

IMPACT OF SUPERVISORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION IN MANUFACTURING SMES IN OMAN

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of perceived supervisory support and perceived organizational support on work-life balance and job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Oman. Using a positivist research philosophy and a deductive approach, the study collected data from 384 employees across six manufacturing SMEs in Oman through a structured questionnaire. The relationships between variables were analysed using structural equation modelling. The findings reveal that perceived organizational support significantly and positively influences both work-life balance and job satisfaction, with work-life balance mediating the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. These results highlight the pivotal role of organizational-level support mechanisms in fostering employee satisfaction and work-life balance, while highlighting the limited influence of supervisory support in this context. This study developed a model that explores the impact of perceived supervisory support and perceived organizational support on work-life balance and job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises in Oman. The study contributes to existing literature by integrating social exchange theory, conservation of resources theory, and work-life balance theory, providing a theoretical framework. The study highlights the importance of implementing organizational initiatives that prioritize employee well-being, including flexible work arrangements. The study used a cross-sectional design and focused on Oman, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships and generalize findings to other contexts. Future research should consider adopting longitudinal approaches, conducting cross-cultural comparisons, and examining sector-specific dynamics to provide deeper insights and broader applicability of the results.

Keywords: Perceived organizational support; perceived supervisory support; work-life balance; job satisfaction and manufacturing SMEs in Oman.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The manufacturing sector, particularly within Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), plays a critical role in fostering economic development globally, regionally, and locally. SMEs are instrumental in driving innovation, generating employment, and contributing to GDP. SMEs in Qatar account for approximately 33% of GDP and 45% of the workforce, underscoring their role in economic diversification and resilience. In the UAE, SMEs contribute about 24% to GDP (Elasrag, 2010). Bahrain's SMEs contribute around 15% to GDP. In Jordan, SMEs are estimated to account for 97% of all businesses, providing a major source of new job creation in the region (UNDP, 2021). SMEs in Kuwait contribute approximately 22% to GDP, making them the second-highest contributor in the Gulf region (Zawya, n.d.). Saudi Arabia aims to increase the contribution of SMEs to non-oil GDP from the current 20% to 35% by 2030, as part of its Vision 2030 initiative (Altalhi, 2023). In Oman, manufacturing SMEs are pivotal to the nation's economic diversification strategy, as outlined in Vision 2040, which aims to reduce reliance on oil revenues and develop a robust, diversified economy. The success of these small businesses hinges not only on operational efficiency but also on the well-being and satisfaction of their workforce. Globally, manufacturing SMEs face challenges such as technological disruption, globalization, and the rising demand for skilled labour.

Work-life balance and job satisfaction are critical determinants of employee performance and organizational success (Abdirahman, Najeemdeen, Abidemi & Ahmad, 2018). Research demonstrated that a supportive work environment, including supervisory and organizational support, significantly reduces work-family conflict, enhances job satisfaction, and improves overall employee well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Supervisory support includes

tangible and intangible resources provided by managers to help employees navigate workplace demands, while organizational support encompasses broader structural and cultural practices that reinforce employee value within the company (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). While research specifically focusing on the interplay between supervisory support, organizational support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction within manufacturing SMEs in Oman is limited, some studies have explored these relationships in different contexts. For instance, Susanto et al. (2022) demonstrated that work-life balance positively influences job satisfaction and performance in Indonesian SMEs, with job satisfaction partially mediating this relationship; however, its findings are not generalizable to other regions, such as Oman. Mohapatra (2019) identified role overload and interference as key factors affecting work-life balance and job satisfaction in the manufacturing sector but did not address the roles of supervisory and organizational support. Kopplin (2013) revealed that supervisor support significantly enhances work-life balance and job satisfaction, though the study did not focus on manufacturing SMEs. Jain et al. (2024) examined the relationships between supervisory support, organizational support, and job satisfaction across sectors but did not investigate the mediating role of work-life balance or provide specific insights for SMEs. Collectively, these studies highlight the importance of workplace support mechanisms while highlighting a need for research focused on manufacturing SMEs, particularly in Oman, to address contextual gaps.

The study addressed the following research objectives:

- 1) To explore the effect of perceived supervisory support on job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman.
- 2) To examine the effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman.
- 3) To determine the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationship between supervisory support, organizational support, and job satisfaction.

This paper explores the relationships between supervisory support, organizational support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction in manufacturing SMEs in Oman. The introduction outlines the study's context and objectives, followed by a literature review highlighting research gaps. The conceptual framework presents the theoretical basis and hypotheses, while the research methods detail the study design, sampling, and data analysis using SEM. The findings are discussed, and the paper concludes with contributions and recommendations for future research. The next section provides a theoretical framework underpinning this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

The theoretical framework for this study draws from three established theories that explain the relationships between supervisory support, organizational support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. These include social exchange theory, conservation of resources theory and work-life balance. Social exchange theory posits that employees develop perceptions of support from their supervisors and organizations based on reciprocal exchanges (Sungu, Weng & Kitule, 2019). When employees feel valued and supported, they reciprocate with increased job satisfaction and commitment (Bahadır, Yeşiltaş, Sesen & Olaleye, 2024). This theory underpins the relationship between supervisory/organizational support and job satisfaction. Conservation of resources theory suggests that employees strive to preserve and accumulate resources, such as time, energy, and emotional well-being (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl & Westman, 2014). Supervisory and organizational support can act as critical resources that help employees manage work-life balance, leading to improved job satisfaction. Work-life balance theory emphasizes the interplay between work and personal life (Koubova & Buchko, 2013). When individuals perceive support in balancing these domains, it leads to higher satisfaction and reduced conflict, serving as a mediating factor between workplace support and job satisfaction (Talukder, 2019). The sections below explore into the interconnectedness of perceived supervisory support, perceived organizational support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction, emphasizing their combined impact on employee well-being and organizational performance in manufacturing SMEs in Oman.

Perceived supervisory and job satisfaction

Perceived supervisory support has been widely recognized as a critical factor positively influencing job satisfaction. Supervisory support refers to the degree to which employees perceive their supervisors as providing emotional, instrumental, and informational resources to help them succeed in their roles (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that employees who feel supported by their supervisors report higher levels of job satisfaction. Allen, Shore, and Griffeth (2003) found that supportive supervision contributes to employees' emotional well-being, reduces stress, and enhances workplace satisfaction. Kottke and Sharafinski (1988) emphasized that supervisors who provide recognition, feedback, and opportunities for growth foster a positive work environment, which in turn improves job satisfaction. Ng and Sorensen (2008) highlighted that perceived supervisory support directly correlates with employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment, across diverse industries and job roles. While these studies provide insights, there remains a scarcity of research specifically examining the impact of

perceived supervisory support on job satisfaction within Oman's manufacturing SMEs. Addressing this gap is essential, as understanding this relationship can inform strategies to enhance employee satisfaction and organizational performance in this sector.

Perceived organizational support and job satisfaction

Perceived organizational support, reflecting the employees' belief that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, has been widely associated with increased job satisfaction. A study by Miao and Kim (2010) in Chinese state-owned enterprises found that higher POS correlates with increased job satisfaction and improved employee performance. Research by Ahmad and Yekta (2010) in Iran demonstrated a positive relationship between POS and job satisfaction, emphasizing the role of supportive organizational environments in fostering employee contentment. Koesmono (2018) revealed that higher levels of POS are associated with increased job satisfaction and reduced feelings of alienation.

Work-life balance mediates the relationship between both supervisory and organizational support and job satisfaction

Research indicates that work-life balance (WLB) serves as a crucial mediator in the relationship between supervisory support, organizational support, and job satisfaction. Supervisory support, characterized by supervisors' assistance in managing work and personal responsibilities, enhances employees' WLB, which in turn leads to increased job satisfaction. Susanto et al. (2022) found that family-supportive supervisor behaviors positively influence WLB, subsequently improving job satisfaction among SME employees. Similarly, organizational support, reflecting the extent to which an organization values and supports employees' work-life integration, has been shown to bolster WLB. This improved balance mediates the effect of organizational support on job satisfaction, as employees who perceive higher organizational backing experience have better WLB and, consequently, greater job satisfaction. Mas-Machuca et al. (2016) demonstrate that organizational support enhances WLB, which in turn increases job satisfaction. Lamprinou, Tasoulis and Kravariti (2021) found that employee engagement and two dimensions of work-life balance (work interference with personal life and work-personal life enhancement) act as mediators in the perceived supervisor support and turnover intentions relationship, highlighting the importance of WLB in enhancing job satisfaction. Maan et al. (2020) demonstrated that psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction, with proactive personality moderating this relationship, further emphasizing the role of supportive work environments in promoting WLB and job satisfaction. These findings highlight the pivotal role of WLB as a mediator, suggesting that both supervisory and organizational support indirectly contribute to job satisfaction by facilitating a harmonious balance between work and personal life. The next section provides the conceptual framework for this study.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The current study is conceptualized using a framework that integrates key constructs shown in Figure 1. It identifies four constructs: Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Job Satisfaction (JS). The framework includes both direct and indirect relationships, with a total of three hypotheses. Specifically, it hypothesizes that the relationships between PSS and JS, and between POS and JS, are mediated by WLB. The conceptual model clearly illustrates three direct relationships and two indirect relationships among these variables. The hypotheses, encompassing PSS, POS, WLB, and JS, are visually depicted in Figure 1.

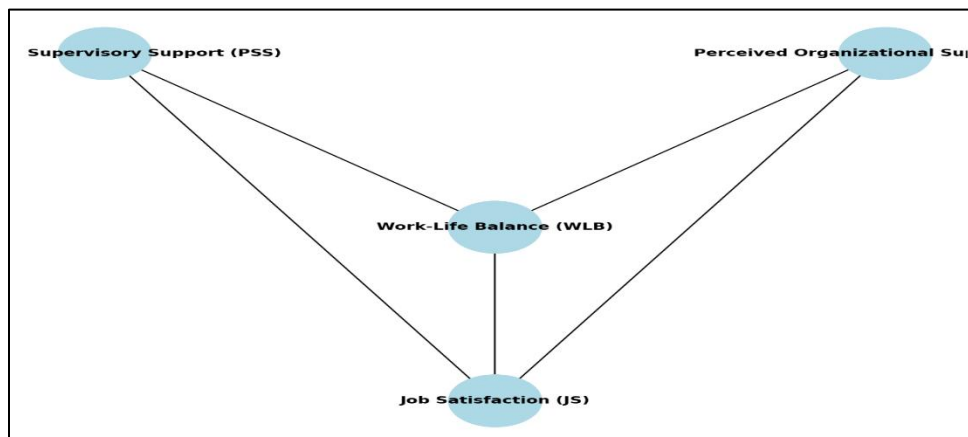


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: Author (2025)

This study sought to test empirically 3 hypotheses using the proposed model, namely:

H1: Perceived supervisory support positively influences job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman.

H2: Perceived organizational support positively influences job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman.

H3: Work-Life Balance mediates the relationship between:

PSS → WLB → JS

POS → WLB → JS

The next section provides the methodology used in this study to collect data from the respondents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of this study adopts a positivist research philosophy. Using a deductive approach, the study derives hypotheses from existing theories and collects data to test these hypotheses. A descriptive design was employed to describe relationships among variables and explain the causal links between them. The list of companies was extracted from the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry Trade Directory and the Industrial Statistical Yearbook issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. These sources provided detailed data on manufacturing industries in Oman, including the geographical distribution of firms. From this, six companies were selected for the study. A total of 4,300 employees were identified from the human resources databases of these companies. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a sample size of 384 participants was determined for the study. Primary data is collected through structured questionnaires designed using validated scales and incorporating Likert-scale items to measure constructs such as supervisory support, organizational support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. A pilot study ensures the reliability and validity of the research instrument, with content validity and internal consistency confirmed through Cronbach's alpha. Structural equation modelling was used to test relationships for this study. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, are rigorously upheld throughout the study, ensuring adherence to ethical guidelines. Table 1 provides the measurement scales and their sources.

Table 1: Measurement scales and their sources

Construct	Measurement items	Source	Theory model
Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS)	1. My supervisor cares about my opinions. 2. My supervisor is supportive when I have work-related problems. 3. My supervisor recognizes my potential. 4. My supervisor provides guidance to succeed in my role.	Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002); Kottke & Sharafinski (1988)	Social Exchange Theory (SET)
Perceived Organizational Support (POS)	1. My organization values my contributions to its well-being. 2. My organization provides adequate resources to do my job. 3. My organization strongly considers my goals and values. 4. My organization helps me maintain work-life balance.	Eisenberger et al. (1986); Ahmad & Yekta (2010)	Social Exchange Theory (SET)
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	1. I can balance my work and personal responsibilities effectively. 2. My work schedule allows me to fulfill my personal commitments. 3. My organization respects my need for personal time. 4. I feel satisfied with my work-life balance.	Mas-Machuca et al. (2016); Talukder (2019)	Conservation of Resources Theory (COR); Work-Life Balance Theory

Job Satisfaction (JS)	1. I am satisfied with my current job. 2. My job provides me with a sense of personal accomplishment. 3. I enjoy the tasks and responsibilities of my job. 4. I would recommend my job to others.	Ng & Sorensen (2008); Locke (1976)	Social Exchange Theory (SET); Work-Life Balance Theory
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Source: Author (2025)

Reliability test

Table 2: Construct reliability and validity

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.883	0.893	0.918	0.738
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	0.854	0.856	0.902	0.699
Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS)	0.857	0.880	0.902	0.698
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	0.852	0.852	0.900	0.693

Source: Author (2025)

Table 2 presents the study Construct reliability and validity for Job Satisfaction (JS), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS), and Work-Life Balance (WLB). The constructs have Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (rho_a, rho_c) values above 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency. The AVE values for all variables exceed 0.5, demonstrating good convergent validity. These results confirm the constructs are reliable and valid for further analysis. The next section presents the discriminant validity

Discriminant Validity

Table 3: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) - Matrix

Variables	Job Satisfaction (JS)	Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS)	Work-Life Balance (WLB)
Job Satisfaction (JS)				
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	0.673			
Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS)	0.233	0.453		
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	0.579	0.693	0.328	

Source: Author (2025)

Table 3 presents the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) - Matrix that shows that Job Satisfaction (JS) has a moderate positive correlation with Work-Life Balance (WLB) (0.579) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) (0.673), while it has a weak correlation with Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) (0.233). POS and WLB share a strong positive correlation (0.693), whereas POS and PSS exhibit a weak positive correlation (0.453). Lastly, PSS and WLB have a weak correlation (0.328). The relationships suggest stronger associations between POS, WLB, and JS compared to PSS. This suggest that the results are suitable for further analysis. The next section presents the factor loading (Table 4 and Figure 2)

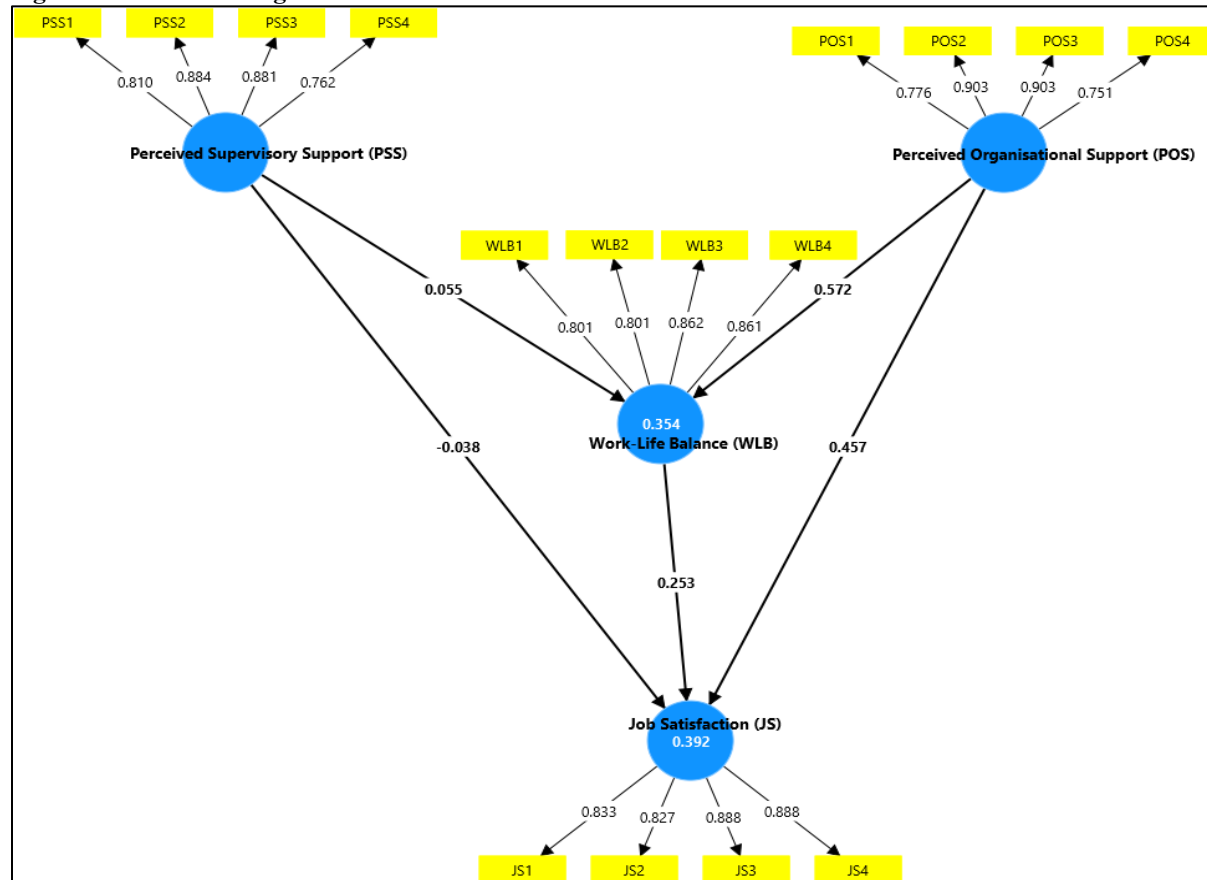
Table 4: Factor Loading

Code description	Job Satisfaction (JS)	Perceived Organisational Support (POS)	Perceived Supervisory	Work-Life Balance (WLB)
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			Support (PSS)	
JS1	0.831			
JS2	0.825			
JS3	0.889			
JS4	0.889			
POS1		0.776		
POS2		0.903		
POS3		0.903		
POS4		0.752		
PSS1			0.810	
PSS2			0.884	
PSS3			0.880	
PSS4			0.763	
WLB1				0.831
WLB2				0.831
WLB3				0.835
WLB4				0.833

Source: Author (2025)

Figure 2: Factor loading



Source: Author (2025)

The four constructs of the study Job Satisfaction (JS), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS), and Work-Life Balance (WLB) meet the rule-of-thumb threshold for factor loadings, with all items exceeding 0.7. This indicates strong indicator reliability and construct validity across all variables, with loadings ranging from 0.752 to 0.903. The data is suitable for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

Direct relationship

Table 5: Direct relationship

Variables	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Perceived Organisational Support (POS) -> Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.602	0.602	0.058	10.349	0.000
Perceived Organisational Support (POS) -> Work-Life Balance (WLB)	0.572	0.572	0.050	11.416	0.000
Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) -> Job Satisfaction (JS)	-0.025	-0.021	0.060	0.411	0.681
Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) -> Work-Life Balance (WLB)	0.055	0.057	0.057	0.964	0.335
Work-Life Balance (WLB) -> Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.253	0.254	0.071	3.557	0.000

Source: Author (2025)

The results indicate that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) significantly and positively impacts both Job Satisfaction (JS) ($\beta = 0.602$, $p < 0.001$) and Work-Life Balance (WLB) ($\beta = 0.572$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting POS as a critical factor for enhancing employee outcomes. WLB has a moderate positive and significant effect on JS ($\beta = 0.253$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that improving work-life balance contributes to higher job satisfaction. Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) shows no significant impact on either JS ($\beta = -0.025$, $p = 0.681$) or WLB ($\beta = 0.055$, $p = 0.335$), indicating that supervisory support is not perceived as a key driver in this context. These findings emphasize the importance of organizational-level support and work-life balance initiatives over individual supervisory support for improving employee satisfaction.

Indirect relationships

Table 6: Indirect relationships

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Perceived Organisational Support (POS) -> Work-Life Balance (WLB) -> Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.145	0.146	0.045	3.198	0.001
Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) -> Work-Life Balance (WLB) -> Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.014	0.014	0.015	0.908	0.364

Source: Author (2025)

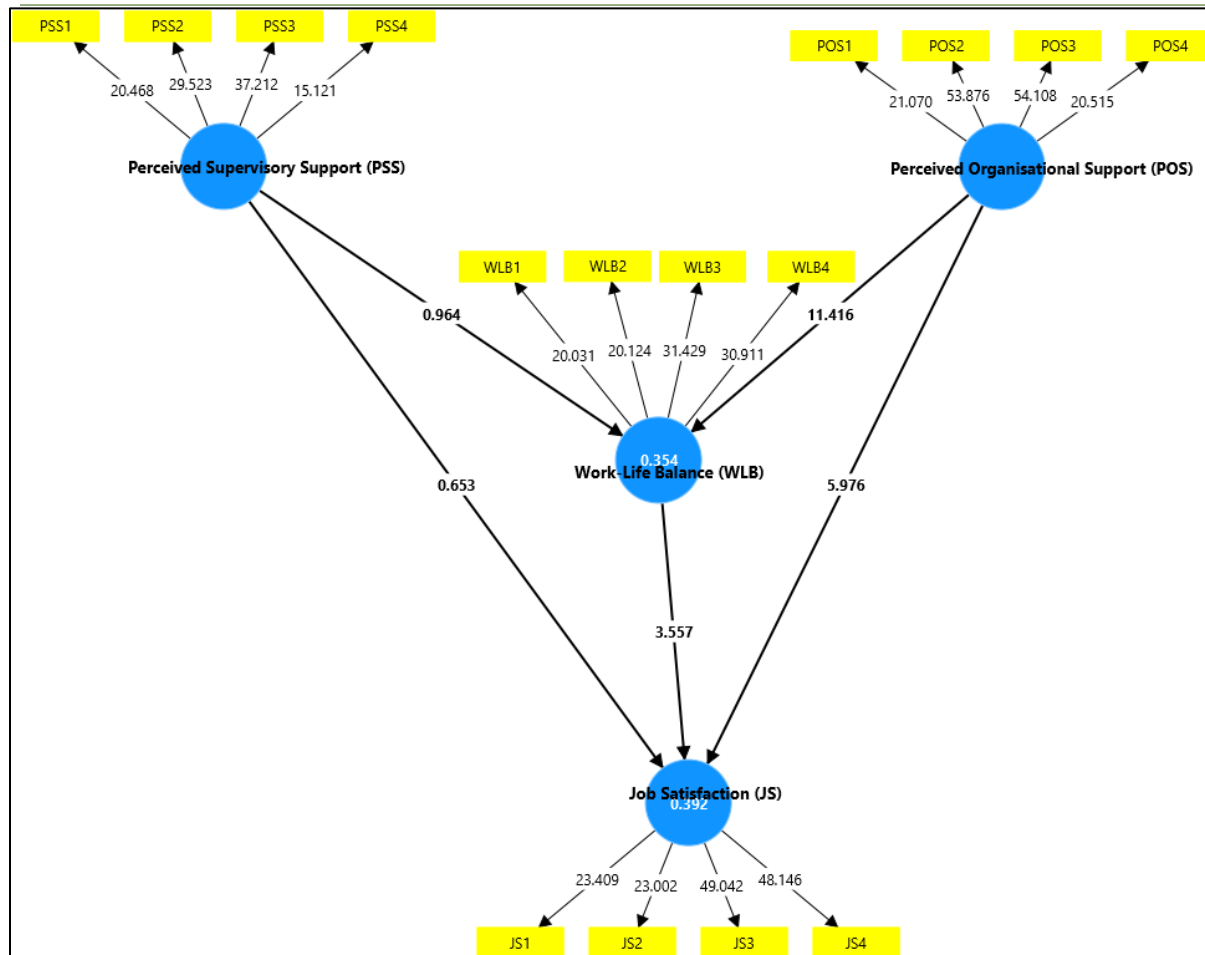


Figure 3: Significant and non-significant relationships in the study model

Source: Author (2025)

The mediation analysis reveals that Work-Life Balance (WLB) significantly mediates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Job Satisfaction (JS) ($\beta = 0.145$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that POS positively influences JS through its impact on WLB. In contrast, the mediating effect of WLB between Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) and Job Satisfaction (JS) is not significant ($\beta = 0.014$, $p = 0.364$), suggesting that PSS does not contribute meaningfully to JS via WLB. These findings emphasize the pivotal role of organizational support in shaping employee satisfaction through improved work-life balance, while supervisory support appears to have a negligible mediating effect in this context.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the relationships between Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Job Satisfaction (JS) among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman. The findings contribute to the growing body of literature by providing empirical evidence on the mediating role of WLB in these relationships, while addressing specific gaps in the context of Omani SMEs. The first research objective was to explore the effect of perceived supervisory support on job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman. The results indicate that Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) does not have a significant direct effect on Job Satisfaction (JS) or on Work-Life Balance (WLB). Furthermore, the mediating role of WLB in the relationship between PSS and JS is not significant. These findings contrast with previous studies, such as Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) and Allen, Shore, and Griffeth (2003), which demonstrated a significant relationship between supervisory support and job satisfaction in various sectors. One possible explanation for these findings is the unique cultural and organizational dynamics within manufacturing SMEs in Oman. Thus, employees may perceive organizational support as more influential than supervisory support, particularly when addressing broader work-life balance challenges. Results highlight the need for capacity-building programs for

supervisors in SMEs to enhance their ability to support employees effectively. The research objective was to examine the effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction among employees in manufacturing SMEs in Oman. The study found that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) has a significant and positive direct effect on both Job Satisfaction (JS) and Work-Life Balance (WLB). These results are consistent with previous research by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and Ahmad and Yekta (2010), which highlighted the critical role of organizational support in fostering employee satisfaction and well-being. Thus, organizational support mechanisms, such as flexible work policies and employee recognition programs, appear to play a pivotal role in enhancing both WLB and JS. The findings aligned with the Social Exchange Theory, which suggests that employees reciprocate organizational support with increased satisfaction and commitment. The third objective of the research was to determine the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationship between supervisory support, organizational support, and job satisfaction. The results confirm that Work-Life Balance significantly mediates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Job Satisfaction (JS). This finding supports the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which posits that organizational resources, such as work-life balance initiatives, help employees manage work and personal life demands, thereby enhancing job satisfaction. The results align with studies by Mas-Machuca et al. (2016) and Lamprinou et al. (2021), which demonstrated the mediating role of WLB. Conversely, the mediating effect of WLB in the relationship between Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) and Job Satisfaction (JS) was not significant. This divergence from studies such as Susanto et al. (2022) and Ng and Sorensen (2008) may be attributed to contextual factors, such as limited autonomy for supervisors in Omani SMEs or cultural preferences for organizational-level interventions over supervisory actions.

CONCLUSION

The results revealed that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) significantly and positively impacts Job Satisfaction (JS) and Work-Life Balance (WLB), with WLB mediating the relationship between POS and JS. These findings underscore the pivotal role of organizational-level support mechanisms, such as flexible work arrangements and recognition programs, in fostering employee satisfaction and enhancing work-life balance. In contrast, Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) showed no significant direct or indirect effect on either WLB or JS, highlighting the need to reassess the role of supervisory support in this context. The study concludes that manufacturing SMEs in Oman can improve employee satisfaction and organizational performance by prioritizing organizational-level interventions over individual supervisory actions. Investments in work-life balance initiatives, supported by a robust organizational framework, can create a more engaged and satisfied workforce. Future research should explore these relationships in different cultural and sectoral contexts and investigate the long-term effects of organizational and supervisory support on employee outcomes. The next section provides the theoretical contribution of this study to the field of human resource management.

Theoretical contributions

The study draws on Social Exchange Theory (SET), Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, and Work-Life Balance Theory to develop an integrated framework that explains the relationships between Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Work-Life Balance (WLB), and Job Satisfaction (JS). Thus, this study provides a holistic understanding of how workplace support mechanisms influence employee satisfaction and well-being by combining these theories. This study emphasizes the mediating role of Work-Life Balance (WLB) in the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction. While previous studies have highlighted WLB as an outcome, this research positions it as a critical link that connects organizational support to improved employee satisfaction, thereby extending the theoretical understanding of WLB as a dynamic mediator. The findings refine the application of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory in the context of manufacturing SMEs in Oman. Specifically, the study demonstrates that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) aligns with the tenets of SET by fostering reciprocal benefits between employees and organizations, while POS also acts as a resource under COR Theory, helping employees manage work-life demands. Contrary to established literature, the study finds that Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) does not significantly influence Work-Life Balance (WLB) or Job Satisfaction (JS) in the manufacturing SME context. These findings challenge traditional assumptions in SET and calls for further exploration of supervisory roles in culturally and organizationally distinct environments, such as Oman. The study contributes to a relatively underexplored sector in the workplace support literature by focusing on manufacturing SMEs. This study highlights unique dynamics within SMEs, such as the heightened influence of organizational support compared to supervisory support, thereby offering new directions for theoretical development in SME-focused research. The study validates the measurement constructs for PSS, POS, WLB, and JS in the context of manufacturing SMEs in Oman. It provides empirical support for the conceptual model using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), reinforcing the theoretical relationships between these variables and

offering a robust framework for future studies. The next section presents the limitations of the study and agenda for future research.

Limitations and future research

This study has some limitations that should be addressed in future research. The findings are specific to manufacturing SMEs in Oman, limiting their generalizability to other regions and industries, particularly larger organizations with more complex structures. Thus, future research could address these limitations by expanding the geographic and industry scope, conducting cross-cultural and comparative studies, and incorporating additional variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding. The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to establish causal relationships, and the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases such as social desirability or common method variance. Thus, longitudinal research could offer insights into the evolution of workplace support dynamics over time, while intervention-based studies could evaluate the impact of specific organizational strategies. Moreover, integrating objective data collection methods, such as HR performance metrics, and exploring the role of digitalization in workplace support and employee outcomes could further enhance the findings. Future studies could investigate mediators (e.g., job engagement) and moderators (e.g., age, tenure, or gender) to uncover relationships and provide broader insights into improving workplace support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction across diverse contexts.

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