

Cultural Values, Gender-Role Beliefs, and Marital Satisfaction Among Dual-Earner Couples: An Actor–Partner Interdependence Structural Equation Model of Work–Family Conflict and Perceived Partner Support

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The Introduction includes the sentence, “Cultural orientations shape how individuals define the self, understand obligations, evaluate hierarchy, prioritize autonomy, and interpret mutual dependence within intimate relationships.” The cultural-value framework requires stronger conceptual grounding. The authors should explain why horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism were selected rather than alternative models of cultural orientation, and they should clarify whether these dimensions are assumed to be independent, correlated, or mutually exclusive. The manuscript should also explain how individual-level cultural values differ from national culture, ethnicity, migration background, and religious identity. Without this clarification, readers may incorrectly interpret the cultural-value scores as proxies for participants’ ethnocultural membership.

In the Data Analysis subsection, the manuscript states, “Missingness patterns were evaluated to determine whether missing responses were plausibly random,” and the Findings later report a nonsignificant Little’s test. The authors should clarify

whether Little's test was conducted at the item level, scale level, or person level and whether dyadic clustering was taken into account. In addition, the manuscript should state the estimator and software used for full-information maximum likelihood and whether robust standard errors were calculated. The claim that missingness was handled appropriately requires a more transparent description of the amount, location, and pattern of missing data for each partner.

The Data Analysis subsection states that "the partners were treated as distinguishable by gender, permitting separate estimation of pathways for wives and husbands." The authors should report whether dyadic distinguishability was empirically tested before estimating the fully distinguishable APIM. A formal omnibus test comparing a distinguishable model with a model constraining corresponding means, variances, actor effects, partner effects, and covariances would establish whether gender-based distinguishability is statistically warranted. Merely assigning gender labels does not demonstrate that the dyad members require distinct parameter estimates.

Response: Revised and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the Methods section, the sentence "A purposive and convenience sampling strategy was used to identify couples who met the eligibility requirements" raises concerns about selection bias. The authors should provide considerably more detail about recruitment, including the number of individuals who accessed the screening form, the number of couples deemed eligible, the number who consented, the number who completed both surveys, and the number excluded at each stage. A participant-flow description is necessary because joint participation may disproportionately attract couples with better communication, higher stability, or greater interest in relationship research. The implications of this self-selection for estimates of marital satisfaction and partner support should be discussed.

The Methods section reports that "the sample was limited to different-gender married couples in which both spouses were engaged in paid employment." The rationale for excluding cohabiting couples, same-gender couples, and couples in which one partner worked fewer than 20 hours per week should be explained more explicitly. These restrictions may be justified by the use of gender-distinguishable APIM parameters and the study's focus on dual-earner marriage, but they substantially narrow the population to which the findings apply. The manuscript should state that its inferences concern different-gender, legally married, English-speaking Canadian couples meeting the specified employment threshold and should avoid broader claims about all dual-earner couples.

The Methods section states, "Both spouses were required to be at least 18 years of age, able to read and understand English, and engaged in paid employment for a minimum of 20 hours per week." The authors should justify the 20-hour threshold theoretically or empirically. It is unclear whether this cutoff reflects a standard definition of substantial employment, a sampling decision, or an attempt to ensure sufficient exposure to work-family demands. Sensitivity analyses comparing participants working 20–29 hours with those working at least 30 hours would be valuable, especially because work intensity may alter the strength of work-to-family conflict pathways.

In the Data Collection Tools subsection, the manuscript identifies the "Individualism–Collectivism Scale developed by Singelis and colleagues" but does not report the exact version, number of items, response anchors, scoring rules, or any adaptations made for the Canadian context. Similar omissions occur for the Gender Role Beliefs Scale, Work–Family Conflict Scale, Support in Intimate Relationships Rating Scale, and Couples Satisfaction Index. For reproducibility, the authors should report the complete instrument name, original citation, number of items, subscale structure, response format, score calculation, interpretation of higher scores, and evidence of validity in comparable populations. The manuscript should also disclose whether permission or licensing was required.

The Methods section states that cultural-value dimensions "were examined as correlated latent constructs rather than being combined into a single global score." This is an appropriate decision, but the measurement specification remains unclear. The authors should state whether individual questionnaire items, parcels, or subscale scores served as indicators of the latent variables. If item parcels were used, the parceling procedure and its justification must be described, because parceling can

conceal multidimensionality and artificially improve model fit. If all items were entered individually, the authors should explain how model complexity was managed given the sample of 250 dyads.

The Methods section reports that “the order of the primary instruments was randomized across participants to reduce systematic order effects.” The authors should clarify whether randomization occurred at the individual or couple level and whether spouses within the same couple could receive different instrument orders. They should also report whether order effects were examined empirically. Because both partners completed similar questionnaire batteries, instrument-order differences could introduce additional within-couple heterogeneity. A brief sensitivity test assessing whether order condition predicted missingness, completion time, or primary study variables would strengthen confidence in the data-collection procedure.

Response: Revised and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.