to bolster what is known about coping for ethnic minority groups.

Coping strategies of Hindu mothers.

Jaga and Bagraim (2017) noted that strong family ties in collectivistic cultures often results in families living nearby to each other, allowing them to draw on shared resources or means. Research conducted within collectivistic cultures have suggested to the benefits of extended family support in reducing WFC (e.g. Mortazavi, Pedhiwala, Shafiro & Hammer, 2009; Thein, Austen, Currie & Lewin, 2010). For Hindu mothers in South Africa, proximity to family could be seen as a coping strategy, especially given many South Africans are still living in locations that were allocated by the Group Areas Act (No. 42 of 1950). Specifically, the strategy of relying on extended family to provide meals and transport children in order to reduce WFC.

Within South Africa, Hindu women are still socialised along traditional gendered lines (Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). Subsequently, if a woman takes on a work role in addition to her family role, responsibility for the provision of care (to children and elders) remains hers (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016; Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). What this implies for WFC and coping is that a Hindu mother holds more responsibility than a Hindu father and this imbalance may exacerbate the negative consequences of WFC.

In terms of spousal support, Jaga's & Bagraim's (2017) participants' stories suggested that they experienced greater WFC when their husband valued traditional gender norms because they evaluated the distribution of family duties to be unequal. Similarly, the study by Ahmed and Carrim (2016) which looked at spousal support (husbands' views and support) for professional Indian women and its influence on career advancement for their wives, showed that spousal support is crucial for the career advancement of South African Indian women. Ahmed and Carrim noted that in instances where wives did not receive spousal support, their career advancement was impeded. Interestingly, Ahmed and Carrim found that "Indian women are not emancipated from domestic and childcare responsibilities, even in relationships classified as being egalitarian." (p.11). This provides motivation for delving deeper into understanding what other coping strategies South African Hindu mothers use, if spousal support is not always available. Especially if South African Hindu women are required to concurrently fulfil the roles of employee, wife, mother and extended family member.

Through the analysis of extant literature, it is clear that more research is needed to develop what is known about coping with WFC for ethnic minorities. Considering that Hindu culture is collectivistic in nature (and serves a unique ethnic minority group of interest) but SA organisations hold and support values of individualistic cultures, the study of how Hindu mothers cope with WFC in SA workplaces is valuable to addressing the need for cross-cultural work-family research.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The study explored the coping strategies that employed South African Hindu mothers use to manage their work and family roles. Previous research has not been done to understand coping strategies used by this particular group. However, prior work-family coping studies found that coping sources vary from person to person. Although coping strategies vary, broad themes across past findings included: social support, individual traits, and, both adaptive and maladaptive coping styles which were used to manage people's multiple work and family roles. Guangdong et al. (2016) criticised past WFC studies stating that research on WFC should not be restricted to quantitative methods. Instead, studies should leverage the diverse set of research methods that exist (Lin, Ju & Chen, 2013). The main objective of this study was to explore the coping strategies that South African Hindu mothers used to deal with work and family role expectations.

Understanding coping strategies for any group is important because it provides insight to the stressors that require coping. Subsequently, studying coping provides an opportunity to improve how individuals cope with life role stressors through the introduction of interventions geared to help with stress and coping. For any person, the risks posed by a lack of coping mean a higher likelihood of unrelieved stress which has negative consequences in both work and family contexts (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). This chapter outlines the research approach followed during this study and explains the steps taken to understand the coping strategies used by South African Hindu mothers

The chapter contains the research approach and design, the data collection procedure and sampling approach, and, description of the study participants. The chapter then covers: the data analysis techniques used to find results (which follow in the next chapter), how the study methodology addressed rigour, and, ethical considerations.

Research Approach

Qualitative research is appropriate when little is known about a specific topic or group of interest (Hayes, 2000) such as, the coping strategies used by South African Hindu mothers to manage work and family role expectations. Given that qualitative methods are “most useful for examining a range of perspectives within data and are good at picking out inconsistencies” (Sullivan, Gibson & Riley, 2012, p. 30), the approach of this study suited the nature of the

research question i.e. the approach allowed for exploration of similarities but also differences within the stories of the South African Hindu mothers.

The qualitative approach was informed by the research question first and foremost. In addition, given the time and resources available to the researcher to complete the study as part of fulfilment of their degree, the methodology was appropriate. The secondary analysis approach was suitable because the intended sample had already been accessed and interviewed on the topic of dealing with work and family life. Interview data that was analysed in this study was collected previously (as part of a larger study) on the antecedents of work-family conflict of Hindu women in South Africa (see Jaga, 2014).

Qualitative data collection allowed for a deeper understanding of a perspective or viewpoint (Jensen & Laurie, 2016). Interviews specifically, enabled discovery of what underlies the surface of individual experience, circumstance or process (Jensen & Laurie, 2016). For this study, to address the research question, interviews served as a useful and well-suited method to understand the coping strategies that Hindu mothers in South Africa use to deal with their work and family role expectations. Despite the critique that data from interviews (i.e. participant responses), are affected by the interviewer's, "identity, demeanour and way of framing the interview" (Jensen & Laurie, 2016, p. 174) the identity of the interviewer in this study may have positively facilitated open responses from participants. The interviewer was also a working, South African Hindu mother i.e. of similar context to the participants. Thus, the mothers were able to share their stories without stopping to offer English versions and explain the cultural context e.g. the participants freely used Hindu cultural terms (Jaga, 2014). This allowed for candid, free-flowing conversation and story sharing by the mothers interviewed.

This study explores a new research question: what are the coping strategies used by Hindu mothers in South Africa in managing work and family demands? Lazarus (1993) and Kovacs, Stiglbauer, Batinic and Gnambs (2018) have recommended that description of the thoughts and actions of a person, in the effort to cope with stressful events, are needed in developing the body of coping research. Given the above, using a qualitative method was an appropriate approach to pursue this study to achieve its aims. By following a qualitative approach, the study was able to provide the participants with an avenue for describing their own thoughts and actions on coping with work and family stresses.

Secondary analysis of qualitative data.

Secondary analysis of the qualitative data formed the basis of this study's data analysis strategy. Secondary analysis of qualitative data is useful to find answers to research questions that differ from those asked in the original study (Heaton, 2008; Long-Sutehall, Sque & Addington-Hall, 2011). Merits of re-visiting or using secondary data for new research include: the development of theoretical knowledge, encouraging multiple perspectives, the promotion of improving methods and techniques for analysis, reduction of costs in comparison to primary research (Heaton, 2004). For this research, all of the above mentioned merits were applicable. Theoretical knowledge about coping for South African Hindu mothers was developed. Multiple perspectives of the data were expressed and discussed in supervision meetings. Active attempts were made to ensure that improved secondary data analysis techniques and appropriate methodology practices were followed. Lastly, because the data was already gathered, time spent on collecting the data i.e. conducting interviews meant a reduction in costs to conduct the research.

Ruggiano and Perry (2017) argued the merits of secondary data analysis in that some researchers are more objective if less emotionally invested in the data (if returning to data). The primary researcher in this study, although a South African Hindu woman, was not the interviewer for the data collection. This meant that in this study the threats or potential pitfalls of emotionally-driven interpretations and engagement with the secondary analysis was minimised by a second researcher, who had no prior interaction with the initial data collection or participants.

Prior meta-analyses of studies that used secondary, qualitative data frequently included researchers who were previously involved in the initial research (Heaton, 2004; Ruggiano & Perry, 2017). These findings were important because they highlighted that the majority of secondary analysis studies have been conducted by researchers with "some first-hand knowledge of the context in which the data were originally collected" (Heaton, 2004, p. 36). Therefore, this study was similar to previous qualitative secondary data analysis studies in that it involved researchers from the parent study (Ruggiano & Perry, 2017) but in a supervisory capacity i.e. the interviewer who collected the data is not this study's primary researcher. The present primary researcher is being supervised by researchers who were involved in the initial study. There are different approaches that secondary analysis studies could take. In this case, there was consistency with the approaches of prior studies (Ruggiano & Perry, 2017).

Referring to Heaton's (2004) classification of types of secondary analysis, this study was a supra analysis i.e. the research transcended the focus of the parent study from which the data were obtained, to examine "new empirical, theoretical or methodological questions" (p.38). Supra analysis has been used by researchers to explore a new question that may have arisen from primary research, or, to examine pre-existing data from a novel perspective (Heaton, 2004). The present research aligned to Heaton's (2004) typology (supra analysis) which was based on investigation of 65 secondary analysis studies. Through their investigation of 65 other secondary analysis studies, Heaton (2004) confirmed the suitability of supra analysis as a research design that fellow researchers have and may continue to depend on to answer their new research questions.

Data Collection

Data collection strategy of initial/parent study.

Data were collected using unstructured in-depth interviews to allow any new patterns or constructs not in existing WFC or coping frameworks to surface i.e. participants were able to shape their story as they wished. Silverman (2016) suggested the strength of qualitative interviews lies in the opportunity it gives to "collect and rigorously examine narrative accounts of social worlds" (p. 137). Given the uniqueness of South African Hindu women in terms of social and cultural backgrounds, interviews enabled the participants to share cultural stories but also shaped a collective story (Silverman, 2016) which could be analysed. A single predetermined question "Tell me your story of what it is like to work and have a family" was asked at the beginning of the interviews with the intention that the participants could freely speak about their experiences (Jaga, 2014, p. 55).

The purpose of an unstructured approach was to enable participants to generate insightful stories, which assisted in better understanding of the complexity of work and family life (Achour et al. 2015; Jaga, 2014; Silverman, 2016). The collection procedure suited the intentions of the research question by being open to receiving a broad range of data. Unstructured interviews were especially suitable given that coping techniques used by individuals vary from person to person. In encouraging the participants to share their experiences, it was important to not let "theories and constructs that appeared in existing published studies from Anglo samples influence the conversations and themes that emerged" (Jaga, 2014, p.53; Thein et al., 2010). Due to the unstructured nature of the interviews, prior

constructs and theories were not introduced to participants and therefore could not have influenced what the South African Hindu mothers shared in the face-to-face interviews.

The face-to-face interviews were conducted as opposed to using any other data collection techniques e.g. focus groups, due to the sensitive nature of sharing work-family experiences (Jaga, 2014), and, the risk of breaching confidentiality (Gray, 2014). As Jaga (2014) noted, “sharing of such intimate feelings may have been withheld had the participants been among other Hindu women as they could have been exposed to social criticism” (p. 53). Additionally, having in-person contact helped the interviewer build rapport with the participants, which, according to Jensen and Laurie (2016) yields more information, richer in detail. Face-to-face interviews then were a way to confidentially ensure the maximum sharing of insightful experiences and free from potential biases which could have impacted stories if other Hindu women were present.

Sampling method and participants.

The non-probability sampling approach i.e. purposive sampling was used to collect the original data. Reflecting on the appropriateness of the sampling technique used by the initial study for the initial study’s aims, whilst apt for the parent study, the approach remained appropriate in this research too. Purposive sampling was suitable given the aims of the research i.e. to explore the coping strategies South African Hindu mothers use to cope with the demands of work and family life. Purposive sampling is appropriate to examine particular communities or cultures as it offers “useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2015, p. 46). Given that this sampling technique is aimed at gaining insight rather than empirical generalisation from a sample to a population (Patton, 2015), the technique proved to be an appropriate means to address the present research’s question and aims. The working South African Hindu mothers (a specific subset of the population of South Africans who have collectivistic backgrounds) identified themselves as part of the South African Hindu cultural group. Therefore, purposive sampling was a logical sampling technique if the aim of the study was to understand the coping strategies used by this group.

The sample comprised of 20 participants who were selected on the basis of self-identification as Hindu women who simultaneously fulfilled full-time paid work and a family role such as, caring for a child and/or elderly family member within their home (Jaga, 2014). The women who participated varied across age groups, educational levels, job statuses, Hindu

language groups, number and ages of children and Indian immigration status (Jaga, 2014). The reason behind deliberate selection of participants, i.e. for variety across the abovementioned factors, was to comprehensively explore the issues that affect work and family role experiences (Jaga, 2014) i.e. coping strategies for the group. Deliberate selection of “a wide range of cases to get variation on dimensions of interests” (Patton, 2015, p.267) served two purposes: firstly, to document diversity in responses, and, secondly, to identify the salient common patterns present across the diversity (Patton, 2015). By purposively selecting a diverse group of South African Hindu mothers, the study was able to solicit diverse sets of experiences from the participants, and, identify salient patterns across the mothers’ stories.

Table 1 depicts the diversity of the sample across the following dimensions: age groups, educational levels, job statuses, Hindu language groups, number and ages of children and Indian immigration status. Ages across the sample ranged from 33 years to 52 years. The number of women who had one child was four. Twelve women had two children. Three of the women interviewed had three children, and, one woman had four children. The ages of the children ranged from three years to 18 years. Jaga (2014) noted her difficulty in finding single Hindu mothers owing to the low divorce rates of the Indian population group in South Africa (Statistics SA, 2010). To further explain the possible reasons for low divorce rates among the group, Hindus regard marriage as “an eternal and sacred bond” (Singh, 2011, p. 36) where divorce is not even considered within the *Sastras* (Hindu scriptures) because divorce is unrighteous and sinful. The occupations and job levels of the women interviewed also varied across different industries and degrees of role seniority (Jaga, 2014). The interviewees identified with particular Indian language groups, despite not being able to speak the language (Jaga, 2014). For South African Hindus, the consequence of identifying with a specific language group is that language, shapes a person’s identity through variations in the application of Hindu customs and traditions (Jaga, 2014). This means that even within the subset of South African Hindu mothers interviewed, language differences between participants could have shaped their family role expectations depending on which language they identified with. Of the mothers interviewed, eight identified as being Gujarati, five as Tamil, two as Hindi and, two as Telegu. Three women identified with multiple language groups as follows: Telegu married to Gujarati, Gujarati married to Hindi, and, Tamil married to Gujarati (Jaga, 2014). Again, the diversity of the group of mothers interviewed, helped to ensure that the experiences they shared provided a representative set of data for this study’s analysis.

To encourage a diverse set of responses from the participants, the unstructured interviewing approach facilitated sharing of experiences that were not influenced by a list of predetermined questions. Another important aspect of the collection of the data (the unstructured interviews) was that the mothers were not asked to speak particularly about culture or coping strategies (Jaga, 2014). Instead they were encouraged to share how they experienced their multiple roles and responsibilities both at work and with their families (Jaga, 2014). Probing questions served the purpose of providing greater depth of information and elaboration of their views. Participants were thanked at the end of the interviews (once there was nothing left to share) and were reassured that their responses would remain confidential (Jaga, 2014). By thanking the mothers and reassuring each one that their responses would remain confidential, the interviewer demonstrated that the experiences of the mothers were valued and would be treated respectfully.

The interviews continued until data saturation was reached (after 20 interviews were conducted and analysed). Simply, sampling continued until no new information was apparent and the concepts, themes or ideas (Gray, 2014) that emerged were confirmed and reconfirmed by the new data (Jaga, 2014; Patton, 2015). The goal of qualitative research (this study) is to achieve a rich understanding of a person's experiences, not to generalise their experiences to wider populations (Silverman, 2016). Thus, the outcome of data saturation after 20 interviews meant that it was not necessary to continue data collection superfluously (Gray, 2014).

Table 1*Demographics of Interview Participants*

	City	Hindu language group	Age category (in years)	Number of children	A child under the age of six years	Nature/field of work, educational qualification
Participant 1	Cape Town	Gujarati	30-35	1	Yes	Occupational therapist
Participant 2	Cape Town	Tamil	30-35	1	Yes	Financial Manager
Participant 3	Cape Town	Gujarati	46-50	2	No	Educator (tertiary education)
Participant 4	Cape Town	Tamil	50-55	4	No	Legal manager
Participant 5	Cape Town	Tamil	36-40	2	Yes	Information technology (IT) manager
Participant 6	Cape Town	Gujarati	40-45	2	No	Pharmacist
Participant 7	Cape Town	Gujarati	36-40	2	Yes	Financial manager
Participant 8	Cape Town	Telegu – married Gujarati	36-40	1	Yes	Legal manager
Participant 9	Cape Town	Gujarati	46-50	3	No	Educator (primary education)
Participant 10	Cape Town	Gujarati	36-40	2	Yes	IT Professional

Table 1*Demographics of Interview Participants (continued)*

	City	Hindu language group	Age category (in years)	Number of children	A child under the age of six years	Nature/Field of work, educational qualification
Participant 11	Durban	Hindi	40-45	2	Yes	Academic
Participant 12	Durban	Gujarati – married Hindi	30-35	2	Yes	Human resources manager
Participant 13	Durban	Hindi	30-35	3	Yes	Medical administrator
Participant 14	Durban	Gujarati	50-55	1	No	Manager in education
Participant 15	Durban	Tamil married Gujarati	30-35	3	Yes	Financial administrator
Participant 16	Durban	Tamil	30-35	2	Yes	Dental professional
Participant 17	Durban	Gujarati	50-55	2	No	Educational administrator
Participant 18	Durban	Telegu	30-35	2	No	Personal assistant
Participant 19	Durban	Tamil	30-35	2	Yes	Occupational therapist and owner of nursery school
Participant 20	Durban	Hindi	30-25	2	Yes	Educator (secondary education)

Data Analysis

To explore what coping strategies South African working Hindu mothers use to cope with WFC, all 20 interviews from Jaga's 2014 study were analysed. The transcribed interview data were thematically analysed. This was done in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase guide to thematic analysis. Themes were identified at a semantic level. This means that the experiences of the South African Hindu mothers were taken as explicitly i.e. with no attempt by myself as the analyst, to look for meaning beyond what was said and transcribed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach to analyse the stories of the mothers aligned to the purpose and aims of the study i.e. to explore the coping strategies that South African Hindu mothers use to deal with work and family role expectations. The six steps followed from Braun and Clarke's method for thematic analysis are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2

Six Steps of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Phase	Description of process
Familiarisation with data	Reading and noting ideas from data.
Generation of initial codes	Systematically generating initial codes by coding across the entire data set, collating the data relevant to each code.
Searching for themes	Gathering codes into potential themes by gathering all data relevant to each theme.
Reviewing themes	Checking if themes make sense in relation to both coded extracts and the entire data set. A map of themes of the analysis should be generated.
Defining and naming themes	Continuous refinement of themes and the overall story that the themes present or tells. Each theme should have a clear definition and name.
Producing the report	This step is the last opportunity for analysis. Selection of extracts that vividly explain theme and relate to research question, existing literature. The researcher writes up their academic report of the analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) clarified that thematic analysis helps researchers with identifying, analysing and reporting patterns, or themes, within data. The semantic approach means that experiences or themes are taken as valid, at face-value (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is not bound to any particular paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and suited the underpinnings of the post-positivist stance (interest in understanding subjective truth) of this study. “Post-positivism emphasizes meanings, not unlike interpretivism, and seeks to explicate social concerns” (Henderson, 2011, p. 342). Post-positivism research uses qualitative data with the belief in the significance of subjective reality (Henderson, 2011). Adopting this ontological stance/paradigm allows for application to situational or contextual data (Henderson, 2011) as was the case for the context-specific stories of the South African Hindu mothers. Post-positivism and thematic analysis then, gave me a way to make sense of the data in a manner that was flexible, relatively simple to implement, and allowed for multiple interpretations; which was useful in addressing the research question and aims.

NVivo (NVivo, 2012) a qualitative data analysis software was used to manage the analysis of the secondary data in order to identify the themes of coping strategies.

To begin with analysis, the transcribed interviews were read and re-read by myself to familiarise myself with the content and to start to understand the experiences of the Hindu mothers. When re-reading the transcripts, I listened to the audio recordings of the interviews to capture any pauses or audible expressions (e.g. laughing, sighing) to add in to the transcriptions. I renamed each transcription and placed in a separate folder, to ensure the original transcripts remained unchanged. For the purpose of writing up the results and quoting participants, each participant’s transcript was again renamed to SAHM (South African Hindu Mother) and allocated a number from 1 to 20. During this first step, initial ideas began to form around the ways in which the women coped with their work and family roles. These ideas were noted directly into the copies of the transcripts as comments, whilst I read through them, the first, two times. A supervision meeting then followed which allowed me to share my initial thoughts with my supervisors and get feedback in terms of next steps i.e. coding using NVivo.

During Step 2 i.e. using NVivo, the 20 transcript files were imported into NVivo and then individually coded. The coding exercise resulted in 62 codes initially. A sample of three transcripts were also coded by the primary supervisor. This was done to obtain an objective perspective to ensure that the themes were vetted by another qualitative researcher. The codes

were then shared and discussed with my supervisors so that the grouping of codes into salient themes could follow. A second round of coding was then done, after supervision input. The second round of coding resulted in 43 codes. These codes were organised into themes in Step 3.

For Step 3, significant themes, were identified by examining the codes. The second round of coding using NVivo allowed me to take a more focused and refined view of the data and during this process, three themes were identified. The themes were then reviewed by my supervisors and through discussion the themes were debated i.e. the relevance of the code excerpts in relation to the themes was deliberated.

In Step 4, the themes were refined to address the research question and with due consideration to the entire data set. Through the deliberation of the themes with my supervisors, two themes were identified rather than three. The refinement of the themes from three to two made sense in that there was similarity between two themes and so these themes were merged. In merging two of the themes, the data and codes were revised to ensure that the appropriate subthemes would be presented in the findings chapter.

Step 5 entailed naming and describing the themes and their associated subthemes that came out of Step 4. Because there was continuous input from my supervisors the themes that were named and defined were considered adequate and ready for Step 6, the findings write-up.

Final step of the analysis, Step 6, was as per Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis process. The write-up of the findings included those excerpts from the experiences of the South African Hindu mothers which clearly articulated each theme and subtheme. In the findings chapter which follows, verbatim extracts of the data explain the themes and subthemes identified through the analysis. Again, these excerpts were reviewed by my supervisors and their input allowed for a rigorous process of analysis being applied to the research (Lyons & Coyle, 2016).

Rigour

Rigour is an indicator of the quality of qualitative research and relates to the completeness (being systematic and consistent) of the study (Lyons & Coyle, 2016; Sullivan et al., 2012). The rigour of this study was characterised by the structured, step-wise approach

to analysing the data (Hayes, 2000). In addition to thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006), the researcher kept a reflexive diary to assist in fostering a genuinely critical approach that supports a systematic self-conscious design (Sullivan et al., 2012). The reflexive diary also assisted with enhancing rigour by supplying “a clear and transparent record of the research process” (Sullivan et al., 2012, p. 166). Specifically, to provide clarity for the process of refinement of codes and themes, in addition to allowing the researcher an opportunity to reflect on the research process. Transparency is a way to display the rigour, coherence and credibility of the study because it demonstrates the steps taken throughout the research process so that the audience may review and critique it (Sullivan et al., 2012).

I had to be transparent with my supervisors so that the codes, subthemes and themes could be rigorously critiqued. By using Nvivo, the process of thematic analysis was made easier given that all the codes were centralised and could be rearranged as and when revision was necessary. Bell, Bryman and Harley (2018) indicated that the use of computer-assisted data analysis software has led to greater transparency in terms of procedures used for the analysis of qualitative data. By using software, it was simple to not only house the data but also analyse and share the data, if required. To demonstrate transparency of analysis procedures in this study, computer-assisted data analysis software was used i.e. NVivo.

Ethical Considerations

HPCSA and APA guidelines informed the ethical considerations of the study. Approval to proceed with the research study was obtained from the UCT Faculty of Commerce Ethics in Research Committee, prior to analysis of data. As a student of UCT, it is important that the institution is supportive of student research practices. Granting ethical clearance for research projects ensures that fundamental ethical principles are adhered to. These principles include: avoiding harm to participants, ensuring informed consent, respect for the privacy of participants and avoiding deception (Gray, 2014). Being given ethical clearance prior to analysis is also important so that the researcher does not breach the principles of ethics and in so doing, conducts themselves in a dissatisfactory, unfavourable manner. Given that the source study has already been granted ethics approval, there should not have been any problems with the approval of this study which used data from the initial source study. The study by Jaga (2014) from which unused data was analysed, was granted ethical clearance prior to commencement of qualitative exploration by the University of Cape Town’s Faculty of Commerce Ethics in Research Committee. In addition, all participants gave written consent for

their inclusion by signing consent forms and all agreed to be recorded for interview, noting that their participation would remain confidential.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to seek understanding of the coping strategies used by South African Hindu mothers to fulfil their work and family roles. By exploring the experiences of the participants (through the analysis of qualitative data) it was clear that the women interviewed used a variety of coping strategies to manage the expectations and demands of their roles as, mothers, wives, extended family members, employees, and, Hindus. Although each mother's account was unique to themselves, all the mothers spoke of strategies that they used to help them cope with meeting their work and family role expectations and demands.

Two prevailing themes emerged from the coded data through the process of thematic analysis. The findings focus on the two main themes specific to how Hindu mothers in South Africa cope with the demands of their work and family life roles: (1) the Internal Processes that they leverage to cope, and (2) the External processes used for coping. This section covers the interpretation and meaning of the strategies used by the participants.

The analysis of findings is explained using the theme structure as a framework i.e. themes and their associated subthemes are discussed in relation to the research question and extant literature. Each theme is named and explained through the presentation of quotations from the mothers to show the rich, detailed meaning that the mothers gave to their stories. The analysis that follows discusses the findings, offers insights in line with prior coping and WFC research and theory, and, highlights implications for future research.

The themes and their associated subthemes are presented below. Significant quotations, taken verbatim, from the participants explained their experiences. Their stories of their experiences, therefore, addressed the question of what coping strategies are used by South African Hindu mothers to manage their family and work demands. Table 3 illustrates the themes and subthemes that emerged from the interview data.

Table 3*Themes that emerged via thematic analysis.*

Name of theme	Name of subtheme	Number of references/ excerpts coded
Internal processes		148
	Acceptance of the “ <i>Indian Way</i> ”	47
	Reappraising challenges of holding multiple roles	58
	Feelings of guilt that contribute to overcompensation	43
External processes		185
	Social support	99
	Managing life roles through structure, prioritisation, organising, flexible work and alternative career pathing	86

Theme 1: Internal Processes

As the mothers shared their experiences, it became evident that they used their internal psychological thinking processes to make sense of and manage their role expectations. Many mothers showed that their psychological internal processes (cognitions, feelings and reflections) helped them deal with the challenges of managing their dual demands from work and family roles. All the mothers reflected on their experiences and in so doing explained how their experiences shaped their ability to deal with their role expectations.

Three subthemes emerged that helped make sense of the mothers’ internal coping mechanisms: reappraising challenges of holding multiple roles, accepting the “*Indian way*”, and, feelings of guilt which lead to overcompensation.

Subtheme: Reappraising challenges of holding multiple roles.

Many mothers tended to assess a situation, experience or circumstance in a negative way first and then after explaining the situation in a negative light, reframed it as something that was not as bad to either accept that this their role or simply assess the situation as not as bad i.e. cognitive reappraisal.

Cognitive reappraisal as described by Gross (2015) involves “reframing an emotional stimulus to change its emotional impact” (p.2). The form of cognitive reappraisal that was evident in the experiences of the mothers was positive reappraisal. Positive reappraisal is underpinned by emotional regulation theory (Gross, 1998b; Stiller, Kattner, Gunzenhauser & Schmitz, 2019). Positive reappraisal aims to change the nature of a negative emotional response by reducing the negative emotional response (Stiller et al., 2019) and actively attempts to pursue (Sears, Stanton, & Danoff-Burg, 2003) and maintain positive emotions and outcomes as well (Shiota & Levenson, 2012).

This strategy seemed to lessen the stress or negative emotions for the mothers and even allowed them to reframe the stress as a positive feature in their lives. For example, some mothers spoke about how the challenges they faced in their work and family roles may have created negative feelings and emotions. However, being faced with these challenges allowed them to reframe them as motivators that helped the women become “*stronger*” and “*more focused*” at fulfilling their roles. Below, one mother shared how working and having a family, and, trying to balance the two has helped her see possibilities that she wouldn’t have been exposed to otherwise. By seeing the challenges as opportunities she has reframed the stress of the challenges into opportunities to build her own resilience as a person:

It doesn't work out [trying to be Superwoman] and you think “Ya, bad idea.” ...And uh, ya, sometimes a challenge [balancing work and family] brings new possibilities. Sometimes, you don't see it until you open that parcel up and “Wow! I didn't know there was so much in this!” you know? [You think] maybe I should have done it earlier. So I'm quite confident, you know, with how things are now. I don't regret. And uh, I believe sometimes also these challenges just make you stronger and I think for me, every time, every challenge that comes or every obstacle that comes, it just makes, I just feel that it makes me so much stronger and it makes me even more...[thinking] focused. (SAHM5 Corporate Professional).

Another woman also reflected on how having had it much harder while she lived overseas, allows her to reframe her current situation as not as bad, helping her to cope with the demands of fulfilling her roles:

So [thinking]...coming back [from being overseas] and everything...and now having to balance work and home - I think all those experiences, positive and negative, made things a bit easier. That, you know what? It's actually not that bad. (SAHM9 Education Professional).

Similarly, one of the mothers added that she opted to keep her work role despite the additional strain that having multiple roles causes for her i.e. “no matter how hard it is”. She had reframed keeping up with both work and family roles from something that was initially seen as stress-causing to being a stress-reliever i.e. working actually made her feel “happy” and “totally independent”. She had reframed holding multiple roles as being strain-inducing to instead being a positive feature in her life that helps her cope with her role demands:

At that point maybe I should leave work and just stay at home but I'm actually glad I didn't. I like work. It keeps my mind active, it gives me an out, I'm not sitting there doing all the work and all of that and then just being this person whose sole responsibility is house-keeping and cooking and looking after a child. At least I've got my independence. Yes, it's tough but I'm actually happy. I'm happy to come to work for these eight hours and, you know, just do my thing - feel appreciated; get paid at the end of the month. I'm able to - I don't have to ask my husband for anything and I'm just totally independent and I like that. So no matter how hard it is, I would choose this option rather than a stay at home option. [emphasis] Any day. (SAHM8 Corporate Professional).

Other examples of reappraisal were shown in the stories of mothers who reflected on their life experiences as moments of character-building which helped them to deal with their role challenges. One mother saw her past life experiences as a way to gain perspective and showed how she coped by thinking about the bigger picture, positively, rather than becoming stressed by her current life stresses. The women had reframed their views that working and having a family was stressful to viewing working and having a family as a positive feature of their lives. Moreover, the women had made it clear that despite the challenges of fulfilling

work and family roles, they would still choose to keep both roles because the positives outweighed the negatives:

Maybe I can just start off by saying is that working fulltime and being a mom and wife looking after home is a challenge...I could make choices in my life, one is work flexi time which means I have to change jobs...[but] I will continue working full time because I believe that my boys are actually benefiting from that. The one benefit is that I can instil them with different kinds of knowledge, the second one is that I'm interacting with different people during the day.” (SAHM6 Corporate Professional).

The excerpt above highlights that the mothers chose to keep their multiple role challenges because they perceived the challenges as worthwhile for themselves and for their children. The internal process of reframing an emotional stimulus from triggering to less provoking and even positive features of their lives allowed the women to cope with their roles. As an example, the emotional trigger of having to fulfil many roles was reframed by participants to a less triggering view that having multiple roles helped them by showing them opportunity and making them happy. In reframing their feelings about working and having a family, reappraisal served as a coping strategy when dealing with their role responsibilities.

Past empirical works consistently point to cognitive reappraisal as beneficial for people in that it plays a significant role for long-term psychological health (Troy et al., 2018). Cognitive reappraisal is an emotional regulation strategy whereby a person changes their interpretation of a stimulus or situation in a way that alters their emotional response (Stiller, et al., 2019) i.e. reframes their situation or challenge in order to cope. Consistent with past coping research (Baltes et al., 2011; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007), the findings of this study confirmed that reframing and positive thinking (positive reappraisal) served as coping strategies for the South African Hindu mothers, especially with regards to their family roles.

Reappraisal requires that a person feels that they are able to control their own outcomes (Versey, 2015). For a person to perceive a situation as controllable; first, the person needs to believe that they can change the environment or condition that is stressful; and second, the person needs to believe that they can change themselves in response to their environment (Versey, 2015). What this highlights, in the context of dealing with the expectations of work

and family roles for South African Hindu mothers, is that their self-perceptions have helped them cope with the roles and see their lives from a higher perspective.

Hinduism through the Vedas (holy scriptures) describes ten dharmas (religious rites and righteous duties) which Hindus are encouraged to fulfil on the soul's journey to attain *moksha* or enlightenment (Singh, 2011). Five of the ten *dharmas* include: forbearance (self-control), mental control, sense-control, wisdom, learning (Singh, 2011). The link between emotional regulation i.e. positive reappraisal and self-regulated learning suggests that coping strategies like positive reappraisal are important contributors for life-long learning (Stiller et al., 2019). Perhaps the mothers leveraged strategies that they may have had exposure to because of their upbringing as Hindus and perhaps emotional regulation i.e. reappraisal has been part of their way of life without them being fully aware of it.

Subtheme: Accepting the “Indian way”.

Many of the women shared how acceptance of their circumstances allowed them to take whatever steps they needed to fulfil their roles. In addition, the majority of the mothers spoke about how it was the “Indian way” to live and hence accepting that it is the “Indian way” allowed them to stay on the course of meeting their role expectations.

Acceptance of circumstances.

The majority of the women interviewed shared how accepting their circumstances for what they were helped them get on with fulfilling their role expectations or, in some cases, helped them accept that they could not fulfil them. The excerpts below detailed how participants used acceptance as a coping strategy for their fulfilling their role expectations:

So whatever happens, I just think oh well I'll just have to deal with this thing or deal with whatever curve ball that comes into the day but I don't get stressed and I don't feel like the walls are caving in on me...So I just deal with it and if it means I go to bed at twelve [o'clock] or whatever, then it's just the way it is. And if I have to wake up at four or five [o'clock] then that's just the way it is. (SAHM8 Corporate Professional).

Another mother added how acceptance helped her make sense of her role and circumstances as a working mother with a family to care for. Her acceptance of her

circumstances and her willingness to “*learn to accept*” were techniques that helped her cope with “*whatever situation*” that she found herself in:

I tend to make the most of any situation - put it that way, you know? One must learn to accept whatever's out there or whatever situation you are in and just try and live with it, you know. That's just my attitude. (SAHM3 Medical Professional).

One of the women spoke about how she had accepted that each person's circumstances are different i.e. “*there're some people that are able...and there are others that can't*”. Her acceptance of what can and cannot be done, helped her cope with her not meeting role expectations:

“People are expected to go to all these events and these functions and the messages that are sent out to everyone [faster] and maybe there're some people that are able to do that, and there are others that can't - and that's just the way it is. I must just accept that.”. (SAHM1 Academic Professional).

Acceptance as a coping strategy means that a person non-judgmentally engages with and accepts negative experiences (Troy et al., 2018). The mothers spoke about how they accepted their circumstances and that that helped them cope with their life roles. Examples included, accepting that life is stressful, so by accepting that life comes with stresses, the participants were able to fulfil their role expectations despite e.g. sleeping late and waking up early i.e. “*that's just the way it is*”.

Acceptance as a way of living life, or, as an attitudinal disposition in life seemed to be a coping strategy for the women. One participant made it clear that making the most of their circumstances was their attitude towards life. Acceptance as a coping strategy is not about avoiding stressors or feelings, rather, acceptance is internal process which encourages self-awareness and acceptance i.e. it is not about actively changing how a person feels (Troy et al., 2018). A potential benefit of the acceptance coping strategy, as found by Troy et al. (2018), was that acceptance would be easier and less cognitively taxing to use than reappraisal to cope with stressors. Furthermore, acceptance as a coping strategy allows a person to feel negative sentiments but the person won't have to deal with maladaptive psychological consequences (Troy et al., 2018).

Troy et al. indicated that “acceptance may be better suited for decreasing short-term psychological reactivity to unpleasant stimuli” (p. 20, 2018). When evaluating the experiences of this study’s participants, Troy et al.’s indication holds true i.e. one mother explained that they forced themselves to accept the continued stressor; which means that they still felt psychological impacts over the long-term. Simply, despite using acceptance as a coping strategy; acceptance for the sake of acceptance i.e. not dealing with the stressor through an additional strategy may not be the most effective way to cope with role expectations. The strategy that the mothers used i.e. accepting the reality of problems was consistent with past coping with WFC research (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007; Aazami et al. 2015).

Although, the women’s experiences showed how the concept of acceptance served as a broad coping strategy for them, what was interesting in this study, was that the South African Hindu mothers often referred to the “*Indian way*” of living or “*being Hindu*” in relation to acceptance of how life should be lived. The acceptance of the “*Indian way*” was a prominent topic of discussion for the mothers. Explained below are the excerpts that showed acceptance of the “*Indian way*”.

The “Indian way”.

The family is the basis of society in Hindu culture and the core of identity development for mothers (Singh, 2011). This section of the subtheme is characterised by the idea that tradition and cultural customs are to be upheld and sustained throughout generations, despite the modernisation of the environments that South African Hindu mothers live in.

Many of the women explained that it was their role to abide by and accept traditional ways of living and maintain the “*Indian way*” of “*being Hindu*”. The women’s stories highlighted how accepting the traditional ways of living meant that they could accept their responsibilities and cope by balancing role responsibilities.

One women shared that “*Indian way*” meant that women’s “*sole purpose was to look after their family, stay at home, see to the kids*”. This showed how she had internalised and accepted that the “*Indian way*” means that a woman’s primary role in life is within the family sphere. The women also acknowledged that more South African Hindu mothers work than they did in the past. She explained that because women have accepted that it is traditionally their

role to care for their families, they were able to cope with work and family demands by balancing what they do:

I think that's the Indian way. Our parents more than likely stayed home, right which was a whole different set [of circumstances]. Women didn't really work; Indian women didn't really work. Their sole purpose was to look after their family, stay at home, see to the kids, you know all of that. Now women have gone to the work place but that other side hasn't changed I mean the constraints around that being the mother, being the cook and the whatever is still there, so you have to balance what you do. (SAHM8 Corporate Professional).

The participant above acknowledged that times have changed i.e. more Hindu mothers are working, other participants reinforced through their stories, their sense of duty and responsibility that Hindu mothers have. According to the Vedas (ancient Indian scriptures which codified ideas and practices and laid the foundation for Hinduism), “a woman was primarily associated with home and was expected to look after domestic and religious chores. Essentially her role was that of housewife, a daughter-in-law and mother...She has special responsibilities and duties” (Singh, 2011, p.143). The women interviewed often referred to their responsibilities and showed how they accepted home and family duties. One of the women said:

We know our responsibilities and we take them seriously. Whereas with other cultures, like the wife, by no means is the one that does the cooking. It's not a stereotypical kind of relationship; they fully share everything; you know? Whereas in an [emphasis] Indian home, it's a bit different...I am the mother. And I am the wife. And I am the one who does the cooking, and, I am the one who does the cleaning and seeing to the child. Rightfully so or wrongfully so, that's my role. (SAHM8 Corporate Professional).

The woman's views above about differences between Indian married couples versus non-Indian married couples, highlights the perception that because of their Indian heritage the women had to accept their home responsibilities - even if the responsibilities didn't apply to women of “*other cultures*”. Their acceptance of their family responsibilities seemed to be reinforced by their willingness to dutifully fulfil their roles. One mother expressed her

acceptance of her duty toward her mother in law, using internal moral standards to accept what is right and wrong as a Hindu woman and daughter in law:

I think it's right to actually cook for her and make sure she has a meal because even though it's tiring, it does get upsetting, but I think it's good. I think she's an elderly person and I believe that it's appropriate that one makes sure that she has a meal. I don't think it's good that one should see an elderly in the house not being treated well and not being comfortable, I think it's quite sad to allow something like that. (SAHM6 Corporate Professional).

Another woman added how she accepted that it was her duty to be a good daughter in law:

Duty means, in a way because we are Indians, I think, and because we were brought up that way, maybe not the younger generation but I'm from the older generation so it's like respect and duty so you feel you have to do it, you have to do it, you can't say, "Go stay with the other son."." (SAHM4 Educational Administrator)

Many of the women spoke about their acceptance of duties related to family roles. Hindu mothers are expected to assume a number of important family roles including those of wife, daughter-in-law, mother, and hostess to extended family and guests (Agarwal, 2007). The women seemed to justify having and fulfilling caregiving responsibilities on the basis of duty. One mother showed how her acceptance that it is her duty to care for her husband's sister's daughter may have been why she was able to cope with the stress of having to care for an extended family member:

She [participant's husband's niece] decided to study here at UCT so since then, she decided she's going to work in Cape Town. So she's currently working. She's not living in a flat because of the fact that if you live on your own you have to do everything on your own and, it's also extra costs. (SAHM6 Corporate Professional).

The understanding that accepting one's duty is part of the "Indian way" for the participants was evident, however, it was also clear that their sense of duty created tension for how they cope with their own expectations and the expectations of Hindu culture i.e. being

respectful to elders and in-laws (Singh, 2011). A few mothers raised that they accepted their duties but found it “*difficult*” to do:

You're supposed to feel your duty and responsibility to the elders and the community and all of that, and, do your part...and I know all of that, but I just find it difficult. (SAHM1 Academic Professional).

Another mother added her acceptance of what she knows to be her duty i.e. leaving her family for her married family. Her accounts however also highlighted frustration in accepting her duty:

I'm supposed to have married out of my family into their family so, emotionally, I'm supposed to have shifted my ties over, and, I tried. God knows, I tried. But I can't do that anymore. It's crazy... for me right now [it] is very difficult. Because if it had been me ten years ago, or, twenty years ago, I wouldn't have even had the chance to complain about this, you just get on with it, you know. (SAHM12 Corporate Professional)

The excerpts above showed that even though the women accepted what was expected of them i.e. living according to the “Indian way”, additional tension was created for some of the participants. The woman’s story above showed how she was aware that if she lived in a bygone period, she would be expected to “just get on with it”. This suggested that she acknowledged and even appreciated that times have changed, however, the expectations of what a good Hindu woman does and the acceptance of family role responsibilities, remains as it always has. By accepting the ideals about what it means to be a good Hindu woman, the mothers were able to cope with their roles.

The women’s stories revealed their awareness of the expectation to adhere to socialised cultural tradition and customs. Their experiences highlighted that despite the expectations for them to fulfil their family roles, the ideal of the “Indian way”, served as a coping tool for them to fulfil these expectations. The participants endorsed the understanding that it is their duty, their responsibility, and, their obligation to meet familial expectations. The South African Hindu mother’s understanding and acceptance of the “Indian way” is what helped them cope with the expectations from their family roles.

Participants explained the importance of duty and responsibility to meet the demands of e.g. caring for elder, in-laws, or, younger, extended-family members. The South African Hindu mothers made it clear that their belief of, doing what is right, served as a coping strategy for them. It was clear from the women's stories that they had been socialised to accept their primary life role as being in the family sphere. Their socialisation in terms of tradition and culture coupled with the fact that traditional Hindu roles reinforce gendered norms i.e. a woman's role is in the home, meant that by accepting the "*Indian way*" they were able to adaptively cope with their role expectations. By accepting the orders of their elders and respecting the customs and traditions of Hinduism, the women showed that they valued living a dutiful life.

Duty is a fundamental principle in Hinduism where the emphasis of "duty rather than on rights [of people] results in harmony" (Singh, 2011, p. 45). For the South African Hindu mothers interviewed, the driver for them to meet their family-role expectation of e.g. caring for extended-family, was their sense of responsibility and feelings of obligation according to Hindu customs and teachings. Hindu women are expected to fulfil their familial duties before their work duties (Singh, 2011), despite the modernisation of society in which, younger, less traditional generations believe that family workload should be shared equally between sexes (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Some mothers acknowledged that a Hindu mother's primary role in society is to be fulfilled in their homes. One mother shared that even though Hindu mothers have picked up roles and responsibilities outside the home i.e. paid work, the expectation for them to be the primary caregiver and cook in a Hindu home remain. If the women interviewed acknowledged that society has changed i.e. more Hindu women have entered the workplace, yet the expectation to fulfil home life duties has not, what could have sustained the expectation? It could be that pressure from family and community to uphold their cultural identity fuels the expectation and urges the women to accept that it is still their role to fulfil.

Furthermore, if the expectation for Hindu mothers is to be primarily focused on fulfilling their familial duties (even when working in an individualistic, South African workplace), perhaps collectivistic, cultural philosophy i.e. achieving duty towards family trumps fulfilling any other role, including paid work roles. The participants often stated that they were "*supposed to*", especially when referring to family role expectations. This links back

to the pressure from family and Hindu communities to uphold a strong sense of cultural identity when they are the minority group i.e. in a society like South Africa in which the dominant cultural and traditional practices are markedly different to those in India (Khokher & Beauregard, 2013; Jaga & Bagraim, 2017). Prior coping and WFC studies in collectivistic contexts too showed that within traditional collectivistic groups, it is normal for the women to be responsible for family duties (Aazami et al., 2015; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Duty and the fulfilment thereof for the mothers served to reinforce the “*Indian way*”. Whilst the findings in this study showed that South African Hindu mothers intend to uphold tradition, and, that accepting and maintaining “*Indian way*” was a coping strategy for them; it was interesting to note that the coping strategy was also laden with tension. To illustrate, some participants’ stories reflected that their acceptance and fulfilment of duty (though a coping strategy) was also a source of unwelcomed tension and stress. This is interesting because coping is understood as effort that solves problems and minimises stress, yet for some participants, fulfilling their duties appeared to stir up feelings of resentment. Prior research conducted in India (a collectivistic and predominantly Hindu society) indicated that maintaining strong familial connections increased the likelihood of stress between work and family roles; where fulfilling expectations from extended families was shown to increase stress among employed women (Buddapriya, 2009; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Thus, the findings in this study are consistent with the principle that strong familial ties and fulfilment of familial duties may actually increase stress for employed women.

The findings raise questions for what can be done to alleviate some of the strain that is created accepting the “*Indian way*” i.e. are there possible interventions for South African Hindu mothers and their communities to better manage the expectations from their family roles? In addition, what accommodations could be made by South African workplaces if leaders in organisations understood the nuances in coping strategies of collectivistic cultural groups, like, South African Hindu mothers? Perhaps younger generations of South African Hindu women entering the workplace, who have a sense of determination towards achieving gender equality in home and work environments (Singh, 2011), will leverage social feminist movements to shift the predominantly, patriarchal status quo (where the primary role of women is to meet home and family expectations). The idea that a Hindu woman’s primary role is within the family needs to be reconsidered by Hindu South Africans so that mothers are relieved of some of the additional tension that fulfilling their duties brings.

Subtheme: Feelings of guilt that contribute to overcompensation.

One of the mothers shared how her feelings of guilt were regularly present, especially when it came to fulfilling Hindu duties i.e. preparing for traditional events or festivals. She went on to add that because of her guilt she made extra efforts to fulfil her role of being a good Hindu woman like her mother was when she was growing up:

Where the guilt might come in is you know if it's Hindu festivals and then she [participant's mother] would make all these sweetmeats - the traditional Diwali things. And that's how we grew up. She made everything and there was an excitement! And sometimes I still find, what with work - I have these challenges when I come home...[at] Diwali time, like, I'll start two weeks before and I'll [emphasis] try and my husband will get very upset with me, "You can't be superwoman!". And I can't even tell him that I'm contemplating, and, I've made the plan, and, I'm going to try this. Make this, and I'm going to make that. And I actually quietly try to down-play it. In the evening I quickly try to put something together and by the fourth day he gets [mimicking her husband] "What are you trying to do? What are you trying to prove to yourself? You can't do it!", you know? And sometimes I prove him wrong. (SAHM5 Corporate Professional).

The mother added that her feelings of guilt were the driving factors that made her make more of an effort to be a "good wife and a good mother":

"Some things make you feel guilty when it comes to the kids. And you think of how you grew up and the experiences you had. And the rich culture. And your kids don't really experience that, you know? So it's more out of guilt... [that you commit] let me try and do that.". (SAHM5 Corporate Professional).

Another woman described how feeling guilt within the working sphere, shaped her work communication and efforts to show that she was committed to her work even when she or her children were ill:

...as I said, my GM, he doesn't have children of his own. He's got a girlfriend and he tells me sometimes, "I think you do too much for your kids.", you know? "...so

I say ya, you know, he doesn't understand. So often I would not say anything, you know, if there's challenges at home, if they sick I'll just keep quiet because you don't [want to] appear as...someone [who is] always having problems...so I just sort of keep quiet unless they at hospital or something. Then I tell him, "Listen, you know, I'm doing this or I'm doing that. And where I am [her workplace] people are there every day. If they sick, which is very rare, they drag themselves to work - so even myself - when you do occasionally get sick, you're there at work because you're the odd one out-...it's like taboo if any one of the managers are sick [laughs].". (SAHM5 Corporate Professional)

These experiences capture how guilt fuels additional efforts by the women and therefore how feeling guilt functions as a coping strategy i.e. overcompensation for South African Hindu mothers. The guilt they feel redirects them towards role fulfilment in both work and family spheres. The women shared how their feelings of guilt motivated them to take compensatory action.

"Guilt is a moral emotion that people experience when they perceive that they have violated a societal or moral standard" (Aarntze, Derks, van Steenberg, Ryan & van der Lippe, 2019, p.115). The women's feeling of guilt lead to them making additional compensatory efforts as a way of coping with their feelings. Baltes et al. (2011) indicated that making compensatory efforts is a coping strategy for dealing with WFC. The stories of the mothers are therefore consistent with Baltes et al.'s coping strategy model which included compensation as a core WFC coping strategy. Feelings of guilt act as motivation to take compensatory action.

"Guilt can be either adaptive or destructive" (Korabik, Aycan & Ayman, 2017, p. 369). In the case of the South African Hindu mothers, guilt seemed to serve as a motivating factor to make additional compensatory efforts so that they could fulfil their role expectations. Both Korabik (2017) and Bochatin and Cowan (2016) suggested that guilt can motivate a person's behaviours and this suggestion was supported in the experiences shared by the women in this study.

It is suggested that the pressures of fulfilling multiple work-family roles contribute to women to feeling guilty and confused about what their priorities should be; so they prioritise conforming to the cultural expectations of their immediate family, extended family and

community members. (Kaur Rana et. al, 1998; Korabik et al., 2017). It is not surprising that the women chose to make compensatory efforts in order to fulfil their family duties, considering their collectivistic roots and desire to be a “*good mother*”. Interestingly, Korabik et al. (2017) showed that feelings of guilt were less prevalent in “more individualistic/egalitarian Anglo and Latin European countries than in the more collectivist/traditional Asian countries” (p. 385). Korabik et al. suggested that the reason for this could be that collectivistic traditional cultures value family duties as more important than work role duties.

The mothers shared how guilt shows up in their lives and their experiences of guilt indicated their desire to uphold traditional practices to fulfil their family role. One participant shared her feelings of guilt because she didn’t have the time to make the same effort her mother did during traditional festivals in terms of preparing sweets. Despite wanting to live up the role of “*superwoman*” in her home life, there simply wasn’t enough time and this resulted in her feeling guilty, which motivated her to spend time during evenings to try to meet her role expectations. The internal process of feeling guilty serves a catalyst for continued effort towards family role fulfilment. To this end, the coping strategy recycles feelings of guilt and turns it into continued compensatory efforts to meet role expectations. Because of their feelings, the mothers made more effort to spend time with family and uphold family traditions. The “*super syndrome*” (Korabik et al., 2017, p. 371) is a compensatory coping strategy whereby a person tries to meet all role expectations across work and family life (Korabik et al., 2017; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). The stories of the women aligned to extant findings relating to guilt, WFC and coping across family but also work roles.

In terms of guilt as a coping strategy within the workplace, one of the mothers mentioned that she doesn’t share much about her personal life at work e.g. if her children were ill and she had to go to the hospital with them. Her account of why she did not share information was that she didn’t want to appear as someone who was “*always having problems*”. In addition, she mentioned that when people in her workplace were ill, they still went to work. So for her, even if she was sick, she would go to work to avoid standing out. This exemplifies how guilt shaped her behaviours in the workplace, and, served as a coping strategy (albeit maladaptive) for meeting work role expectations plus, managing the perceptions of her at work

Aarntzen et al. (2019) revealed that most working parents have had to compromise their family responsibilities to meet a work responsibility including a child being sick, or getting home late. Women, more than men, are pressured to prioritise family role fulfilment (Aarntzen et al., 2019; Sousa, Kuschel, Brito & Goncalves, 2018). Interestingly, and in agreement with the results of this study, experiences of guilt prompted compensatory efforts by mothers to balance out the guilt-inducing stressors.

Guilt arises when a person feels that they have breached a societal or moral standard, so perhaps for the mothers (who navigate life through roles that are individualistic i.e. work and collectivistic i.e. family) it is possible that this particular group may experience more guilt than another group that holds roles that are rooted in either an individualistic, or, collectivistic culture. The reason for this is that this group may have more, societal, traditional, and, moral standards to violate. Therefore, could be more prone to feeling guilty. In addition, some of these standards could clash and therefore amplify feelings of guilt e.g. a mother is expected to provide care for her children when they are ill, but, if she is not physically present at work, she feels guilty for not being seen in the workplace.

Guilt may fuel additional efforts for South African Hindu mothers to meet role expectations, but, if it is ongoing, guilt may have negative consequences on the wellbeing of mothers (Aarntzen et al., 2019; Korabik et al., 2017). The negative implications of ongoing guilt mean that guilt serves a coping strategy but it is an unsustainable one. To address the issue of non-sustainability, more organisations should consider their role in creating and sustaining guilt for employees i.e. in South Africa where the employer is obliged to perform a duty of care for employees, what types of workplace practices will minimise guilt.

Given that women are more likely to experience guilt especially when living with traditional, less egalitarian societal views about the roles of men versus women (Korabik et al., 2017), organisations should aim to promote egalitarianism within the workplace with the aim of reducing triggers that cause guilt e.g. being judged if you don't go to the office when you are ill.

Theme 2: External Processes

Prior research by Krohne (2002) and Kalliath and Kalliath (2014), highlight that it is clear that internal processes in coping work in tandem with external processes such as: seeking

social support from family members, being supported by supervisors and colleagues, leveraging job flexibility and creating alternative career paths. When analysing the data, the subthemes identified were social support, and, managing life roles: structure, prioritisation, organising, flexible work and opting out. Each of the subthemes are demonstrated through the direct quotes from the women and are discussed in light of extant literature.

Subtheme 1: Social Support.

Spousal support.

Within the interview data, social support was a key contributor to how the women managed to cope with their roles. The sources of social support for the women varied according to their own circumstances but consistently, spousal support came up. Furthermore, it seemed that spousal support was a valued yet inconsistently experienced source of support for the women interviewed.

Many women spoke about how grateful they were for the instrumental support that their husbands provide in helping the women meet the demands of their roles:

So he's supportive from, at, many levels. So if I start, so for instance I think from a financial level...we find a balance in terms of finance between our work, right which is the...greatest relief...he's, a phone call away at any given time...He helps me with the lunches, he helps me with the porridge for my 3-year-old while I do other things and, we just, we all just sort of work together and get the kids out...then at 2 o'clock he...fetches me from work and we, we both go to fetch our daughter from school...he's there, he's there all the time. He's very supportive - even in terms of my studies...and I think that, to have somebody that has time for you, is for me, the [emphasis] greatest resource you could ever ask for. So I'm [emphasis] very grateful for that. (SAHM18 Education Professional).

Similarly, another woman added how the efforts of support (instrumental and emotional) from her husband helped her cope:

Uhm...[thinking] It is a very tedious job being a working mum but it makes a job easier, if your appreciated by your partner, you know? Uhm...Just little things, I don't want

gifts or...heaped praise on me all the time but you know what, "Let me wash the dishes" now and again and just small things. We've been married for ten years now we don't need blatant gifts and things just to say you appreciate, just the small things that count. Like if you're tired then that day my husband will cook and stuff. It's the little things that count now. I think that, it makes the job easier and you feel investing of your time and know sort of more worth it. (SAHM2 Medical Professional).

Interestingly, whilst many women spoke about the help they got from their husbands, some mothers also shared how even though help was available, it was not necessarily given i.e. though they women were supported in some ways, the ways that the women would perhaps like to be helped by their husbands was not always evident:

[My] husband doesn't fix anything in the house. He does nothing! [laughs] If I had anything to fix - if my dad came to visit, he would fix it. The only thing a husband does is he supports us, financially, or he would buy things for the house but he wouldn't help or fix anything, obviously my kids help me though. (SAHM16 Personal Assistant).

Another mother echoed that her husband supported her but her story seemed to indicate that the help given was not the help she would perhaps prefer:

Ya, uhm, basically what he takes, he takes my daughter to school because it's en-route to work for him and he fetches her...The main and big bills he sorts out, the fewer smaller, bills I sort out in the middle of the week, daily shopping for things...Uh, so that's what he does, the finance aspect and obviously taking the daughter to school and back home and I think that's as far as it goes [laughs]." (SAHM14 Education Professional).

The women's experiences of the support they received from their husbands was clearly acknowledged but not necessarily appreciated. Some mothers were open about the financial support and assistance from their husbands with transportation of children yet their stories suggested that they wanted more than instrumental (tangible aid) support i.e. "*he does, the finance aspect and obviously taking the daughter to school and back home and I think that's as far as it goes [laughs].*". The mother's laughter suggested that her husband didn't perhaps help enough.

Extended family support.

The women referred to the support from extended family members and seemed to be appreciative of the support that extended families offered them in coping with their roles:

Kids and well, baby and my career happened at exactly the same time. So my career took off at the point when I had my first child. Fortunately for me, I survived that because I was staying with my folks, so that helped a lot - having the support of the extended family...Baby number two happened shortly after that and the career continued to take off. (SAHM12 Corporate Professional).

The mothers spoke about how their families were regular sources of support in fulfilling their “duties”:

“We lived on our own but like my mother lives quite close to me now and my mother in law lives quite close to me now and my kids often go and spend nights there and they help a lot with supporting the children and with my duties as well. Like taking the children to school and helping with the cooking sometimes.”. (SAHM17 Medical Professional).

Extended family support seemed to be a widely relied upon coping resource for the women but not all the women felt like they could rely on extended family even when living in the same household:

She'll [participant's niece] take them [participant's children] out now and again but we don't really ask her to babysit...But we don't really specifically ask her to babysit. I also think it needs to be forthcoming, actually, “Maybe the two of you need a bit of a break? I can babysit for an hour or two if you want to go out for supper?”, but we don't have that opportunity [from their niece]. (SAHM6 Corporate Professional).

Co-worker support.

Many of the women explained how their co-workers helped them cope with the demands of meeting their role expectations. Their stories showed how their coworkers offered emotional support and allowed the mothers to cope with their roles:

It's a little support group of other Indian medical personnel. We sit in a little tea room...and so we always talk about, you know, "It's not easy.", and, their roles as well, they [are] married, they're still young, married and young. So we're always a little support group, chatting, discussing, going out shopping in our little one-hour lunch break, so it also helps to de-stress quite a bit. Because it's very hard to do any kind of shopping with these two [participant's children], you know? (SAHM2 Medical Professional).

Another mother added how being able to share her experiences with her colleagues “that are going through the same thing”, helped her build her “confidence” and that assisted her to “be able to cope”:

Uh...right now you know, it's very difficult as I said, coping...basically, when you talk to people that are going through the same thing as you that you're not alone in whatever you are doing. And even like, you know, a few of my friends, my colleagues at school with the same situation, the more I talk to them as well, and feel that, or hear that [emphasis] they're in the same situation as me - it just makes me feel a little easier and a little, you know, confident and you know, be able to cope as well. (SAHM14 Education Professional)

The mothers' experiences highlighted that their co-worker relationships were positive features of their lives and that having supportive co-workers helped them cope with their work and family demands.

Supervisor support.

Support from supervisors often came up when the women spoke about how they were able to cope with their role expectations. Supervisors seemed to be a key contributor to the social support that the women experienced:

I feel that I'm so blessed to be working for someone like him and that is why [it's] easier for me to take all that pressure...I don't think there's another human being that as patient or understanding, not just with me - with everybody. Whether it's cleaner or patient or, it just makes the working environment easier to handle...his way of speaking to you and you don't have somebody screaming at you, shouting at you and pressurising you. For me, I feel I'm blessed to be working for somebody like that...because that really helps me cope with everything else, even if it's a

difficult year, there's no business and we're scraping through and we don't know where is it going to come from next. (SAHM7 Personal Assistant).

Similarly, one of the women shared how her supervisors have supported her to a point where she was “*happy at work*” and “*happy at home*”. The woman suggested that support from her supervisor had allowed her to reach a place in life where she didn't feel that she was “*short of anything*”:

Well I must say I'm enjoying my job. I've got very people I work with, I've got an excellent manager, my, my, directors are very supportive so I've got a good team going. I'm happy at work and I'm happy at home so I, I don't think I'm short of anything at the moment. (SAHM10 Medical Administrator).

The women referred to supervisory support as a coping resource for managing role expectations and again noted that being able to work under “*supportive*” leaders allowed them to cope outside of work too.

Paid support.

Paid support in the form of domestic help, nannies, tutors, au pairs, and even drivers were mentioned by the women as they shared how they were able to cope with their role expectations:

We've got two helpers at home, and they two live ins, so one focuses only on the children and she does everything else but focuses on the children and the other one focuses on the home, cleaning and that... We've got a driver... he does all the [drop-offs and] pick-ups... he takes Harshad (name has been changed) to this lady, she's a qualified teacher, she's at home, so she does his homework, she does a little bit extra stuff... And he also - they go for swimming lessons, so then the nanny goes with and he takes them to swimming lessons. And any other sort of - like last week Friday - we couldn't take Harshad to a birthday party. So he took Harshad, together with the nanny, to the birthday party. So two helpers and a driver. (SAHM6 Corporate Professional).

Other mothers added how they leveraged paid sources of support to cope with their roles and created their own “*very strong support system*”. One mother shared:

Yes, [we get support from the] domestic helpers and then I have a nanny, an Indian aunty who's a nanny who's also very helpful with the children, she's the extended mother...she cooks for us and she makes the roti when we need her to. She helps with the babysitting and even when the children are sick, she's there to help us out. So ya, a very strong support system. (SAHM17 Medical Professional).

Social support sources were varied for the group of women interviewed. Although the sources of their social support were varied it was clear that having support helped them cope with their role expectations and that a wide variety of support was useful for the women. The multitude of sources for coping with WFC found in this study is consistent to prior studies relating to WFC and social support (French et al., 2018).

Social support especially from spouses is clearly indicated as a coping resource throughout extant literature and contexts (Achour et al., 2015; Ahmed & Carrim, 2016; French et al., 2018; Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Reddick et al., 2012; Uysal Irak, Kalkışım, & Yıldırım, 2020).

Spousal support in particular was often mentioned by the mothers interviewed. Their stories of support from their husbands ranged from being extremely acknowledging and thankful for the support from their husbands, to, begrudgingly conceding that their husbands did help them but that the help was not always deeply appreciated. As an example, one of the mothers mentioned that their husband sorted out the financial aspects in running the home and transporting their daughter to and from school. And that was the extent of his help towards her. It is obvious that the husband is supporting her yet her view of the support is that it is insufficient. Maybe the support he gave was not the type of support she expected or wanted from him. She was amused by the support her husband gave her, which suggests that the degree to which he offered support is laughable or mediocre. Perhaps not all support is valued and if not all types of support are valued, what does this mean for how married, Hindu couples share family-role responsibilities such as, caring for children?

Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) along with Korabik et al. (2017), suggested that for women with equalitarian views i.e. men and women should hold equal responsibilities, spousal support may still be an important moderator for the effects of stress from sources like work or other family roles. The following participants' experiences are examples of how support may be on hand in terms of availability, yet, it is clear that support is not always forthcoming.

A common trend from the stories of the South African Hindu mothers was that husbands who were more accessible, available and willing to help their wives, were more appreciated as sources of coping with role demands. The wives referred to their husbands' willingness to pick up responsibilities and tasks that ordinarily would be expected of the women to do e.g. preparing lunch for the children, washing and tidying up, and cooking for the family. In addition, the women shared that they were appreciative that they could call on their husbands at any time and know that they will be supported. They referred to the stability in their relationship with their husband as a source of support and reliability. As one participant put it, *"to have somebody that has time for you, is for me, the greatest resource you could ever ask for. So I'm very grateful for that."* Consistent with prior research, spousal support is seen a critical factor for stability and security within home life (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016; Kalliath et al., 2011; Korabik et al., 2017).

Cooklin et al. (2016) highlighted that although spousal support is a positive resource for families overall, within the husband and wife relationship - support may actually worsen work-family conflict i.e. where the husband is not seen as helpful. This idea is supported by the findings of this study in the sense that participants mentioned that not all support was useful in terms of helping them meet their role expectations. French et al. (2018) confirmed that "social support is most beneficial in contexts in which it is needed or perceived as useful" (p. 1). In the case of the South African Hindu mothers, the need for social support was clear but the perception that spousal support in particular was useful, was not always evident.

The traditional view of the roles of mothers and wives in Hindu homes are for them to serve as primary caregivers and household up-keepers. In homes where both parents identify as non-traditional, they do not believe in separating roles by sex i.e. men and women are considered equal in terms of sharing home and work responsibilities (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007).

Perhaps the South African Hindu mothers who perceive their husbands' lack of involvement when it comes to home role responsibilities is due, in part, to how they identify as men in a modern society. For instance, it is possible that husbands of the women in this study who consider themselves traditional Hindu men, still feel that it is not their role (as per Hindu teachings and practice) to take on caregiving tasks and responsibilities. Furthermore,

for those Hindu men who identify as non-traditional, it is possible that they are more open to taking on tasks that would ordinarily be considered the role and responsibility of a woman.

Some of the South African Hindu mothers' experiences revealed their lingering sense of resentment around the lack of support from husbands especially. One participant was quite vocal in expressing her anger towards her husband's lack of assistance in terms of caring for their child. Another participant, also mentioned that her husband was not very helpful with caring for their child, but her explanation of his lack of effort was riddled with laughter. This was intriguing because it demonstrated that she had gotten to a point of seeing his disengagement with home role tasks as amusing. This raised interest in understanding if there are sources of help available, what makes those sources useful or non-useful for women to cope with their work and family demands.

Similarly, extended family (living within the same home or nearby) was flagged as a potential source of support that is not perceived as useful i.e. potential support being available from family members but not actually useful as a coping resource. One mother spoke about how her niece is not "*forthcoming*" about offering support e.g. babysitting. The participant explains that the niece could offer to help more but does not and this seems to create frustration in the sense that the participant knows there is potential to receive support but she cannot make use of it because it is not being offered.

In contrast to the experience of the woman above, living near extended family was mostly perceived as a positive source of coping for the mothers. Many mothers spoke about how they valued and appreciated the support they received from: husbands, extended family, coworkers and friends, their supervisors and, paid sources of help. One mother's story echoed that extended family support was a coping resource that she missed in her life because she didn't live near extended family, "*we're not originally from Cape Town so we don't have support structures like family members or extended family members. So that puts a lot of pressure on as well.*". Consistent with prior research on collectivistic samples, living in close proximity to extended family members allowed the mothers to cope by leveraging family support (Carrim, 2012; Jaga & Bagraim, 2017; Mortazavi et al., 2009; Thein et al., 2010).

Collectivism may play a role for co-worker support in the context of the South African Hindu mothers. Co-worker support was noted as a salient coping resource for the women. The mothers shared how their co-workers provided emotional support (caring), instrumental support (helping with work tasks) and even informational support (advice). The reasons that co-worker support were so keenly relied on by the mothers could be explained by Vaziri, Benson and Salazar Campo's (2019) findings which suggested that individuals from high collectivist cultures e.g. South African Hindus, could be more kind-hearted about helping their colleagues (with similar collectivist upbringings) deal with WFC. Another explanation for the usefulness of co-worker support aligns to the findings of Kalliath and Kalliath (2014) in that the women highlighted the importance of communicating with co-workers as a form of coping support.

Supervisors too, who were able to empathise and take supportive actions were seen as sources of social support for the women. French et al. (2018) highlighted the importance and power that supervisors hold in helping their employees cope with challenges at work but also with family duties e.g. if a child is ill, a supervisor has the authority to allow the employee time to attend to the child. The importance of supervisors in helping women cope with WFC was also noted by Kossek et al. (2011) who indicated that training supervisors to be more supportive of their employees' role demands. Kossek et al. (2011) suggested that by sensitising supervisors to the needs of their employees, there could be an uptake in work-family supportive policies. In the South African context, perhaps more sensitisation and awareness training interventions could help to increase the number of supervisors who take supportive decisions and help their employees cope with WFC.

Subtheme 2: Managing life roles through structure, prioritisation, organising, flexible work and choosing alternative career paths.

This subtheme is focused on the externalised coping strategies that the women used to actively manage their life roles. The subtheme is characterised by prioritisation, organising, routine, usage of flexible working conditions e.g. hours and, choosing alternative career paths.

Creating structure: prioritisation, organising and routine.

The women often referred to how they created structure for themselves in order to cope with their role demands. The mothers shared how prioritisation, being organised and having a

routine allowed them to cope. One mother shared that creating structure for her roles helped her cope:

Now how I do I juggle my time. I prioritise. Ok. I basically look at what's important in my life, so one is: my family is important, my boys come first...family comes first before work but my work is also important...I think prioritising, multi-tasking, being organised, you know being well-, I mean, I like working in a structured form, I like being organised...I mean if you're disorganised there's no way one can actually cope. (SAHM6 Corporate Professional)

Another woman added how “being organised” and “having a routine” assisted her in coping with her roles:

But it's a matter of, you know, being organised, having a routine. The routine works. (SAHM20 Legal Professional).

The importance of routine was reiterated by many of the mothers with one mother explaining that routine gave her and her child a sense of stability:

That's the other thing, if you don't have a routine you're slightly bugged. Especially with your kids, so they need to know, that this is what's expected from them to a point...When you wake up this is what's expected from you, when you come home from school, this is what's expected of you and interestingly enough Keshan [her child] (name has been changed) thrives on routine. (SAHM12 Corporate Professional).

The ability to create structure, maintain routine and be organised within work and family roles, allowed the mothers to cope with the pressures of their roles.

Flexible work conditions.

Many women spoke about how their flexible work schedules and work environments e.g. working from home, assisted them in being able to cope with their role demands. Flexible work conditions also extended to flexible working hours, depending on the circumstances that day. One mother expressed how flexible working arrangements allowed her to cope with her roles:

I'm lucky in that the department that I work in, the time is flexible, so I can arrive at work at quarter to nine and I can even leave here if my husband is away and I

need to pick my child up. I can leave here at four and that would be fine. They do understand and they [are] very understanding. That's why we have laptops and we can work from home, so if she's [her child] sick or if I need to stay home with her for any reason, I can do that and work from home. (SAHM8 Corporate Professional).

Another mother added how her workplace was flexible about her bringing her child with her to work during e.g. school holidays. By having a flexible work environment, she felt less stressed:

In school holidays as well, Neha [her child] (name has been changed) will come with me to work. So I don't have to stress...and maybe two, [or] three days she'll come with me to work. So they're [management at her workplace] flexible. (SAHM19 IT Professional).

Flexibility in the workplace in terms of working hours and the ability to work from home were valued by the women because flexibility allowed them to better cope with their roles.

Choosing alternative career paths.

Some mothers elected to structure their lives in a way that eliminated their work role, temporarily, in order to better manage their family role demands. Others, selected to work in roles that were more flexible, didn't require as much travelling, or, allowed them to be closer to home. These coping strategies were salient findings in terms of how the women coped with their role demands. One mother explained that she wanted to care for her child so she left her job to do so:

When I had my son I left my job. I stayed at home for him for 4 years because he was premature. So I stayed at home, for, for four years and once he went to school, I decided "Hey, you know what - let me go back to work". (SAHM16 Personal Assistant).

Another woman spoke about how she selected work opportunities and screened out those jobs that couldn't deliver the flexibility and financial stability that she needed:

I have to seriously think about what kind of job I take, I cannot take jobs that travel, I cannot take jobs that require you to work outside of office hours...especially because he [her husband] travels. And so, someone has got to be there for her - my child. I mean it won't work out if both of us gave up our careers...He can, you know, climb the corporate ladder, I've got to find something that sustains us financially but still provides some kind of sane household for her. (SAHM8 Corporate Professional).

The women explained that their work demands needed to fit in with their family roles. Hence their willingness to change jobs and make career compromises so that they could better fulfil their family duties.

The experiences of the women showed that they were able to actively cope by creating structure in the way they fulfilled their roles. Specifically, they made use of techniques like being organised, having routines and prioritisation to create structure for their role fulfilment.

Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) suggested that structural role definition allows a person to alter their "external, structurally imposed" role expectations i.e. the expectations that come with holding a role such as being a full-time employee. In the case of the women interviewed in this study, they too opted to restructure their roles e.g. taking on jobs that required less travel and allowed them to be physically in closer proximity to their children's school. Kaur and Kumar (2017) also found that redefining one's role i.e. role definition, and, the prioritising which role demands should be met above others were significant coping strategies used by participants. Again, the mothers shared that by prioritising they were able to cope with their role demands.

By prioritising which demands the mothers refused to default on e.g. being present for their children when they were ill; the mothers demonstrated that coping with their roles was done by choosing the demands that were more closely aligned to their sense of identity i.e. being a "good mother". Interestingly, the collectivist female group that Achour et al. (2015)

interviewed also used prioritisation as a way to cope with WFC. This could be an indication that motivation to prioritise a certain role over another is seemingly underpinned by how a person constructs their identity. Simply, it could be that a person prioritises the role demands that allow them to feel that they are living dutifully as per their Hindu upbringing.

Within the South African context, Brink and de la Rey (2001) found that women “emphasised the importance compromise between work and home demands and of being well organised” (p.60). Both prioritisation and being organised were found as salient coping strategies within the South African context (Brink & de la Rey, 2001). Furthermore, working women in South Africa indicated that they acknowledge that they are accountable for structuring and organising their roles in order to meet both work and family expectations (Brink & de la Rey).

Whilst findings from Brink and de la Rey (2001) inferred that prioritisation and organising (maintaining routine) are a coping strategies that are used throughout the female employed population, other studies suggest that being prioritising, being organised and maintaining routine are coping strategies extensively used across contexts (Achour et al., 2015; Aryee et al. 1999; Dewe, 1985; Potts, Didymus & Kaiseler, 2019; Reddick et al., 2012). This means that the mothers interviewed for this study leveraged a widely used coping strategy rather than a coping strategy that is unique to the group.

Yet again, as with prior coping with WFC findings, the participants of this study showed a preference for working in environments that embraced flexibility and supported work-family integration (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Nie et al, 2018; Shockley et al., 2017; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). This is consistent with prior research i.e. women preferred to select work in organisations that supported work and family role fulfilment equally (Nie et al., 2018; Shockley et al, 2017). Some of the South African Hindu mothers highlighted that flexible working times enabled them to care for the children when needed but still pursue the professional career goals within the company that they were working for.

Another mother shared that she was not fortunate to make use of a flexi-time arrangement due to the operational requirements of her place of work. Because she pointed out the concept of flexi-time it would seem that she would gladly make use of flexible work hours, given the chance to. The win-win outcome of flexible working hours serves as a demonstration

that organisations can motivate and encourage employees to stay engaged within their work roles if their employees feel supported by them in ways that help them meet other role expectations (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Shockley et al., 2017).

In addition, another type of flexibility or source of support was the work environment itself. One of the participants mentioned that her place of work was open to change i.e. meet her needs. She explained that being able to work from home was a privilege that she was fortunate to have as an option and make use of. The implications for organisations in terms of the forms of support they can offer to their employees are clear e.g. flexible work schedules and work locations (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Shockley, Shen, DeNunzio, Arvan, & Knudsen, 2017b). If employees are able to deliver their work from a different location, or, are able to do so outside regular business hours, organisations could reassess and encourage use of policies and practices to better support and retain employees (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014; Shockley et al., 2017a).

Should organisations fail to make the relevant accommodations, they risk losing talent and skills due to women seeking opportunities that actively support their family role fulfilment. The women interviewed explained that they opted to craft career paths that accommodated and facilitated the fulfilment of their work and family roles. Kahn, Garcia-Manglano & Bianchi (2014) noted that women's participation in paid work is reduced when women have children. If women are to have equal opportunity to build careers, organisations need to be aware that their policies may either hinder or promote women's career advancement. If organisations fail to accommodate the work and family roles of women, women will continue to seek job roles that actually do enable their role fulfilment.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Summary

The challenges of Hindu-upbringing seem to have created a divide about who in the family is expected to do what. For Hindu women in South Africa, it would appear that there is division between those who hold a traditional view of what men and women should do in the home, versus, a more modern (non-traditional) egalitarian view of what men and women should do. When trying to understand the coping strategies that South African Hindu mothers use to manage work and family roles, it is important to note that within this subgroup, the differences between being more-traditionally Hindu versus less-traditionally Hindu may have influenced how the mothers coped. As an example, it is possible that a less traditionally inclined Hindu mother may want, or, seek support from their husband e.g. caregiving for children; however; a more-traditionally Hindu mother would rely on other coping strategies like guilt or acceptance.

The study builds understanding of WFC but specifically, the coping used by South African Hindu working mothers as a smaller, culturally collectivistic group within the diverse context of South Africa. Increasingly, workplaces are concerned with being more inclusive and better at managing diverse workforces (Mazibuko & Govender, 2017). The intention of being better at being inclusive for organisations is to attract, retain and better develop their human capital and talent (Guillaume et al., 2014; Mazibuko & Govender, 2017). This study is important for the movement towards an inclusive and diverse South African workplace and society. The study's findings are an aid to establishing solutions that redress past injustices of the country, and, the more current struggles around gender inequality. It provides a richer understanding of what coping strategies working mothers from traditional backgrounds use to manage the demands of family life; whilst facing potentially contradictory values of Western management practices in their work roles. This insight provides academics and organisations the ability to pre-empt potential areas of support and therefore implement or bolster support for working women from an organisational perspective.

This study addressed the need to broaden what is known about cultural values and its influence in defining the coping strategies used by the groups of people that subscribe to those values and traditions. This study also has the potential of extending our understanding of coping

with multiple life roles that are entrenched in diverse cultural values, thereby extending existing frameworks to be more representative and inclusive.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study contributes to a greater understanding of coping strategies that are used by a collectivistic, traditional cultural group in the context of a more individualistic, modern, society and workplace. The study's findings should be measured in context of its research limitations. The limitations should be addressed in future studies by taking into account the following recommendations.

The findings of this study were as a result of secondary analysis of qualitative data. Whilst the utilisation of existing data is a practical option for researchers with limited time and resources (Johnston, 2014), the data would have been collected for another purpose so the researcher's specific questions about what they aim to understand may not always be present in the data collected. Fortunately, this study's data set was collected by the primary supervisor for a topic that was related to work-family conflict but not coping strategies. Future studies could revisit data collection methods i.e. interview questions, so that researchers can be more specific about the questions they seek answers for, if necessary.

In addition, due to the nature of the ethics process, this study was granted ethical clearance based on the initial study - which enabled the primary supervisor to gather the data from participants. This meant that participant identifiers were removed from the dataset, to ensure anonymity of the participants, as per the initial consent agreement. As a result, the participants could not be contacted for additional follow-up questions, and, additional data could not be collected. Even though this was a limitation for the advancement of this study, Heaton (2008) maintains that it is crucial that secondary data analysis follows the consent conditions of the initial study. Recommendations for future studies are to collect data specific to the researcher's study question, and, to try to incorporate a clause within the ethics consent form which allows the same initial researcher to ask follow-up questions.

Because the present researcher was not involved during the data collection process, I had to rely on the recollections of how the data were collected. Whilst it would have been valuable if the present researcher had the opportunity to interview the participants, the

presence, advice and guidance from the initial study's researchers has helped this study, in line with the practices of other secondary analysis research studies (Johnstone, 2014; Ruggiano & Perry, 2017).

Despite the limitations in terms of methodological approach to this research, the validity of the findings still hold weight. The post-positivist stance of the researcher resulted in the stories and experiences (shared by participants) being taken at face-value. The stories and experiences were analysed subjectively and at a latent level; meaning that the present researcher's interpretations whilst their own were derived from and rooted in the data. Future studies should seek to adopt an interpretivist or constructivist approach in order to delve deeper into the underlying levers that drive how women from collectivistic cultures create meaning in their lives.

More research is needed to understand the role that culture plays on coping with WFC. Future studies should explore and aim to identify the cultural drivers involved with coping and WFC for groups like South African Hindus. Perhaps Hindu dogma, which underpins the identities of the South African Hindu mothers, had influenced the coping strategies that the women used to cope with their role expectations. If so, to what extent did the women actively select a coping strategy, and, were they aware of the influence of their Hindu duties (i.e. to be in control, apply wisdom and learn)? More research is needed to understand the degree to which South African Hindu mothers apply the core concepts of Hinduism to their everyday, interactions and thoughts. Future studies will build on this research by seeking to better understand the process of meaning-making for Hindu mothers.

Future studies may look to expand on this research by exploring the coping strategies that are used by similar, collectivistic cultural groups in South Africa. Comparison across multiple collectivistic, traditional groups may assist in building a more comprehensive body of knowledge around coping and WFC within the unique South African context. For organisations, the expansion of what is known about coping and WFC may contribute to workplaces being better informed in terms of what interventions they deploy in support of their employees. Similarly, future studies may highlight techniques and ideas that enable all employees (from collectivistic or individualistic backgrounds) to better cope with the expectations of work and family roles.

Research Contributions

Managerial implications.

The study builds understanding of WFC and coping of working mothers within organisations within the context of a traditional cultural group in the diverse context of South Africa. Increasingly, workplaces are concerned with being more inclusive and better at managing diverse workforces (Mazibuko & Govender, 2017). The intention of being better at being inclusive for organisations is to attract, retain and better develop their human capital (Guillaume et al., 2014; Mazibuko & Govender, 2017).

This study is important for the movement towards an inclusive and diverse South African workplace and society and aid in redressing past injustices in the country. It provides a richer understanding of what coping strategies working mothers from traditional, collectivistic backgrounds use to manage the demands of family life whilst facing potentially contradictory values of Western management practices in their work roles. This insight provides academics and organisations the ability to pre-empt potential areas of support and therefore implement better support for working women from an organisational perspective.

Support from organisations may include revisiting how work is conducted i.e. whether employees and women with family responsibilities in particular are able to fulfil their work role demands from home versus the office. Flexible work schedules too, are suggested as a way to encourage and sustain women's role fulfilment. Given that the demands that women with children are expected to fulfil dictate what their priorities are, women actively seek flexibility in terms of work schedule and location where tasks can be completed (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2014). This means that if organisations seek to attract, motivate and retain women, conscious efforts must be made to facilitate women's work and family role fulfilment.

Theoretical contribution.

The present research addresses the need to deepen what is known about how individual-specific factors i.e. cultural values or collectivistic upbringing may influence in a person's selection and use of coping strategies. This study also has the potential of extending our understanding of coping with multiple life roles that are entrenched in cultural values that are contradictory (working within individualistic organisations but having family roles that are governed by collectivistic ideals). This study has extended existing frameworks by exploring

and highlighting the details of how South African Hindu mothers cope with their work and family roles.

To date, there have been no known prior studies which considered the coping strategies that are specific to the South African Indian Hindu diaspora. Whilst there has been research related to South African Indians (see Ahmed & Carrim, 2016), those studies draw no distinction between Hindu and Muslim women. Hinduism and the tenets thereof are unique, hence this study's findings address the calls to conduct WFC and coping research in samples that have been largely unexplored (French et al., 2018; Shockley et al., 2017). The findings of this study should be contrasted with findings from other cultural groups, especially, other collectivistic groups so that similarities and differences can be identified.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the coping strategies that South African Hindu women use to manage their work and family role expectations. Findings were that the women used two types (themes) of coping strategies i.e. internal processes and external processes. The strategies used by the mothers were supported by extant literature and theory. The implications of the findings highlighted that more attention should be given to how organisations support and facilitate work and family role fulfilment in light of employees' cultural backgrounds and home life responsibilities. Women of collectivistic backgrounds were highlighted as a group vulnerable to strain given Western, individualistic corporate practices. Thus, for South African organisations wanting to attract and retain talent (as mandated by legislation in order to redress past imbalances in the workplace), careful consideration for family-friendly policies i.e. flexible work conditions should be made. In addition, this study shows that research within samples that are collectivistic may shed light on the role that organisations have in promoting egalitarianism to realise a more equal society. This study serves as a response to calls for more WFC and coping research on cultural subgroups within South Africa and diaspora groups.

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APPENDIX A

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09th April 2019

Ms Sohana Harrilal
School of Management
Studies
University of Cape Town

Dear Ms Harrilal

REF: REC 2019/000/034

EXPLORING THE COPING STRATEGIES USED BY SOUTH AFRICAN HINDU MOTHERS TO MANAGE WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER/S

We are pleased to inform you that your ethics application has been approved. Unless otherwise specified this ethical clearance is valid for 1 year and may be renewed upon application.

Please be aware that you need to notify the Ethics Committee immediately should any aspect of your study regarding the engagement with participants as approved in this application, change. This may include aspects such as changes to the research design, questionnaires, or choice of participants.

The ongoing ethical conduct throughout the duration of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

We wish you well for your research.

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APPENDIX B

Unanticipated Findings

The aim of this study was to explore the coping strategies that South African Hindu mothers use to manage work and family role expectations. The findings of this study were largely consistent with past research as follows: firstly, in the sense that coping strategies are emotion or problem-focused (Baltes et al., 2011; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007, Versey, 2015). Second, that the coping strategies were either adaptive or maladaptive. Third, that the strategies used for coping were proactive or reactive.

Given the nature of past coping research i.e. that is has largely been based within a western, individualistic context, I expected the results of this study to be a combination of what is already known about coping. However, due to the nature of the participants i.e. South African Hindu mothers who may be likely to hold traditional, collectivistic values; yet are employed in workplaces that predominantly subscribe to western practices, I also expected to find coping strategies unique to this group.

A unique finding was the desire of the South African Hindu mothers to uphold tradition and maintain Hindu customs within their family roles. It was interesting that despite the participants being part of the Indian diaspora (which has been present in South Africa for 159 years) they still identified as Hindu women who wished to preserve the Indian way of living. And even though the participants showed insistence on maintaining the Indian way i.e. placing family duty fulfilment ahead of any other role fulfilment, the use of this coping strategy seemed to create a feedback loop of additional stress. So despite fulfilling the role as e.g. daughter-in-law, they still experienced stress because it may not have been their preference to fulfil the role in the first place. Instead their sense of duty, responsibility and obligation (which was culturally instilled, across many generations) drives their behaviour to meet their role expectations. The duality between the desire to live according to the traditional Indian way and the stress caused by fulfilling their role expectations is intriguing. It suggests that the desire to adhere to duty is more important than not being strained in order to fulfil their duty. This means that the group will knowingly enter into stressful, strain-causing situations for the purpose of meeting the expectations placed on them by family and their Hindu cultural group.

Another unexpected finding was that the participants acknowledged not being able to cope. It is possible that the mothers who shared their feelings about not being able to cope or manage their role expectations, are generally more self-aware and mindful of what they are capable of. Through their stories about not managing to meet their role expectations was a welcomed, unforeseen finding. It was welcomed because it highlighted that a person's capacity to learn and grow, may enhance how people cope with their work and family role expectations. Being able to develop a skill such as mindfulness or practising self-awareness provides an opportunity to build on what is understood about self-awareness and more effective coping for all people, not just, South African Hindu mothers.

APPENDIX C

Reflections

Being a South African Hindu female, I viewed being able to research this topic as a way to better understand the experiences of mothers that are part my own Indian diaspora. I wanted to learn about how this group copes with their work and family role expectations. Through analysing their experiences and stories, I sometimes felt like I could relate to their accounts, despite not being a mother myself.

I was raised in a fairly traditional Hindu home. I too could relate to fulfilling my duties but sometimes feeling additional stress for doing so. Personally, I understand and believe in the importance of upholding Hindu traditions and customs. Yet, I am also aware that the society I live in today, does not necessarily require the same family structures and ways of living, which it may have in the past. This meant that, whilst I understood the motivations of the participants in wanting to maintain tradition, I also hoped that one or more of them would have recognised the need to shift the perceptions of what is expected of women today. I hoped that they would challenge their families and cultural communities to review what responsibilities are relevant to men and women, considering the society we live in now.

Because of my feelings about the differences between what is expected of men versus women in Hindu homes, I had to be self-critical when coding and analysing the data. Self-critical to ensure that my own biases (around gender differences in Hindu homes) did not interfere with interpreting the coping strategies that South African Hindu mothers used.

I believe that a broader social movement with the aim of addressing underlying work-family issues i.e. role expectations across sexes, will help to alleviate some of the strain that women, and specifically, South African Hindu mothers experience. Taking a problem-focused approach may take a long time though - because it requires a collective re-examination of how families function and how to maintain tradition without losing the essence of cultural identity. For workplaces, it means deconstructing the barriers that inhibit mothers from career success and reimagining how work can be done for a future organisation that supports overall wellbeing. I believe that the future of coping for South African Hindu mothers will be positively impacted if conscious efforts are made to re-negotiate role expectations within the group. If not, it is possible that tension in coping may continue. And if tension continues to be part of coping, as

a group, South African Hindu mothers will continue to take two steps forward and one step back.