**The impact of work-life balance on happiness with mediating effect of work stress; Hotline maintenance employees in Sri Lanka related to power sector organizations**.

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**Abstract**

 Maintaining hotlines are crucial to employees who works in power sector organizations. This research study therefore aimed to investigate the empirical gap related work-life balance and happiness of hotline maintenance workers with mediating effect of their work stress. Based on survey research design, we collected data from 235 employees using a questionnaire and analyzed. Study results indicate that work-life balance positively impact on employee happiness and negatively impact on work stress. Further, work stress has a negative impact on employee happiness. Finally, the results revealed that work stress negatively mediates the relationship between work-life balance and happiness of hotline maintenance workers. The findings provide employees of power sector organizations with valuable recommendations and directions on managing employee work-life balance, happiness and work stress.

Keywords: Happiness; Hotline Maintenance Employees; Work Stress; Work-Life Balance

**Background of the Study**

Work-life balance improves employee wellbeing physically, mentally and emotionally**.** As defined by World Health Organization (2019) work life balance is, “the interaction between wok related activities and non-work aspects of life, including family, personal interests, and social relationships, which contribute to individual well-being and job satisfaction”. According to Greenhause & Allen (2011) work life balance is “the equilibrium individuals seek to strike between their work and personal lives.” They emphasize the importance of achieving harmony between the demands of work and personal well-being.  Wesarat et al,. (2014) stated, it is important to have a work-life balance among employees for different reasons.

These include physical and mental health. Further, Tella et al. (2010) also depicted that the presence of a good balance will provide the employees with adequate time to sleep, exercise, etc. Being fit and healthy will assist them to participate and be present at work. This also gives ample time and opportunity for the employees to be creative as well as think out of the box. Creativity is always needed when it comes to solving problems. Awada & Ismail (2019) mentioned that life being balanced will keep the continuous flow of ideas and solutions to problems can be obtained very easily.

The positive experiences in one domain can increase happiness and welling in other domain and highlights how crucial work-life balance is to fostering general happiness and welling (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).  Longer working hours are linked to lower job satisfaction and a higher likelihood of quitting, indicating that work-life balance is important for overall happiness and job satisfaction (Reynolds, 2003).  As revealed by Elnanto & Suhari (2021) work-life balance can boost happiness and welding of employees.

Employee happiness has been linked to both professional and personal outcomes Dienerl, Kesebir & Tov (2009). Happy employees may be more dedicated and productive at work. (Othman et al.,2018). Hence, previous studies have measured employee work-life balance and happiness at work. However, the majority of research continue to measure employee satisfaction as the dependent variable rather than employee happiness (Meer & Wielers, 2013; Wielers & Meer, 2021).  Further, researchers have concluded large numbers of research on work life balance using different dependent variables such as satisfaction (eg: Husan et al., (2020), Haar et al., (2014), career opportunities (ex. Pace & Sciotto, 2021), subjective wellbeing (ex.  Gröpel & Kuhl, 2009) and employee performance (ex. Haider et al., 2018).

Despite the importance of employee happiness for business organizations, the topic, work-life balance and happiness has not yet received much attention in research (Joo & Lee, 2017).  Otken & Erben (2013) have investigated investigate the relationship between work-life balance and happiness of white-collar employees working in Istanbul with moderator effect of x and y generation employees. Husan et al., (2020) investigated the association between work life balance, intrinsic motivation, subjective wellbeing, and job satisfaction among the healthcare professionals in Pakistan, suggest that the association between work life balance and subjective well-being in health care professionals and has revealed that work life balance improve subjective well-being over job satisfaction at low level of intrinsic motivation.   Haar et al., (2014) study and examined how work-life balance affects various individual outcomes over cultural boundaries and revealed that the work life balance was favorably connected to job and life satisfaction and negatively related to anxiety and depression across the seven cultures utilizing employees representing seven different populations such as Malaysian, Chinese, New Zealand Maori, New Zealand European, Spanish, French, and Italian. The research has revealed that substantial evidence that work life balance is advantageous for workers from different cultural backgrounds.

The connection between WLB and subjective wellbeing, with need fulfillment serving as a mediator was studied by Gröpel & Kuhl (2009), using students and employees serving as distinct samples. Finding reveals that work-life balance and need fulfillment were positively correlated.  Additionally, satisfaction of needs was positively connected to subjective welling. In the same time researchers have used different moderators such as generation x and y, organizational support, gender, job control and etc. on the relationship between work-life balance and employee happiness.  For example, Otken & Erben (2013) studied on importance of work-life balance and investigated the relationship between work-life balance and happiness of white-collar employees working in Istanbul with moderating effect of X and Y generation employees and found that in relation to generation X work interferes their personal life and happiness negatively and for generation Y work/personal life improvement positively influence on happiness.

Dhingra (2021) examined the relationship between work-life balance, working hours, and subjective happiness as well as offering preliminary evidence of the moderation effect of gender on that relationship. Few research could be found that mediate the work-related stress (Cundiff et. Al., 2020). Accordingly, in this study, we identified an empirical gap in existing literature on impact of work-life balance on employee happiness with the mediating effect of employee stress.  On the other hand, the research studies that were conducted to identify the impact of work-life balance on employee happiness with mediating effect of employee stress have not identified among hotline maintenance employees’ in Sri Lanka. These employees’ work-life balance and happiness have not gained much attention from scholars. Therefore, in this study, we study the impact of work life balance on happiness of hot line maintenance employees with mediation effect of work stress.

**Theory and Hypothesis Development**

**Theory**

We utilized Hedonic and Eudemonic approaches to explain this relationship between work life balance, wellbeing, and employee happiness. Aristotle introduced the word “eudaimonia” in the fourth century BCE. in his work, “The Nicomachean Ethics”, where the theory was written in-depth about the hedonic-eudemonic dichotomy. The Hedonic and Eudemonic approaches are two different styles of perception in the pursuit of wellbeing in Western part of the world (Fromm, 1976; Westman et.al, 2009).  They both contribute to the concept of employee well-being (Zheng et al., 2015).  The hedonic approach is focusing on maximization of self-interest pleasure and the minimization of pain are the two goals of one’s life (Fromm, 1976; Nizam & Kam, 2018).  In the same time the hedonic approach is defined as “the pursuit of pleasurable experiences and the avoidance of pain” and it can be explained as the happiness or satisfaction that derived from optimal performance (Robertson & Cooper, 2010; Guest, 2017; Viot & Benraiss-Noailles, 2019).  The eudemonic method focuses on self-expression, a person's level of functionality, and how closely they adhere to their own actual values (Westman et al., 2009).

The modern individual continues to fulfil their need for the "good things" in life, for instance pleasure and wellbeing, yet the more they struggle, the more happiness and tranquilly seem to elude them. (Fromm, 1976; Westman et al. 2009).  The provision of material and spiritual goods might be interpreted as well-being (Qi & Wu, 2018).  A person is also in a state of well-being when they are happy (Westman et al. 2009; Guest, 2017). Byrne (2005) has suggested that people try to establish a good balance among major elements of life, including work, family, self, finances, hobbies, social, health, and spirituality. The success of work life balance is favourably correlated with job satisfaction, quality of life, and employee well-being. (Taşdelen-Karçkay & Bakalım, 2017).

**Work-Life Balance and Employee Happiness**

The term work life balance defines as “ the equilibrium in individuals seek to strike between their work and personal lives.” Greenhaus & Allen (2011).  As mentioned in research findings, incased work-life balance support employee to enhance their happiness (Joo & Lee, 2017). Accordingly, work life balance helps to improve outcomes related to professional Grawitch et al., (2015), family, and personal lives in a way that enables people to be successful and fulfilled in all facets of their life (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015).  Further, a positive relationship between work-life balance encourages both physical and mental health, lessens stress and burnout, and ultimately improves the quality of life (Pichler, 2009). Therefore, the work-life balance related outcomes may lead to employee’s happiness. A significant body of research indicates that happy employees are the result of having a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives (Greenhaus & Collins, 2003). Work-family enrichment hypothesis indicates that establishing a work-life balance may enhance happiness and satisfaction facilitating individuals to satisfy their duties at both, place of employment and homes (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006).

The importance of work-life balance has been highlighted by Ayse and Gul (2013) who also looked into how happiness of white-collar employees working in large firms in Istanbul, Turkey, related to the X and Y generation.  The findings indicate a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and happiness, demonstrating that when an employees' life is influenced by their work, their degree of happiness declines.  For instance, Michel et. al (2011) concluded that a good work-life balance was more beneficial to females than it was to males. This was shown to be the case in comparison to men. In addition, Elnanto & Suharti (2021) studied in relation to university lecturers and revealed that the work family health has positive effects on work life balance and work life balance has positive effects on employee happiness.  Elnanto & Suharti (2021) by research carried out in relation to Malaysian employees on the implications to employee happiness and the influence of organizational support as moderating variable and have concluded that work life balance has an influence on employee happiness. Hence, we hypothesized that,

H1 – There is an impact of work-life balance on the happiness of field employees.

**Work-Life Balance and The Work Stress**

According to past research, the work-life conflict has been linked to a rise in psychological distress, stress within the family, and the emergence of sickness symptoms.  Significant connections between stress and work-life conflict have also been shown by research by Sirgy & Lee (2018).  job stress, well-being, work-life balance, and work-life conflict was focused for a study among Australian acagdemic teaching personnel.  The results of the study revealed that high levels of perceived job-related stress would be positively correlated with work-life balance and well-being among Australian academic teaching personnel (Amanda, Diana, and Stephen, 2012)

The above findings have been further proved by Kelly et la. (2020) by study conducted on job satisfaction, well-being, work-life balance, and stress at work among pathology residents and fellows. The study found that the primary causes of burnout and job stress are related to both external and internal variables such as the integration of work and life.  It has been shown that providing employees with greater control over their work schedules and making it simpler for them to maintain a good work-life balance may reduce employee stress. Flexible work arrangements are one of the key strategies for achieving a healthy work-life balance, for example, Shockley, Clark, Dodd, and King's (2017) has revealed that individuals with greater job autonomy and supervisors who give emotional support to deduce job stress. Hence, we hypothesized that,

H2 – There is an impact of work-life balance on the work stress of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit.

**Work Stress and Happiness**

One of the biggest issues in the working environment is stress at work. (Skakon, Nielsen, Borg, & Guzman, 2010; Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012).Work stress is a term used to describe the physiological, psychological, and emotional reactions that occur. Although it is a natural and unavoidable human reaction to the difficulties and demands of work, when it persists or is excessive, it may have a negative impact on relationships, performance at work, and mental and physical health. Workload, deadlines, interpersonal tension, job uncertainty, a lack of control or autonomy, and a lack of enough resources are common causes of workplace stress (Robinson, 2018). Happiness is typically understood in the context of a person's subjective overall enjoyment of life in literature of social science (Szczygieł and Mikolajczak, 2017).

Both positive and negative correlations between job stress and happiness have been demonstrated. Few researchers have demonstrated how stress has a negative impact on wellbeing (Scherer (1999); Naseem (2018) and stress at work and employee happiness are inversely correlated (Chiang, Birtch & Kwan, 2010). Naseem (2018) carried out a research related to the telecommunications sector in Lahore, Pakistan, was examined to see if there was any relationship between job stress and life satisfaction and happiness. The findings indicate that working in the telecommunications business is a very stressful job that has a negative impact on happiness. The relationship between work stress and happiness was further discussed by Schiffrin and Nelson (2010), conducting a research among full-time undergraduates attached to public liberal arts college, mid-Atlantic. Participants who felt more stress expressed less happiness than participants who felt less stress.  This finding was further proved by Akgunduz, Bardakoglu & Kizilcalioglu (2023).  This study was focused on employees attached to five-star hotels operating in Antaliya, Turkey. The findings of the study supported the hypothesis of “job stress reduces happiness”. H3 for this study was developed, considering the above literature. Hence, we hypothesized that,

H3 – There is an impact of work stress on employee happiness of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit in CEB.

**Mediating Effect Of Employee Work Stress**

Work stress can be defined as “an adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or demand placed on them at work" (Wickramasinghe, 2012).  Stress is a highly individual phenomenon that differs between individuals depending on personal susceptibility and resiliency, as well as between various work types (Fink, 2016).  The key determining factors for work stress are workload and time, where employees have a lot of tasks to complete in a short time period and consequently, increase job pressure and affects employee performance (Omar et a., 2020).  However, work pressure or stress have beneficial effects on humans, with positive pressure promoting awareness and self-examination (Chen, et al., 2012) and always do not have negative effect on the company (Ratri, 2021).  Stress at a certain level enables to influence workers to perform their work and who are experiencing condition of work stress will demonstrate changes in their behavior. At low-stress stages, employees may not necessarily be challenged or engaged required to perform at their best and Employees can perform at their best when stress levels are at optimal level (Certo, 2003). Abdulraheem (2014) found that employee wok life balance is highly impacted by employee performance and productivity.  High-quality WLB is an important element in efficacy and happiness (Malik, 2021). This is essential for performance optimization, staff retention, and loyalty enhancement, all of which can boost employee engagement and happiness. (Fisher, 2002; Allen et al. 2000).

Meanwhile, the negative behavior demonstrated by employees can be triggered by the increase of work stress (Emslie and Hunt, 2009).  Meanwhile, an employee's poor behavior may have been brought on by a rise in work stress (Emslie and Hunt, 2009). According to Mullen and Kelloway (2010) Task failure, employee turnover, and absenteeism are becoming commonplace in the workplace, and all of these are endangering the organization's performance and growth.

Working-age people may be particularly susceptible to chronic heart disease due to work stress, which is mediated by both direct and indirect impacts on neuroendocrine stress pathways and health behaviors. (Chandola et al., 2008).  Employees have a lower risk of experiencing burnout and stress at work when they can create a good balance between their personal and professional life. When people can meet their obligations both at work and at home, they report feeling a higher sense of control over their lives. Achieving a feeling of command over one's life requires one's emotional and mental health to be in good standing at all times.

Singh and Nayak (2015), found that stress mediated the relationship between work family balance and satisfaction of the police officials, this research referred police officers as the sample.   Aruldoss et al., (2021) has revealed that stress at work may act as a mediator in the connection between a healthy work-life balance and employee happiness. Even if employees have a healthy work-life balance, the stress they experience on the job may still have a detrimental effect on their happiness and health Ratri & Wahjudono. (2021).  Findings of Özer et al., (2022) further found that a negative and poor relationship between work stress and employee happiness for nurses and all other health care workers.  Accordingly, we hypothesized that,

H4 – There is a mediating effect of work stress on the relationship between work-life balance and employee happiness of field employees.

**Methods and Results**

**Population and sample**

The population for the present study was the employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit of a power sector organization. 942 employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit were used as the population of the study. The researchers calculated the sample size for the study by using the Morgan table introduced by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) a specific demographic. Accordingly, we selected 269 employees as the sample for this study. The questionnaire was distributed among 269 employees, and we received only 235 responses for the final data analysis. The response rate is 87.36%.

**Scales**

We used three scales for data collection as follows.

*Work life balance:*   We used 7-item to measure work life balance by Kuhnel, et al., 2020.  The Cobach’s alpha for the current study is 0.85.

*Happiness:* We used  6-item scale developed by Lorente et al., (2019) to measure happiness. The Cronbach’s alpha for the current study is 0.89.

*Work Stress.*  We used 7-item scale developed by Mello Alves et al., (2021) to measure work stress. The Cronbach’s alpha for the current study is 0.9.

**Other Variables**. They were measured as follows: age of employees (“1” for years18-30, “2” for year 31-40, “3” for year 41-50 and “4” for 51 or above), educational level (“1” for School-level, “2” for Diploma, “3” for Graduate, 4 for Other) and income level (“1” for Up to LKR 30,000, “2” for LKR 30,001 - 60,000, “3” for LKR 60,001 - 90,000, “4” for LKR 90,001- 120,000, “5” for LKR 120,001 or above

**Data Collection**

We collected data through a Google Form questionnaire. The link to the Google form was distributed among the supervisors of each work team through WhatsApp. The supervisors distributed the Google link to respondents through their WhatsApp group created for communication among team members. Then the data were automatically collected on an Excel sheet when the respondents submitted the duly filled-out questionnaire.

**Data Analysis**

We imported the data set into SPSS as the first step of data analysis. The data cleaning is carried out to check for any missing values, outliers, or errors in the data set. Then Use descriptive analysis to summarize and describe the data. This includes measures such as mean, median, mode, and standard deviation.  We tested hypotheses, using statistical tests such as t-test, chi-square test, ANOVA, regression analysis, and correlation analysis.  Regression analysis was used to determine the connection between a dependent variable.

**Findings**

**Data filtering: Missing values**

In the current study, we identified that there are no missing values in the data set.  Further, researchers used a boxplot to visualize the outliers of the data of the independent variable of the study. The boxplot shows no outliers. Therefore, the researchers stated that "no outliers were identified in work-life balance, work life balance and stress using the boxplot analysis. This interpretation adds validity to the findings of the study and strengthens the conclusions drawn from the analysis.

The dataset of work-life balance has a well-shaped bell curve. The mean value is recorded as 3.34 and the standard deviation is recorded as 0.486.  The dataset of employee happiness has a well-shaped bell curve with the mean value of 4.0 and the standard deviation of 0.617. The dataset of work-life balance has also a well-shaped bell curve with value of 2.46 and the standard deviation of 0.56. Therefore, the researchers identified that the data set of the independent variable, dependent variable and mediating variables are normally distributed.

Table: 1 Reliability of statistics

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Scales | Cronbach alpha | KMO value | P-value |
| Work-life balance | 0.85 | 0.79 | 0.00 |
| Happiness | 0.89 | 0.86 | 0.00 |
| Work stress | 0.9 | 0.88 | 0.00 |

The independent variable in this study is work-life balance, which is measured using 7 items. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.85 suggests a high level of internal consistency among these items, indicating that they are strong indicators of work-life balance. The dependent variable in this study is happiness, which is assessed using 6 items. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.89 indicates strong internal consistency among these items, suggesting that they are reliable measures of happiness. The mediator variable in this study is work stress, which is assessed using 7 items. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.9 suggests strong internal consistency among these items, indicating that they are robust measures of work stress. According to KMO and Bartlett’s test each variable has taken a KMO value greater than 0.7. Therefore, it can identify that the selected sample is adequate for the current research.

**Demographic Profile**

The Age distribution of the study, among the participants, 14.9% were between 18 and 30 years old, 46.0% were in the age range of 31 to 40 years, 31.5% were between 41 and 50 years old, and 7.7% were 51 years or above. The total number of participants was 235. According to the findings, 15.7% had a school-level education, 14.5% held a diploma, 2.1% had a graduate degree, and the remaining 67.7% fell into the "Other" category.

The distribution of monthly income among the study participants provides valuable insights into the socioeconomic aspect of the sample. The data reveals that 1.7% of the participants had an income of up to LKR 30,000, indicating a relatively lower income bracket. On the other hand, 20.4% reported a monthly income of LKR 120,001 or above, representing a higher income category. The majority of participants fell into the middle-income range. Specifically, 8.9% earned between LKR 30,001 and LKR 60,000, while 34.0% had a monthly income between LKR 60,001 and LKR 90,000. Additionally, 34.9% of the respondents reported an income within the range of LKR 90,001 to LKR 120,000. Examining the distribution cumulatively, it becomes apparent that nearly 44.7% of the participants had a monthly income of LKR 60,000 or higher, while 79.6% earned at least LKR 90,000 per month.

**Correlation**

Pearson correlation analysis is a statistical technique that measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables.

Table 2 Correlation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variable relationship | Correlation | Sig |
| Work-life balance and happiness | .54\*\* | .00 |
| Work-life balance and work stress | -.72\*\* | .00 |
| Work stress and happiness | -.73\*\* | .00 |

According to the results indicated in Table 2, the correlation between work-life balance and happiness is recorded as 0.54. The significance value is recorded as 0.00 and it is lower than 0.05. Since the correlation value is positive and it falls between +0.5 and +0.75, and the significance level is accepted, it can state that there is a significant positive moderate correlation between work-life balance and employee happiness of  Hotline Maintenance Employees. Moreover, the correlation between work-life balance and work stress is recorded as -0.72. The significance value is recorded as 0.00 and as it is lower than 0.05, correlation value is negative and it falls between +0.5 and +0.75, and the significance level is accepted, it can state that there is a significant negative moderate correlation between work-life balance and work stress of Hotline Maintenance Employees. Finally, the correlation between work stress and happiness is recorded as -0.73. The significance value is recorded as 0.00 and it is lower than 0.05. Since the correlation value is negative and it falls between +0.5 and +0.75, and the significance level is accepted, it can state that there is a significant negative moderate correlation between work stress and the happiness of Hotline Maintenance Employees.

**Mediation analysis**

Mediation analysis is used in research to examine how an independent variable affects a dependent variable via one or more mediating variables. The researcher identified the statistical data of paths “a”, “b” and “c” through simple linear regression and multiple linear regression analysis. Each path is indicated in Figure 1. These statistical data were employed by the researcher to calculate the Sobel test.

*Figure 1: Mediation analysis path demonstration*

According to the simple Linier regression analysis results the normal P-P plot was used to test  impact of IV on DV, IV on MV, IV & MV on DV indicate that the residuals are distributed close to the Linier curve and impact of linear distribution in relation to each relationship.

The homoscedasticity of the impact of work-life balance on happiness indicates that the residuals are evenly distributed around the zero line. Therefore, the simple linear regression analysis results are valid.

**Step one of mediation analysis**

Table 3: Model summaryfor the impact of the IV on DV

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| 1 | **.54a** | .29 | **.29** | .52 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), WLB | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | |

Table 3 presents the model summary for assessing the impact of the work-life balance, on happiness. The R-value, which represents the correlation coefficient, is 0.54. This indicates a moderate positive correlation between work-life balance and happiness. The adjusted R Square value, which takes into account the number of predictors in the model, is 0.29. This means that approximately 29% of the variance in happiness can be explained by work-life balance. Overall, these findings suggest that work-life balance plays a role in influencing happiness, although other factors may also contribute to an individual's overall sense of happiness.

Table 4: ANOVA for the impact of the independent IV on DV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 25.99 | 1 | 25.99 | 96.13 | .00b |
| Residual | 63.00 | 233 | .27 |  |  |
| Total | 89.00 | 234 |  |  |  |
| a. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), WLB | | | | | | |

Table 4 provides the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) results for examining the impact of the independent variable (IV), work-life balance, on the dependent variable (DV), happiness. The F-statistic is 96.13, indicating a significant relationship between work-life balance and happiness. The associated significance level (Sig.) is .00, which is below the conventional threshold of .05, suggesting a highly significant relationship.

Table 5: Coefficients for the impact of the IV on DV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Unstandardized Coefficients** | | **Standardized Coefficients** |  |  |
| **Model** | | **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.711 | .236 |  | 7.25 | .00 |
| WLB | **.69** | .07 | .540 | 9.80 | **.00** |
| a. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | | | |

Table 5 presents the coefficients for the impact of work-life balance on happiness. The unstandardized coefficient for the work-life balance is 0.69, indicating that for every one-unit increase in work-life balance, there is an expected increase of 0.69 units in happiness, holding other variables constant at a significant level of 0.05. The findings suggest that an improvement in work-life balance is associated with increased levels of happiness among the individuals in the study. The findings provide empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of work-life balance on happiness.

Table 6: Model summaryfor the impact of the IV on the MV

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| 1 | .72a | .52 | .52 | .40 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), WLB | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: WS | | | | |

Table 6 presents the model summary for assessing the impact of the work-life balance, on work stress The R-value, which represents the correlation coefficient, is 0.72. This indicates a strong positive correlation between work-life balance and work stress. The adjusted R Square value, which takes into account the number of predictors in the model, is 0.52. This means that approximately 52% of the variance in work stress can be explained by work-life balance.

Table 7:  ANOVA for the impact of the IV on the MV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | | **Sum of Squares** | **df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 38.34 | 1 | 38.34 | 254.81 | .00b |
| Residual | 35.06 | 233 | .15 |  |  |
| Total | 73.40 | 234 |  |  |  |
| a. Dependent Variable: WS | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), WLB | | | | | | |

Table 7: provides the ANOVA results for examining the impact of the work-life balance, on work stress. The F-statistic is 254.81, indicating a significant relationship between work-life balance and work stress. The associated significance level (Sig.) is .00,(<.05), suggesting a highly significant relationship.

Table 8: Coefficients for the impact of the IV on the MV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | | **Unstandardized Coefficients** | | **Standardized Coefficients** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5.24 | .18 |  | 29.77 | .00 |
| WLB | -.83 | .05 | -.72 | -15.96 | .00 |
| a. Dependent Variable: WS | | | | | | |

Table 8 presents the coefficients for the impact of work-life balance (WLB) on work stress (WS). The unstandardized coefficient for the work-life balance is -0.83, indicating that for every one-unit increase in work-life balance, there is an expected decrease of 0.83 units in work stress, holding other variables constant at a significant level of 0.05. The findings suggest that an improvement in work-life balance is associated with a decrease in the levels of work stress among the individuals in the study.

**Step three of mediation analysis**

Table 9: Model summaryfor the impact of IV and MV on DV

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| 1 | .73a | .53 | .53 | .42 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), WS, WLB | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | |

Table 9 presents the model summary for assessing the impact of work-life balance and work stress on happiness. The R-value, which represents the correlation coefficient, is 0.73. This indicates a strong positive correlation between work-life balance and work stress on happiness. The adjusted R Square value, which takes into account the number of predictors in the model, is 0.53. This means that approximately 53% of the variance in happiness can be explained by work-life balance and work stress.

Table 10: ANOVA for the effect of IV and MV on DV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | | **Sum of Squares** | **df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 47.46 | 2 | 23.78 | 132.49 | .00b |
| Residual | 41.55 | 232 | .18 |  |  |
| Total | 89 | 234 |  |  |  |
| a. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), WS, WLB | | | | | | |

Table 10 provides the ANOVA results for examining the impact of the work-life balance and work stress, on happiness The F-statistic is 132.49, indicating a significant relationship between these variables. The associated significance level (Sig.) is .00, (<0.5) suggesting a highly significant relationship.

Table 11: Coefficients for the impact of IV and MV on DV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Unstandardized Coefficients** | | **Standardized Coefficients** |  |  |
| **Model** | | **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5.81 | .42 |  | 13.81 | .00 |
| WLB | .03 | .08 | .03 | .41 | .68 |
| WS | -.78 | .07 | -.71 | -10.95 | .00 |
| a. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | | | |

Table 11 presents the coefficients for the impact of the work-life balance and work stress and happiness. The unstandardized coefficient for the work-life balance is 0.03, and the significance value is recorded as 0.68 which is recorded far from the accepted level. These results indicate that work-life balance does not influence employee happiness when the presence of work stress. Moreover, the unstandardized coefficient for the work stress is -0.78, indicating that for every one-unit increase in work stress, there is an expected decrease of 0.78 units in happiness, holding other variables constant at a significant level of 0.05. These findings align with previous research that has emphasized the importance of work-life balance and the detrimental effects of work stress on happiness. A healthy work-life balance is crucial for individuals to effectively manage their work responsibilities while maintaining personal and family life, contributing to overall satisfaction and happiness. Conversely, high levels of work stress can lead to negative outcomes and diminish one's happiness.

**Step four of mediation analysis**

The Sobel test value of the mediation effect is recorded as 9.07583903, and the standard error is 0.07177364. The P-value is recorded as 0.000. Since the P-value is recorded as less than 0.05, it can conclude that there is a significant mediator impact of work stress on the relationship between work-life balance and happiness of hotline maintenance employees. Moreover, path “c” is insignificant in the current study as indicated in table (see Table 12).  Therefore, we identified a full mediation of work stress.

Table 13: Model summaryfor the impact of the MV on the DV

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| 1 | .73a | .53 | .53 | .42 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), WS | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | |

Table 13 presents the model summary for assessing the impact of work stress, on happiness. The R-value, which represents the correlation coefficient, is 0.73. This indicates a strong positive correlation between work stress and happiness. The adjusted R Square value, which takes into account the number of predictors in the model, is 0.53. This means that approximately 53% of the variance in happiness can be explained by work stress.

Table 14: ANOVA for the impact of the MV on the DV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | | **Sum of Squares** | **df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 47.42 | 1 | 47.42 | 265.76 | .00b |
| Residual | 41.58 | 233 | .19 |  |  |
| Total | 89.00 | 234 |  |  |  |
| a. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), WS | | | | | | |

Table 14 provides the ANOVA results for examining the impact of work stress, on happiness. The F-statistic is 265.76, indicating a significant relationship between happiness and work stress. The associated significance level (Sig.) is .00 (<.05), suggesting a highly significant relationship.

Table 15 Coefficients for the impact of the MV on the DV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Unstandardized Coefficients** | | **Standardized Coefficients** |  |  |
| **Model** | | **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5.98 | .12 |  | 48.08 | .00 |
| WS | -0.80 | .05 | -.73 | -16.30 | .00 |
| 1. Dependent Variable: HP | | | | | | |

Table 15 presents the coefficients for the impact of work stress on happiness. The unstandardized coefficient for the work stress is -0.80, indicating that for every one-unit increase in work stress, there is an expected decrease of 0.80 units in happiness, holding other variables constant at a significant level of 0.05. The findings suggest that a decrease in work stress is associated with an increase in the levels of happiness among the individuals in the study.

**Discussion**

**Work-Life Balance And Employees’ Happiness**

According to the correlation analysis, the researchers identified a significant moderate positive correlation between work-life balance and happiness. Moreover, the simple linear regression analysis results indicate that the work-life balance has a significant positive impact on the happiness of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit. With these results, the researcher accepted the first alternative hypothesis of the current study.

**Work-Life Balance And Employees’ Work Stress**

The researchers identified a significant moderate negative correlation between work-life balance and work stress. Moreover, the simple linear regression analysis results indicate that the work-life balance has a significant negative impact on the work stress of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit.  With these results, the researchers accepted the second alternative hypothesis of the current study.

**Work Stress And Employees’ Happiness**

According to the correlation analysis, we identified a significant moderate negative correlation between work stress and employee happiness. Moreover, both simple linear regression analysis and multiple linear regression analysis results indicate that work stress has a significant negative impact on the happiness of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit. With these results, the researchers accepted the third alternative hypothesis of the current study.

**The Mediator Role of Work Stress on The Link Between Work-Life Balance and Employees’ Happiness**

The researchers identified a significant mediation effect of work stress on the link between work-life balance and happiness. With these results, the researcher accepted the fourth alternative research hypothesis. Therefore, the current study results support the existing literature. Moreover, the fourth objective of the current study was to investigate the mediating impact of work stress on the relationship between work-life balance and the happiness of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit.  With the study results, We were able to investigate the mediator role of job stress. Accordingly, work stress has a negative mediating impact on the influence of work-life balance on employee happiness of field employees attached to the hotline maintenance unit.

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**Annextures**

Table 12: Data for the Sobel test

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Path | Beta (Unstandardized) |
| A | -0.83 |
| B | -0.78 |
| Sa | .05 |
| Sb | .07 |
| Sc | .67 (0.000<0.05) significant |
| Sc | .03 (0.678>0.05) insignificant |