



Work-life balance, organisational culture, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction: Findings from private-sector employees

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ABSTRACT

Existing research suggests that work-life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being influence job satisfaction; however, evidence from the private sector in Sarawak, Malaysia, remains limited. This study investigates the relationships among these factors among private-sector employees in Sarawak. Job satisfaction is a key aspect of human resource management, as it directly affects productivity, employee retention, and organisational commitment. The study involved 268 respondents from three private manufacturing organisations and used structured questionnaires to gather data. Descriptive and correlational approaches were used to assess the degree of correlation between the variables. The results show that job satisfaction is significantly positively correlated with all three independent factors. The most significant factors were organisational culture, work-life balance, and psychological well-being. These results emphasise the importance of promoting psychological well-being, work-life balance, and a supportive organisational culture to increase job satisfaction. This study provides valuable insights and recommendations for policy and future research to build a more satisfied workforce in the private sector.

Keywords: job satisfaction, work-life balance, organisational culture, psychological well-being, private sector

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1 INTRODUCTION

The global trends in job satisfaction among private-sector employees indicate a mixed picture compared to public-sector workers. A comparative analysis found that job satisfaction in the private sector often hinges on factors such as organisational commitment, internal communication, work environment, and management practices (Boukamcha, 2023; Sweta, 2015). Employee performance and overall organisational success are strongly influenced by job satisfaction, a crucial component of organisational behaviour. Furthermore, according to Stefanovska et al. (2019), job satisfaction is a positive emotional state arising from an individual's evaluation of their work experience. It has been strongly linked to positive outcomes, including higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and lower turnover.

In the private sector, competition is high, and employee retention is critical. Therefore, recognising the factors that can enhance job satisfaction is crucial. Research suggests that job satisfaction is not only determined by individual circumstances but also shaped by organisational culture. Organisational cultures that value employee well-being and provide supportive environments have been shown to reduce work-life conflict and foster higher job satisfaction (Brough et al., 2020). Employees who believe their organisation's culture promotes work-life balance are more satisfied with their jobs because they can better balance their professional and personal lives (Banu & Sundharavadivel, 2019). A positive organisational culture, where employees feel valued and supported, will significantly enhance job satisfaction (Stefanovska et al., 2019).

Psychological well-being also emerges as an important factor contributing to job satisfaction. Research based on the affective events theory and psychological well-being frameworks emphasises that employees' emotional experiences at work are shaped by factors such as stress levels, support systems, and work-life dynamics, which directly influence their job attitudes (Haider et al., 2018). Employees with high psychological well-being can better negotiate the pressures of both professional and personal life, resulting in more favourable job outcomes (Gagnano et al., 2020; Haar et al., 2014). Moreover, the increasing demands of modern work environments will further blur the boundary between work and personal domains, leading to increased stress and burnout, particularly in the private sector, where long hours and intense demands are prevalent (Thakur & Madhu, 2019).

1.1 Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

One of the key elements influencing job satisfaction is work-life balance. According to Siagian (2024), work-life quality and balance have a major impact on job satisfaction, with organisational support serving as a mediator. This is supported by Permadi et al. (2023), who found that work-life balance significantly affects job satisfaction, suggesting that individuals who achieve balance between their professional and personal lives tend to have higher job satisfaction. Conversely, Soomro et al. (2018) reported that employees experiencing work-life imbalance often report lower job satisfaction, which may negatively affect their performance. Organisations that actively promote work-life balance are likely to experience increased employee loyalty and commitment, both of which are important factors in sustaining job satisfaction (Thakur & Madhu, 2019).

Additionally, Hsu et al. (2019) found that longer working hours negatively impact both work-life balance and job satisfaction, suggesting that organisations should prioritise employee well-being in order to enhance job satisfaction.

1.2 Organisational Cultures and Job Satisfaction

It has been acknowledged that organisational culture is an important factor affecting job satisfaction. According to Agarwal et al. (2020), the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee happiness and well-being are moderated by cultural factors. A positive organisational culture encourages work-life balance, which directly improves job satisfaction (Dewi et al., 2021; Simard et al., 2022). Additionally, Hambali et al. (2020) discovered that workers are happier when they are part of a strong, supportive culture that promotes collaboration and involvement. Furthermore, Körner et al. (2015) revealed that job satisfaction increases when organisational culture aligns employees' values with the organisation's mission and goals. These findings suggest that organisational culture not only shapes behaviour and performance but also plays a central role in fostering greater job satisfaction.

1.3 Psychological Well-Being and Job Satisfaction

Psychological well-being is an important factor that directly contributes to job satisfaction. Sisask et al. (2014) found that individuals with higher psychological well-being reported greater job satisfaction and were more effective at handling work-related responsibilities. Bolier et al. (2013) and Edwards (2006) also emphasised that employees with strong psychological well-being tend to demonstrate higher levels of job engagement, productivity, and organisational commitment, all of which enhance satisfaction. Bayir et al. (2022) further revealed that organisations that prioritise psychological well-being experience reduced employee stress and burnout, creating a more positive work environment that fosters satisfaction. Moreover, Hidayati et al. (2021) and Irianto et al. (2021) highlighted that psychological well-being goes beyond the absence of distress, encompassing positive functioning and realisation of personal potential, which strengthens employees' sense of fulfilment at work. Collectively, these findings indicate that higher psychological well-being is associated with greater job satisfaction by improving employees' mental health and workplace outcomes.

1.4 Relationship between Work-Life Balance, Organisational Culture, and Psychological Well-Being and Job Satisfaction

Recent studies have highlighted that work-life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being are strongly interconnected in shaping job satisfaction. Agarwal et al. (2020) noted that organisational culture moderates the effect of work-life balance initiatives on employees' well-being, which, in turn, influences job satisfaction. Similarly, Simard et al. (2022) emphasised that a supportive organisational culture strengthens the positive impact of work-life balance, creating conditions where employees are more satisfied. Haider et al. (2018) further found that work-life balance enhances psychological well-being, which, in turn, serves as a pathway to higher job satisfaction.

In addition, Bolier et al. (2013) and Edwards (2006) found that employees with high psychological well-being demonstrate greater productivity and organisational commitment, reinforcing the role of both culture and balance in achieving satisfaction. Conversely, unsupportive cultures or excessive workloads can undermine well-being, disrupt work-life balance, and lead to dissatisfaction and burnout (Bayir et al., 2022). Collectively, these findings suggest that work-life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being are interdependent, and their combined influence is essential in fostering higher job satisfaction.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Weiss and Cropanzano's (1996) Affective Events Theory (AET) provides the foundation for this study, proposing that work-related events elicit emotional responses that subsequently influence employees' job satisfaction and work efficiency. Positive events, such as recognition or supportive leadership, enhance satisfaction, whereas negative events, such as conflict, reduce it. Within this framework, work-life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being act as key contextual factors shaping these emotional responses. Studies have demonstrated that daily workplace events, including supportive leadership, acknowledgement, and flexible work practices, trigger positive emotional reactions that improve job satisfaction and employee engagement (Itzkovich et al., 2022; Kundi et al., 2021). Work-life balance fosters positive emotions and enhances satisfaction, whereas imbalance can lead to dissatisfaction (Faisal et al., 2022; Haider et al., 2018). Organisational culture shapes the emotional climate of the workplace, with supportive cultures mitigating negative experiences and enhancing satisfaction (Itzkovich et al., 2022; Kundi et al., 2021; Wegge et al., 2006). Psychological well-being and personality traits act as dispositional moderators, such that individuals with higher well-being or adaptive traits interpret workplace events more positively, thereby reducing the impact of adverse experiences (Odoni & Meier, 2016). Contemporary applications of AET therefore emphasise that organisational structures and cultural practices influence the frequency and intensity of employees' affective events, suggesting that work-life balance policies, organisational culture, and psychological well-being initiatives are important factors shaping emotional responses and, ultimately, job satisfaction.

1.6 The Present Study

The relationship between work-life balance, organisational culture, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction is complex and underexplored, particularly in Malaysia's private sector. While job satisfaction is widely recognised as critical for enhancing productivity and employee retention (Ab Rahman et al., 2019), the specific influence of these factors within the Malaysian context remains unclear. Cultural nuances and economic conditions also significantly affect employees' perceptions and experiences (Kanapathipillai & Azam, 2020).

Achieving work-life balance is especially challenging in Malaysia's private sector, where long working hours and demanding jobs are common, often leading to dissatisfaction, burnout, and high turnover (Dousin et al., 2019; Hsu et al., 2019). Previous studies have generally examined these variables independently rather than investigating their combined influence on job satisfaction

(Dousin et al., 2019; Kanapathipillai & Azam, 2020). Organisational environments characterised by heavy workloads and performance pressures may significantly affect employees' well-being and satisfaction (Akter et al., 2024; Edros et al., 2025; Sabran & Abd Karim, 2020). Supportive organisational cultures enhance satisfaction, while cultures that encourage excessive working hours exacerbate dissatisfaction (Stefanovska et al., 2019; Roy & Vries, 2017; Lu et al., 2016). Psychological well-being further mediates employees' responses to workplace conditions (Haider et al., 2018). Regional economic structures, cultural norms, and employment conditions may also influence how employees perceive workplace experiences. Addressing this gap is essential to provide insights that guide organisations in creating supportive workplaces, improving employee satisfaction, reducing attrition, and enhancing overall well-being. Therefore, this study aims to provide empirical evidence on how work-life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being collectively influence job satisfaction among employees in private manufacturing organisations in Sarawak. This study was guided by the following hypotheses

- i. There is a significant relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction.
- ii. There is a significant relationship between organisational culture and job satisfaction.
- iii. There is a significant relationship between psychological well-being and job satisfaction.
- iv. A dominant factor significantly influences job satisfaction.

2 METHODS

2.1 Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive, quantitative research design. A quantitative research design was adopted because it enables researchers to examine relationships between variables through statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). On the other hand, Apuke (2017) points out that testing theories and examining connections between variables require a quantitative framework. A structured survey has been utilised to collect data as it can yield consistent, quantifiable conclusions from a large sample (Apuke, 2017).

The study's population comprised employees from three private manufacturing companies in Sarawak, Malaysia. According to statistics collected from the human resources departments of the participating firms, the overall workforce was approximately 700 employees. These organisations were chosen because they contribute significantly to Sarawak's manufacturing sector and are easily accessible for data collection. To determine the appropriate sample size, the study employed the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. It is commonly used in social science research to generate representative sample sizes. The required minimum sample size for a population of 700 employees is 248 responses. As a result, a total of 268 completed questionnaires were successfully collected, exceeding the minimum required sample size and so providing appropriate statistical power and representation for the study.

2.2 Instrument

The instrument was structured into five sections (A-E) to capture the variables under investigation comprehensively. Demographic data, including respondents' age, gender, level of education, and years of employment, were collected in Section A. Section B consisted of four items measuring work-life balance, adapted from Brough et al. (2014). Section C contained fifteen items assessing organisational culture, based on the scale developed by Van der Post et al. (1997). Section D included eighteen items evaluating psychological well-being, as adapted from Ryff and Keyes (1995). Section E comprised ten items related to job satisfaction, adapted from the work of Weiss et al. (1967).

A five-point Likert scale was used to facilitate ease of response and standardisation across all sections except for the demographic component. Respondents indicated their level of agreement with each statement, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree), and 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale format is widely used in survey-based research for its clarity and ability to capture variations in attitude or perception (Joshi et al., 2015).

The selection and adaptation of the instruments were guided by their established validity and relevance to the constructs of interest. Modifications were minimal and aimed at aligning the language and structure with the context of the current study. The instrument development process was undertaken with careful consideration of content relevance, clarity, and ease of understanding to ensure effective data collection. In addition, reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. In this study, Cronbach's alpha values were above 0.70 and considered acceptable.

2.3 Procedure

Prior to data collection, formal authorisation was obtained from the administrative offices of the participating organisations. Potential respondents were approached through organisational communication channels by the respective administrative officers. They were provided with a brief explanation of the study's purpose and assured that participation was entirely voluntary. The questionnaire was then administered over one month and was distributed via Google Forms. Respondents were instructed to complete the questionnaire independently, based on their own experiences and perceptions, without consulting others. Participants completed the survey at their convenience within the designated data collection period. Upon completion, all responses were collected automatically through the online platform and subsequently screened for completeness and accuracy. Responses containing incomplete data were excluded during the data cleaning stage before analysis. The cleaned data were then entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. Prior to analysis, the dataset was examined for errors, inconsistencies, and outliers to ensure data quality and reliability.

To protect participants' privacy and confidentiality, no personal identifiers such as names or employee identification numbers were collected. All responses were kept anonymous and used only for academic research. Participants were also advised that they might leave the survey at any time without repercussions.

3 RESULTS

The data analysis began with descriptive statistics, including frequency analysis and measures of central tendency, to examine demographic data. Most respondents were female (53.7%) and aged 31-40 years (52.2%). Before hypothesis testing, a normality test was performed. In this study, normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis, and the normality test scores for all research variables were well within acceptable limits, indicating that the data did not deviate substantially from normality. As a result, the data were normally distributed, and the assumptions for performing Pearson correlation analysis were met.

3.1 The Relationship between Work-Life Balance, Organisational Culture, Psychological Well-Being, and Job Satisfaction

Table 1 indicates that work-life balance is significantly correlated with job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$), demonstrating a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.791$). Similarly, organisational culture shows a statistically significant and very strong positive correlation with job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$; $r = 0.860$). In addition, psychological well-being is also significantly and positively associated with job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$), with a strong correlation coefficient ($r = 0.735$). Overall, these findings suggest that higher levels of work-life balance, a supportive organisational culture, and enhanced psychological well-being are strongly associated with increased job satisfaction. Therefore, Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 are supported.

Table 1. Relationship between work-life balance, organisational culture, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction.

	Pearson correlation (r)	Significance value (p)
Work-life balance and job satisfaction	0.791	0.001
Organisational culture and job satisfaction	0.860	0.001
Psychological well-being and job satisfaction	0.735	0.001

3.2 The Influence of Work-Life Balance, Organisational Culture, Psychological Well-Being, and Job Satisfaction

The multiple regression analysis presented in Table 2 indicates that the model is statistically significant ($F = 311.028$, $p = 0.001$). The model demonstrates strong explanatory power, with an R value of 0.883, an R^2 of 0.779, and an adjusted R^2 of 0.777, indicating that the independent variables explain a substantial proportion of the variance in job satisfaction. Overall, these results

confirm a good model fit and a strong linear relationship between the predictors and job satisfaction.

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis of work-life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being as predictors of job satisfaction.

Independent Variables	Unstandardised Coefficients	Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	B		
Constant	-0.279		-1.931	0.055
Work-life balance	0.199	0.229	4.449	0.001
Organisational culture	0.636	0.523	9.068	0.001
Psychological well-being	0.263	0.203	4.728	0.001

Note. Dependent Variable = Job Satisfaction in Overall. $F=311.028$, $R = 0.883$, $R^2 = 0.779$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.777$, $P=0.001$.

The R^2 value suggests that 77.9% of the variance in job satisfaction is explained by work–life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being. All three independent variables significantly predict job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). Among the predictors, organisational culture demonstrates the strongest influence, as indicated by the highest standardised coefficient ($\beta = 0.523$), followed by work–life balance ($\beta = 0.229$) and psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.203$). These results underscore the predominant role of organisational culture in shaping job satisfaction relative to the other variables.

4 DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate significant relationships between work-life balance, organisational culture, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction among employees in the private sector of Sarawak. Work–life balance practices, such as flexible working arrangements or manageable workloads, function as positive affective events that reduce work–family conflict and create positive emotional reactions among employees. These positive emotional responses enhance employees' attitudes toward their work and increase job satisfaction (Devdutt et al., 2023). On the other hand, excessive workloads or lack of work–life balance may generate negative affective events that lead to stress and dissatisfaction. Jeevitha et al. (2024) emphasised that flexible work arrangements, moderate workloads, and organisational support enhance job satisfaction by promoting work-life balance. The results also align with previous research by Haar et al. (2014), who show that work-life balance is positively associated with job satisfaction across various cultural contexts, including Malaysia. These findings support the view that work-life balance is not only about personal preference but a strategic organisational factor in maintaining employee engagement and reducing burnout. Employees who have enough time to spend on their personal responsibilities are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction and psychological stability.

The positive relationship between organisational culture and job satisfaction observed in this study aligns with previous research. A supportive organisational culture characterised by recognition, collaboration, and employee involvement creates frequent positive workplace interactions that foster positive emotions and stronger organisational attachment. According to Chan et al. (2022), supportive and innovative cultures in Malaysian organisations are linked to higher job satisfaction, reinforcing the notion that culture is a daily experience rather than an abstract framework. Alias et al. (2022) have concluded that clan and adhocracy cultures, which foster collaboration and adaptability, lead to greater employee engagement than rigid hierarchical models. The current results support the idea that employees are more likely to build trust and a sense of belonging when they are involved in decision-making processes and are acknowledged for their contributions. This aligns with Zainuddin's (2024) opinion that cultural alignment and motivation are important in improving performance and satisfaction.

The findings about psychological well-being further support the hypothesised relationships. In line with Wright and Cropanzano (2000), this study found that employees with higher psychological well-being exhibit greater job satisfaction and higher engagement. Kundi et al. (2021) highlighted that well-being influences performance through affective commitment, which reflects deeper emotional connections to the workplace. Although the correlation between psychological well-being and job satisfaction in this research was slightly weaker than the other variables, the relationship remains important. Increased work pressure is associated with decreased job satisfaction, leading to higher levels of burnout, whereas more social support is associated with greater job satisfaction, resulting in increased work engagement (Hagen et al., 2025). The findings further affirm that mental health plays a key role in shaping workplace experiences, even though external factors can also influence it. This aligned with the American Psychological Association (2023), which reported that 92% of workers value organisations that prioritise emotional and psychological health.

From the perspective of Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), workplace conditions such as work–life balance, organisational culture, and psychological well-being can be conceptualised as sources of affective events that influence employees' emotional experiences at work. According to this theory, employees' attitudes are shaped by their emotional reactions to daily workplace experiences. Positive experiences, such as flexible work arrangements, supportive leadership, recognition of employees' achievement, and empathy, will create a favourable emotional response that enhances satisfaction (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). On the other hand, the absence of these experiences might lead to stress and dissatisfaction.

Overall, this study highlights a significant positive relationship between work–life balance, organisational culture, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction among employees in the private sector in Sarawak. From a theoretical perspective, the findings support the application of Affective Events Theory (AET) in explaining how workplace conditions shape employees' emotional experiences and attitudes toward their work. The results confirm the proposed hypotheses and provide deeper insight into how multiple workplace factors interact to influence employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings contribute to the theoretical discourse by reinforcing the relevance of AET in understanding employee attitudes while emphasising that

organisational culture should be viewed as a strategic organisational priority rather than merely a procedural element. Practically, organisations in the private sector should prioritise initiatives that improve work–life balance, promote a positive organisational culture, and support employees' psychological well-being. Implementing flexible work arrangements, encouraging supportive leadership practices, and developing employee wellness programs may contribute to higher job satisfaction and greater employee retention.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. The study was restricted to employees in the private manufacturing sector within Sarawak, limiting the generalisability of the findings. Moreover, the cross-sectional design does not allow for causal inferences, as data were collected at a single point in time. The reliance on self-reported data may also introduce bias, as respondents may provide socially desirable responses, especially on sensitive topics such as well-being or satisfaction. Future research should address this limitation by adopting a longitudinal study to investigate how these relationships evolve over time and under various situations. Furthermore, expanding the study to other sectors, such as healthcare or the public sector, would enable sector-specific comparisons and enhance generalisability.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Both authors contributed to the interpretation of results and writing of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

All participants provided informed consent before participating in the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the research's purpose.

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