

Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction in the Private Sectors Among Malaysian Women

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Abstract

Job satisfaction among women in Malaysia's private sector has been declining, yet there is limited research on the factors contributing to this trend. This study aims to explore the influence of key factors such as gender stereotypes, mentoring support, and work-life balance on the job satisfaction of women employed across various industries in private sector. A structured questionnaire was developed and administered to a sample of 385 female employees in the service sector. The survey gathered demographic information and measured levels of job satisfaction alongside the perceived impact of the identified factors. The findings of this study shed light on the complex interplay between these factors and job satisfaction, providing a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by women in the workforce. The results offer practical recommendations for organizations seeking to improve job satisfaction among female employees by promoting workplace policies that support diversity, equity, and inclusivity. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on employment satisfaction in Malaysia's private sector and offers a basis for future studies to further examine the unique challenges encountered by women in different occupational environments.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Gender Stereotypes, Work-Life Balance, Mentoring Support.*

Introduction

The Asia and the Pacific region harbor over 2 billion laborers, constituting approximately 66% of the worldwide workforce. Although there has been significant advancement in enhancing the quality of employment in the past few decades, there are still deficiencies in decent work and disparities between genders that continue to exist (International Labour Organization, 2022). According to Global Gender Gap 2023, it serves as a framework to analyze and compare gender inequality globally. In Malaysia, women face a significantly lower level of economic participation and opportunities compared to men. Women hold the lowest quartile of positions, ranking 102 out of 146, with a participation rate of 24.85% for legislators, senior officials, and managers. This figure is 50.30 percentage points lower than the rate for men in the same sectors (World Economic Forum, n.d.). Moreover, according to the labour force report compiled by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), the rate of female labour force participation was recorded at 55.6% in April 2022, whereas the corresponding figure for males was 82.5% (DOSM, n.d.).

Over the years, the status of women in Malaysia has experienced positive progress, mainly due to improved educational opportunities and increased awareness of their constitutional rights (Nik Saleh et. al., 2020). The participation of women is paramount in ensuring the well-being of the family unit and the progress of the nation (Nik Saleh et. al., 2020). The Malaysian society underwent a notable shift from traditional cultural customs to contemporary cultural behaviours with the establishment of the Women's Affairs Secretariat (HAWA) in 1982-83. This organisation was later reconstructed as the Department for Women's

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Development (DWD) under the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development (Nik Saleh et. al., 2020).

In today's business world organization especially Malaysia organizations are facing challenges in retaining and ensuring the satisfaction of women employees. The modifications in the internal structures and employment practices are resulting in additional transformations in the psychological contract that connects the employee to their job. *Job satisfaction*: refers to an individual's overall attitude and emotional response towards their occupation. Individuals who experience a high level of occupational satisfaction exhibit a favorable attitude towards their work (Imran et al., 2020). There are various previous studies related to job satisfaction. In a survey conducted in 2019, it shows that there is a positive correlation between the work-life balance and job satisfaction (Hsu et al., 2019). Yohana Palupi Meilani (2019) suggests that there are various factors that affect the job satisfaction which can tackle the high absenteeism of female workers and the high impact of the production target. Research conducted by Rodriguez Lopez et. al. (2021) reveals that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affects the mental strain experienced by fashion retail personnel, particularly women. This is evident in higher levels of emotional burnout caused by the interplay of work-family conflicts, emotional workload, financial impact, and working hours.

However, the correlation between factors and job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia remains uncertain mostly due to their underrepresentation in positions. Hence, it is crucial to conduct further research to investigate the key factors that are essential for understanding job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia and improving their impact within organizational contexts.

Problem Statement

Women significantly contribute to the Malaysian economy, making it essential to study factors affecting their job satisfaction. Despite a 54% workforce participation rate, many women leave their jobs in their late 20s to early 30s due to family-related issues (Ridzwan, 2018). Balancing work and personal life is a widespread challenge. *Work-life Balance* is an explanation of how individuals can achieve balance by effectively managing and surmounting conflicts within their work and family lives. Research by Lugiani and Yuniarsih (2019) indicates that gender stereotypes negatively impact women's job satisfaction. In addition, Arshad (2020) found that men report higher job satisfaction than women, underscore the effects of gender discrimination. Gender stereotypes, as defined by Einarsdottir et.al (2018), refer to the long-established assignment of gender roles and divisions within the workplace.

Globally, studies have demonstrated that mentoring support is crucial for women's career satisfaction. According to Benjamin Yin Fah (2019), Mentoring support involves a relationship where a more experienced individual, the mentor, guides and supports a less experienced individual, known as the mentee or protégé. Mcilongo and Strydom (2021) noted that 85.% of women in the public sector viewed mentoring as crucial for their advancement. However, Shen et al. (2021) revealed that women face less mentoring, lower productivity, and greater barriers to promotion, leading to decreased career satisfaction. Cross et al. (2019) also indicated that inadequate mentoring negatively affects job satisfaction and career progression among female academic staff.

Susanto et al. (2022) emphasized that work-life balance positively influences job satisfaction, with flexible work hours and supportive policies being key factors. Despite these favorable conditions, many employed women in Malaysia's private sector still report low job satisfaction, leading to disengagement and high turnover rates. Thus, this study seeks to explore why women who benefit from a harmonious work-life balance, reduced gender stereotypes, and effective mentoring still experience lower job satisfaction.

Research Question: Does the gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector?

Significance of the Study

This study aimed to evaluate job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector, focusing

on their perspectives and viewpoints. It explored the cognitive frameworks of women employees to enhance motivation and create a conducive work environment that fosters productivity. The research provided valuable insights into job fulfillment opportunities for Malaysian women, helping them better understand their levels of satisfaction in the workplace.

Additionally, the study offers organizations crucial insights into the impact of job satisfaction on the overall organizational environment, contributing to social transformation. Over the past decade, women have encountered unique barriers and challenges in their professional journeys. By addressing these obstacles, women are empowered to perform their jobs more efficiently. Therefore, it is essential for researchers to understand how women can overcome gender stereotypes, achieve a work-life balance, and access mentoring support to enhance their professional growth and success. This research is essential for academics as it fills a critical gap in the literature regarding the factors that influence job satisfaction among women employees.

Research Objectives

This study aims to investigate the factors affecting job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.

- To examine the gender stereotypes that influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.
- To examine the work-life balance that influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.
- To examine the mentoring support that influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.

Literature Review

The primary objective of this section is to conduct an exhaustive analysis of job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia, including its definition, characteristics, and fundamental significance. Despite the abundance of research on the subject, the objective of this section is to provide fresh insights by investigating the local and global levels of job satisfaction among female employees. The analysis will focus on three independent variables: mentoring support, work-life balance, and gender stereotypes. The conceptual framework and theoretical theory utilized in the research are also encompassed within this section.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the satisfaction one feels with one's job and the conditions in which they work. It is influenced by various factors such as the nature of the work, gender, educational background, work environment, location, colleagues, income, work schedule, compensation, benefits, opportunities for advancement, and relationships with supervisors (Al Zabir, 2018). In addition, job satisfaction has fostered the generation of innovative ideas among employees, leading to increased loyalty towards the organization (Ghazalah Thifal and Fitri Ayu Kusumaningrum, 2021). Numerous internal and external factors can impact job satisfaction. There would be several advantages for the company if it could affect employee job satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction has been linked to faster work completion times, reduced wastage, absenteeism, lower employee turnover and unit costs, and higher work productivity (Wenno, 2018). Satisfied employees enhance their performance by delivering optimal service and working at their highest capacity (Esthi and Ekhsan, 2020).

Employees who experience high job satisfaction exhibit elevated morale, resulting in optimal work performance within an organization (Parashakti and Ekhsan, 2020). A positive correlation between job

satisfaction and organizational commitment has been established by Aburumman et. al. (2020), indicating that an increase in job satisfaction is accompanied by a corresponding increase in organizational commitment.

Job satisfaction has the potential to positively influence employees' behavior by discouraging negative behaviors like theft, vandalism, and corruption. It can also foster compliance, discipline, helpfulness, and innovation (Davidescu et.al, 2020). According to the research findings of Chau (2019), the negative effects of dissatisfaction at work can lead to work conflicts, fluctuation, job changes, reduce efficiency, feelings of boredom, absenteeism, unstable emotions, and health impairments. Furthermore, job satisfaction can be interpreted as an indicator of wellness, particularly mental, social well-being in the workplace, a factor that influences other aspects of human life such as physical health and the circumstances of the family (Lachowski et. al, 2018).

Considering the foregoing, it is imperative that organizations acknowledge that by identifying the critical elements that are indispensable for their female workforce and ensuring that they are provided to women, they can bolster employee contentment and reduce the likelihood of attrition of skilled and talented personnel (Mehrzaad and Rostan, 2021).

Women and Job Satisfaction

The 2023 Conference Board Job Satisfaction Survey found that women in the U.S. report significantly lower satisfaction than men across nearly all examined aspects, including job security, benefits, communication, and mental health support. The report urges companies to address these gender disparities and highlights the need for flexible work arrangements and a strong workplace culture to improve job satisfaction and retention (The Conference Board, 2023).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, women faced reduced productivity and job satisfaction, primarily due to increased domestic responsibilities and childcare obligations (Feng and Savani, 2020; Carli, 2020). The pandemic disrupted the balance women were striving to achieve across various industries (Bruce et al., 2021). While research on gender-related job satisfaction is growing in Asia and the Middle East, most studies have focused on the UK, Europe, and the U.S. Discrepancies in gender-related job satisfaction persist globally due to various interconnected factors, such as work environments, cultural norms, labor markets, and educational attainment (Schill et al., 2021).

In Malaysia, studies indicate that gender is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, with women reporting lower levels than men. Iskandar and Mohamad (2021) identified factors influencing job satisfaction, including demographics, education level, job security, autonomy, and stress, noting that job-related stress negatively impacts satisfaction for both genders. Malaysia is actively promoting gender equality, with the 2030 Agenda providing new opportunities for progress and the establishment of a Select Committee on Rights and Gender Equality in Parliament representing a positive development (Nik Saleh et al., 2020).

Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction among Employed Women

Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are the long-established assignments of gender roles within the workplace (Einarsdottir, Christiansen, and Kristjansdottir, 2018). These stereotypes influence various aspects of daily life, affecting both the appeal of organizations to start-ups and applicants' inclination to pursue them (Ofir, 2023). Additionally, they can impact employment decisions (Son Hing et al., 2023). For instance, research shows that the callback rate for highly skilled positions is higher for men than for women (Quadlin, 2018). These gender disparities are deeply rooted in societal development and reflect the distinct roles assigned to males and females (Ellemers, 2018).

Numerous studies have highlighted the impact of gender stereotypes on job selection, perceived job suitability, and expected salary levels (Morris et al., 2020). A role incongruity exists between the perceived

demands of leadership and women leaders, leading to biased evaluations of women in leadership positions (Saint-Michel, 2018). Gender stereotypes are particularly prevalent in the male-dominated construction industry, with the stereotype that gender diversity can harm company performance (Lim et al., 2019).

Tabassum and Nayak (2021) assert that gender stereotypes are the foundation of gender discrimination, which often hinders women's development in the workplace. For instance, to prevent sexual harassment, organizations must foster an environment of support and trust among male employees, who may fear false accusations. Such concerns can deter men from mentoring women, perpetuating gender inequities (Soklaridis et al., 2018). Conversely, Shan, Keller, and Joseph (2019) found that women excel in societies prioritizing collectivism and displaying low assertiveness.

In STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, studies indicate that women face stereotypes suggesting they have lesser abilities, leading to challenges and decreased professional satisfaction (Charlesworth and Banaji, 2019). These stereotypes also perpetuate the belief that women lack essential skills, such as assertiveness and leadership, necessary for success in certain professions (Dollija et al., 2021). Additionally, stereotypes that portray men as "cures" and women as "carers" contribute to the segregation of women into lower-paying healthcare roles and reduce the proportion of female doctors.

Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Work-Life Balance (WLB) is defined as a state in which employees experience minimal stress and high well-being (Bhende et al., 2020). An individual's ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities positively impacts work performance, leading to benefits such as increased job satisfaction, stronger organizational commitment, and a lower likelihood of leaving the organization (Sitorus, Raharjo, and Kusumawati, 2018).

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for job satisfaction, as satisfied employees tend to adhere to consistent work schedules, demonstrate loyalty, and achieve high performance (Aliya and Saragih, 2020). Khoury (2021) identifies WLB as a significant determinant of job satisfaction, and research by Mani et al. (2020) empirically supports a positive correlation between WLB and job satisfaction in service companies in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The findings suggest that greater work-life balance correlates with higher job satisfaction, a conclusion echoed in previous studies (Sitorus et al., 2018; Fatmawati and Irbayuni, 2021). Additionally, research on the millennial generation indicates a significant positive relationship between WLB and job satisfaction (Pranindhita, 2019). Employees with a strong sense of WLB typically experience low stress levels, high work motivation, and positive relationships with colleagues and superiors, reflecting their ability to manage both work and personal matters effectively. Moreover, a significant correlation exists between work-family conflicts and quality of work-life issues in employees engaged in part-time job enrichment (Talip et al., 2020).

Traditionally, women are seen as caregivers, which affects their work-life balance and social sustainability (Mushfiqu et al., 2018). Cultural perspectives, expectations, and gender issues also influence women's WLB and social sustainability (Mushfiqu et al., 2018). Vasumathi (2018) notes that recent economic and social changes have made it increasingly challenging for women to balance work and family life. Conflicting findings exist regarding the benefits of WLB for both genders. While WLB often increases family responsibilities for women, it can also provide additional income for men (Chung and van der Lippe, 2020). Consequently, WLB has implications for women's organizational commitment (Lugiani and Yuniarsih, 2019).

Mentoring Support

Mentorship is a collaborative relationship between individuals with different expertise levels, where a mentor supports a mentee in enhancing their skills and knowledge for professional advancement (Burgess et al., 2018). It provides a relaxed environment for feedback exchange, fostering supportive relationships (Prendergast et al., 2019). Mentoring involves a close association between an experienced individual and a beginner seeking guidance in their professional, academic, and personal growth (Sandardos and Chambers,

2019). According to Tania Carlson Reis and Grady (2020), mentors help women navigate social networks and develop social capital, even across gender barriers.

Peer mentoring offers ongoing emotional support and shared empathy (Theurer et al., 2020). A study by Ben Salem and Lakhali (2018) found that individuals who receive mentoring alongside personal support experience enhanced social well-being, increased self-esteem, and a greater sense of accomplishment. Additionally, mentoring provides job support that improves mentees' job satisfaction regarding career progression, salary increases, and related factors. The cooperative nature of peer mentorship benefits individuals with diverse experiences, leading to various potential solutions for mentees (Levy-Tzedek et al., 2018). Formal mentoring programs are associated with significant improvements across multiple domains, including confidence, diversity support, teaching effectiveness, retention, and productivity (Biehle et al., 2020). Mentorship positively affects personal well-being and promotes professional development (Kennedy et al., 2021).

Gaps in the Literature

Even though there is a lot of research on gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support across the world. Several studies have investigated the correlation between these variables and the progression of women's careers in Malaysia. For example, a study investigated by Siew et al. (2018) found a relationship between work-life balance, mentorship support, and networking in relation to the progress of women's careers in Malaysia. The study employed a simple sample methodology to poll a total of 110 female employees and the findings revealed that work-life balance, mentorship assistance, and networking play pivotal roles in influencing the progress of women in the workforce in Malaysia. Another study conducted by Moorthy et al. (2022) focused on the impact of gender inequality, organizational cultural factors, and family factors on women's career progression in Malaysia. Moreover, a study conducted by Abidina et al. (2019) in the banking sector has shown that obstacles to women's career progression include challenges related to maintaining a healthy work-life balance, fulfilling family duties, and a dearth of mentoring opportunities.

However, scientific studies and publications on gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support in relation to the job satisfaction of employed women in Malaysia are still insufficient. As a result, the purpose of the research is to aid, enrichment, and contribution to this field.

Fundamental Theory- Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

The foundational theory linking worker to job satisfaction in this study is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, also known as Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Sachau, 2007). This theory posits that employees have two types of needs: motivating factors and hygiene factors (Abdulkhamidova, 2021). Frederick Herzberg's research explored the interplay between these factors, suggesting that motivators such as recognition and job advancement contribute to a sense of achievement following successful job performance. In contrast, hygiene factors pertain to the basic elements of a job that, when inadequate, can lead to dissatisfaction, such as supervision, organizational policies, and workload (Alrawahi et al., 2020).

Applying Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides a robust framework for understanding the elements that influence employee satisfaction and motivation. This work contributes to the discourse on the theory by examining a new data set and utilizing online reviews, allowing for the development of predictive models regarding employee job satisfaction (Koncar et al., 2021). Research by Holmberg, Caro, and Sobis (2017) applied Herzberg's theory to investigate the shortage of nurses in Swedish mental health care. Their interviews with 25 nurses revealed that limited opportunities for career advancement contributed significantly to this shortage. Furthermore, Hur (2018) noted that the impacts of hygiene and motivation factors on employee satisfaction differ between public and private sectors. A study by V.V. Devi et al. (2018) on 150 retail salesmen found that these employees reported higher satisfaction with hygiene factors than with motivation factors, suggesting some deviations from Herzberg's predictions.

Sankaran et al. (2023) recently applied Herzberg's theory to a classroom setting, investigating motivators

affecting student satisfaction with a new instructional approach. The findings indicated a positive correlation between motivators and satisfaction, while hygiene factors had no significant impact. The study concluded that students were motivated to take on more challenging tasks to enhance their future job prospects.

Conceptual Framework

To enhance the effectiveness of current research, the following conceptual framework (Shown in Figure 2.1) and subsequent hypotheses serve as the necessary structure for guiding the research.

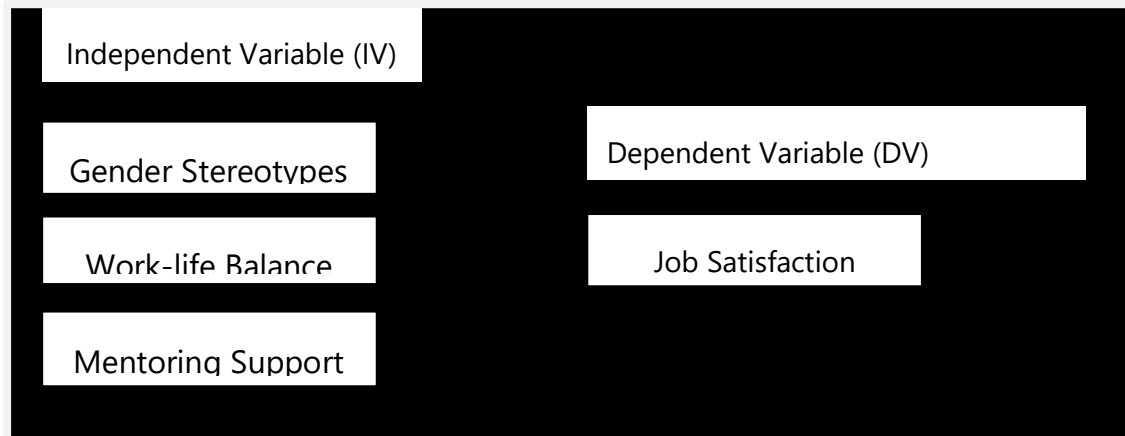


Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses

The job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia has relationship with the independent variables of gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support. Below are the three hypotheses that were developed.

- H1: Gender stereotypes has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.
- H2: Work-life balance has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.
- H3: Mentoring support has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in private Malaysia's private sector.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to explore factors influencing job satisfaction among employed women. The research utilizes a cross-sectional survey method, where data is collected at a single point in time. The study employed a non-probability sampling technique, specifically convenience sampling, due to its ease, speed, and low cost. Convenience sampling uses readily available participants, making it less formal than random sampling. The target population for this study includes female employees in Malaysia, without restrictions on gender, age, or ethnicity. The calculated sample size (N) for a population (P) of 15.6 million women, using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error (E), is approximately 384.16. Hence rounded to a whole number, a sample of 385 respondents is required. The data collection is expected to take place within two to three weeks of November-December 2023 using an electronic questionnaire. This cross-sectional survey will provide insights at a single point in time to understand job satisfaction in the target population.

The research aim is to examine the correlation between job satisfaction and elements such as gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support, with correlation analysis being used to assess relationships between independent and dependent variables (LaMorte, 2021). This design facilitates a structured approach to data collection, measurement, and analysis.

Data Collection & Instrument

The primary data for this analysis were collected directly from original sources, using questionnaires as the main data collection method, distributed to female respondents working in various organizations within Malaysia's service industry (Abu-Taieh, Hadid, and Mouatasim, 2020). Electronic questionnaires were used for their convenience, eliminating the need for face-to-face interactions and reducing both time and expenses for researchers and respondents. Most respondents preferred the online format, and Google Forms was chosen to generate the survey due to its ease of use and cost-effectiveness. The questionnaire was distributed via hyperlinks shared across social media platforms like Emails, LinkedIn, Facebook, and WhatsApp. Secondary data was sourced from credible journals, articles, books, and certified databases relevant to the study's focus.

The questionnaire was designed to be visually appealing and structured, containing an introduction, clear instructions, and well-organized questions (Bougie and Sekaran, 2019). The questionnaire is divided into three sections, with 27 items in total. Section A gathers demographic information (7 items). Section B measures the dependent variable, job satisfaction among employed women (5 items). Section C focuses on independent variables, including gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support, with 5 items each. This structure ensures comprehensive data collection on the factors influencing job satisfaction. A 5-point Likert scale was used, with responses ranging from 1 ('completely disagree') to 5 ('completely agree') (Pescaroli et al., 2020).

Data Analysis

The data analysis involves the examination of collected data using empirical and analytic reasoning. This study employs the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to encode and analyze the data, applying descriptive, normality, reliability, correlation, and multiple regression analyses. A pilot test will be conducted with a sample of 40 respondents to assess the questionnaire's reliability and validity. Descriptive analysis measured central tendency and variability, while normality analysis checked if the data followed a normal distribution by examining skewness and kurtosis values. Correlation analysis assessed the strength and direction of relationships between variables, with the coefficient of correlation ranging from -1 to +1. Multiple regression analysis allowed the inclusion of multiple independent variables, such as gender stereotypes, work-life balance, and mentoring support, to predict the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Questionnaires were distributed to 385 employed women in Malaysia to gather data, with non-probability sampling ensuring optimal insights for the study.

Result and Discussion

This chapter involves the collection of quantitative data through questionnaires from employed women in Malaysia. The purpose is to obtain empirical data that will assess the reliability and validity of the research on the factors influencing the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia. All the data collected will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 27.0 software. The software was used to examine reliability, correlation and multilinear regressions that will detail up below this research.

Pilot Test

The questionnaire was distributed to 40 employed women in Malaysia as part of a pilot test to assess the reliability of the data collection tool. The purpose of this pilot test was to ensure that the questionnaire provided accurate and trustworthy data. The reliability analysis, as shown in Table 4.1, produced a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.798 for 20 items, indicating good internal consistency. Since Cronbach's Alpha is above the acceptable threshold of 0.7, the questionnaire is considered reliable for complete data collection.

Table 4.1. Result Of Reliability Analysis for the Pilot Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.798	20

Demographic Analysis

Based on Table 4.2, the provided data includes demographic information such as age, education qualification, marital status, work experience, occupation, category of occupation, and monthly income. There were 385 questionnaires distributed in total, but only 340 respondents for the survey. This means that there is a response rate of 88.31%.

- The largest age group in the dataset is individuals aged 21 to 30, making up 37% of the total. Individuals aged 31 to 40 years old constitute 36% of the total. Individuals aged 18 to 20 years old represent the smallest percentage of the total at 5% among the listed age groups. Since most survey respondents are 21 to 40 years old, comprising approximately 73% of the sample. This suggests a population that is relatively young.
- From an educational perspective, most respondents have obtained at least a diploma, with 89% having achieved a diploma or a higher level of education. The largest proportion is made up of respondents who possess a bachelor's degree, with 41%. The lowest percentage is for those with doctorate qualifications at 3%.
- In terms of marital status, most of the population is married, comprising 56% of the respondents, followed by 44% who were single.
- The occupational distribution shows that the largest proportion of respondents are employed in the private sector; comprising 96% of the total and the smallest proportion of respondents are self-employed, with 1% of the total.
- From the data provided, the work experience data indicates that most candidates have falling in the 4-7 years range (26%) while the lower range are less than a year and >15 years (8%) .
- The occupation category data indicates that the most prevalent occupations are junior officer/executive at 49%, intermediate officer/executive at 27%, and senior officer/executive at 15%. Managers and above represent 7.9% of the total, while operators/technicians make up 1.5%.
- The monthly income distribution reveals that 49% of the respondents earn a monthly income of RM3,000 or less. Next is dominated by the salary range of RM3,001-RM6,000, with 27% representing 93 respondents. This is followed by RM6,001-RM9,000 with 14% and RM9,0001-RM12,000 with 6% with 49 and 19 respondents each respectively. The least category is from respondents with a salary range above RM12,0001, with only 3% representing 11 respondents.

Table 4.2. Demographic Profile Distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 to 20 years old	18	5%
21 to 30 years old	126	37%
31 to 40 years old	121	36%

41 to 50 years old	56	17%
51 years old and above	19	6%
Education Qualification		
SPM and below	12	4%
Certificate / HSC / STP / STPM	26	8%
Diploma	120	35%
Bachelor's degree	140	41%
Master's degree	32	9%
Doctorate	10	3%
Marital Status		
Single	149	44%
Married	191	56%
Work experience		
Less than a year	27	8%
1-3 years	78	23%
4-7 years	88	26%
8-11 years	61	18%
12-15 years	59	17%
>15 years	27	8%
Occupation		
Self Employed	4	1%
Private Sector	327	96%
Government Sector	9	3%
Category of Occupation		
Junior Officer/executive	165	49%
Intermediate Officer/executive	93	27%
Senior Officer/executive	50	15%
Manager and above	27	8%
Operator/Technician	5	2%
Monthly Income		
RM3,000 and below	168	49%
RM3,001 - RM6,000	93	27%
RM6,001 - RM9,000	49	14%
RM9,001 - RM12,000	19	6%
RM12,001 and above	11	3%

Descriptive Statistics

Based on Table 4.3, the mean of employed women's job satisfaction is 4.152 for the 340 respondents with a standard deviation of 0.563. For job satisfaction, the mean, median, and mode are all around 4.2, indicating

a consensus among respondents that their job satisfaction tends to be in this range. This suggests that most respondents report relatively high levels of job satisfaction, with little deviation from this central value.

- Similarly, in terms of gender stereotypes, the mean, median, and mode are 1.475, 1.000, and 1.000 relatively, with the mean slightly higher than the median and mode. This indicates that while there is a central tendency towards lower scores, there is some variability in responses, with a portion of respondents reporting higher levels of agreement with gender stereotypes.
- The mean, median, and mode exhibit a high degree of proximity, indicating a close clustering, in terms of both work-life balance (4.334, 4.600 and 4.600) and mentoring support (4.330, 4.400 and 4.400). These findings indicate that most participants have a favorable perception of their work-life balance and mentoring support, with minimal variation from the average values. Collectively, these measures of central tendency suggest that, on average, survey participants generally express favorable views regarding job satisfaction, work-life balance, and mentoring support. However, there is some variation in responses to gender stereotypes.
- Upon analyzing the skewness and kurtosis values in the data, the distributions for job satisfaction, work-life balance, and mentoring support display non-normal characteristics. The skewness values for these variables are beyond the acceptable range of -1 to 1, indicating significant asymmetry in the distributions. Job satisfaction, work-life balance, and mentoring support all have negative skewness values (-2.026, -2.327, and -2.262, respectively). This means that there is a higher concentration of respondents reporting higher levels of satisfaction, better work-life balance, and greater mentoring support.
- Similarly, the kurtosis values for these variables surpass the normal range, suggesting a distribution with heavier tails and a more pronounced peak compared to a normal distribution. The kurtosis values for job satisfaction, work-life balance, and mentoring support are 5.496, 5.785, and 4.905, respectively.

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics for The Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness
Job Satisfaction	4.152	4.200	4.200	0.563	5.496	-2.026
Gender Stereotypes	1.475	1.000	1.000	0.871	2.270	1.850
Work-life Balance	4.334	4.600	4.600	0.632	5.785	-2.327
Mentoring Support	4.330	4.400	4.400	0.708	4.905	-2.262

These findings suggest that the distributions exhibit leptokurtosis, characterized by a higher concentration of scores near the mean and heavier tails compared to a normal distribution. Overall, these findings indicate that respondents generally express positive views regarding job satisfaction, work-life balance, and mentoring support. However, the distributions of these variables significantly differ from a normal distribution.

Scale Measurement

Normality Analysis

The study assesses the job satisfaction among employed women employee as the dependent variable by conducting a normality test to determine if the data follows a normal distribution. Table 4.4 displays the outcome of the normality test. The Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests are commonly used for testing normality in statistical analysis. The Shapiro-Wilk test is recommended for small datasets with fewer than fifty respondents, while the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is recommended for large sample sizes. With a sample size of 340 respondents, the study focused on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Since the p-value is

less than 0.05, the result is significant, and the data is normally distributed.

Table 4.4 Normality Analysis

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	.228	340	.000	.809	340	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Reliability Analysis

The Cronbach's Alpha is primarily utilized to assess the reliability of all variables in the research. It is also referred to as the Coefficient Alpha. Based on Table 4.5, the Cronbach's alpha for gender stereotypes (0.964), Work-life Balance (0.852), mentoring support (0.906) and job satisfaction among Employed Women (0.709) are greater than 0.7, indicating high internal consistency of reliability for entire 340 responses. If any of the variables does not exceed a certain threshold, it should be eliminated from the research paper. Subsequently, the reliability test should be rerun, resulting in an increase of the remaining variables to a minimum of 0.70.

Table 4.5 Reliability Analysis of Studied Variables in the Main Survey

Variable's Name	Cronbach's Alpha Score	No. of Items
IV1: Gender Stereotypes	0.964	5
IV2: Work-life Balance	0.852	5
IV3: Mentoring Support	0.906	5
DV: Job Satisfaction	0.709	5

Inferential Analysis

Inferential statistics assist in identifying the independent variables influencing the dependent variable and make conclusions based on them. The hypothetical deductive method requires that hypotheses are capable of being proven false. Null hypotheses are generated as an outcome. Formulate a null hypothesis (H0) to refute the acceptance of alternative hypothesis H1. It is deemed accurate until statistical evidence through hypothesis testing indicates otherwise. Inferential statistics offer crucial statistical evidence (Stapor, 2020).

Correlations Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was performed, and the results are presented in Table 4.6. According to Schober, Boer and Schwarte (2018), the analysis elucidates the correlation and level of significance between the dependent and independent variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to 1. A value closer to 1 indicates a strong relationship, while a value closer to 0 indicates a weak correlation.

- Based on the Table 4.6, there is a significant negative association ($p < 0.01$) between the gender stereotypes and job satisfaction with -0.454. This demonstrates that when gender stereotypes are higher, job satisfaction rates get reduced.
- Gender stereotypes also has a significant negative association between work-life balance (-0.626) and mentoring support (-0.584) at the 0.01 significance level. This indicates that higher levels of gender stereotypes are associated with lower levels of work-life balance and mentoring support.
- A slightly high association could be noticeable between work-life balance and mentoring support, showing a strong positive association of 0.786. This implies that higher levels of work-life balance are associated with higher levels of mentoring support.

- Work-life balance and mentoring support have significant positive association with job satisfaction as 0.572 and 0.570 respectively. It could be interpreted that higher levels of Job Satisfaction are associated with higher levels of work-life balance and mentoring support.

Table 4.6: Correlation Analysis between Dependent Variable and Independent Variables

		Gender Stereotypes	Work-life Balance	Mentoring Support	Job Satisfaction
Gender Stereotypes	Pearson Correlation	1	-.626**	-.584**	-.454**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	340	340	340	340
Work-life Balance	Pearson Correlation	-.626**	1	.786**	.572**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	340	340	340	340
Mentoring Support	Pearson Correlation	-.584**	.786**	1	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	340	340	340	340
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.454**	.572**	.570**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	340	340	340	340

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Model Summary: In multiple regression analysis, the R-square value indicates the proportion of the total variation in the independent variables that is explained by the dependent variable (Wahab and Khong, 2019). This study will examine the R-square value to determine how much of the total variation in the independent variables can explain the dependent variable. The model explanation in Table 4.7 shows the R-square value of 0.373, which is equivalent to 37.3%. The three independent variables account for 37.3% of the variance in the dependent variable, job satisfaction. The rest 62.7% of the factors are not covered in this.

Table 4.7 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.611 ^a	.373	.367	.448

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mentoring Support, Gender Stereotypes, Work-life Balance

ANOVA: ANOVA is a statistical method used to determine the significance of the relationship between independent variables and a dependent variable. Referring to Table 4.8, the F-value in the ANOVA shows 66.549 and the result of analysis indicated that p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and resulted that the regression model of the research is significant.

Table 4.8: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.100	3	13.367	66.549	.000 ^b
	Residual	67.488	336	.201		
	Total	107.588	339			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mentoring Support, Gender Stereotypes, Work-life Balance

Coefficients: The multiple regression equation is derived from Table 4.9. When creating an equation to predict a dependent variable using multiple independent variables, the unstandardized coefficient (B), also known as the regression coefficient constant or slope, is typically utilized.

The multiple regression equation used in this report is as follows:

Job satisfaction = 2.213 + (-0.074) (Gender stereotypes) + 0.244 (Work-life balance) + 0.229 (Mentoring support).

This suggests that one unit increase in gender stereotypes may result in a 0.074 drop in job satisfaction, and this impact is significant with a p-value of 0.043 ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, every increase in work-life balance and mentoring support causes an increase in job satisfaction with a significant impact, with a p-value equal to zero ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4.9: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.213	.260		8.506	.000	1.701	2.724
	Gender Stereotypes	-.074	.037	-.115	-2.036	.043	-.146	-.003
	Work-life Balance	.244	.066	.274	3.696	.000	.114	.374
	Mentoring Support	.229	.057	.288	4.039	.000	.117	.341

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Moreover, indicated in Table 4.9 according to the standardized Beta coefficient of the regression model it is indicated that mentoring support has the highest influencing job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia. A one standard deviation increase in mentoring support is associated with a 0.288 standard deviation increase in job satisfaction. It is then followed by work-life balance. This indicates that for a one standard deviation increase in work-life Balance, the Job Satisfaction is expected to increase by 0.274 standard deviations. Lastly, gender stereotypes has the least influencing power among the variables considered but eventually still statistically significant in indicating the influence towards job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia. This indicates that for a one standard deviation increase in gender stereotypes, the job satisfaction is expected to decrease by 0.115 standard deviations. As a general, all the independent variables to be statistically significant.

Hypotheses Results

Based on the multiple regression analysis, all three hypotheses related to each independent variable are

supported, as all the independent variables have corresponding significant value below 0.05. and indicated as the independent variables are significantly influence the dependent variable. The summary of confirmation hypotheses are displayed in the table 4.10.

Table 4.10. Summary Hypothesis Results

Hypotheses	Result
H1: Gender stereotypes has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in private sector Malaysia.	Accepted
H2: The work-life balance has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in private sector Malaysia.	Accepted
H3: Mentoring support has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in private sector Malaysia.	Accepted

Conclusion and Recommendation

The research concludes by incorporating a statistical summary, discussing the research question, and presenting major findings from previous data analysis. The limitations or challenges faced by the researchers will be addressed. Additional recommendations will be provided for further research and study.

Summary of Statistical Analysis

According to the statistical analysis in section 4, after being distributed to 40 employed women in Malaysia, the questionnaire was tested for reliability, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.798, which signifies good reliability. Analyzed 340 completed questionnaires to identify demographic profiles, showing that most participants were young, married, and working in Malaysia. Most respondents had at least a diploma, and the distribution of income was displayed. Descriptive statistics showed that employed women had high job satisfaction levels, with average scores of approximately 4.2 on a scale from 1 to 5.

For the Pearson correlation, work-life balance and mentoring support have been shown to have significant positive relationships with job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia. This means that as work-life balance and mentoring support increase, job satisfaction tends to increase as well. Additionally, there is a moderately significant negative relationship between gender stereotypes and job satisfaction. This indicates that as the level of gender stereotypes increase, the level of job satisfaction tends to decrease among employed women in Malaysia.

The multiple regression model showed an R-square value of 0.373, indicating that approximately 37.3% of the variance in job satisfaction can be explained by the three independent variables. The ANOVA results indicated that the regression model was statistically significant ($F = 66.549$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that the independent variables collectively predict job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia. All three independent variables are influencing the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia.

Summary of Hypotheses

H1: Gender stereotypes has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.

Based on the analysis, the calculated P-value less than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted, The result confirms that the job satisfaction among employed women had influenced by the gender stereotypes as most of the respondents think that traditional gender roles and biases associated with women in the workplace affect their job satisfaction. These perceptions may include beliefs that women are less competent or capable than men, leading to fewer opportunities for advancement, lower salaries, and less respect in the workplace

(Morris et al., 2020). Additionally, gender stereotypes may contribute to the barrier for women in their career progression. (Dollija et. al 2021).

H2: The work-life balance has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.

Referring to the analysis, the hypothesis is accepted because P-value less than 0.05. It indicates a significant influence of work-life balance on job satisfaction. This implies that the job satisfaction among employed women had directly influenced by the availability and adequacy of work-life balance initiatives and practices. Respondents who reported higher levels of satisfaction with their work-life balance tended to also report higher overall job satisfaction. This suggests that employed women in Malaysia perceive a direct link between their ability to effectively manage their work responsibilities and personal life commitments, and their overall level of job satisfaction. For job satisfaction which considered by the research of work-life balance (Sitorus, Raharjo and Kusumawati, 2018), there is a relationship between them. According to Mani et.al (2020), it is asserted that work-life balance has a direct positive relationship with job satisfaction. Because of work-life balance for working women, so it can impact the job satisfaction as well (Fatmawati and Irbayuni, 2021).

H3: Mentoring support has a significantly influence the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector.

With a calculated P-value less than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that mentoring support has a positive influence on job satisfaction. This outcome is supporting the studies of Biehle et al. (2020) which align with the mentoring support in women. There is an article stating the positive relationship between mentoring support and job satisfaction which showed the higher degree of satisfaction with one-to-one mentoring relationships (Tania Carlson Reis and Grady, 2020).

Implications of the Study

Organizations can use the findings to develop policies that promote gender equality and challenge stereotypes in the workplace. This includes programs to address unconscious biases and support women's career advancement. Employers can improve work-life balance by offering flexible schedules, childcare, and wellness programs, fostering a supportive work environment. By focusing on these areas, organizations can enhance talent retention, job satisfaction, and productivity. The results can also guide advocacy efforts, helping policymakers push for reforms that address gender discrimination and promote equality in the workplace.

The results of this research can enrich academic studies by emphasizing key factors influencing employee job satisfaction, providing a basis for further exploration of job satisfaction among employed women. It suggests future research directions, such as examining the effects of organizational culture, leadership styles, and societal norms. Additionally, the study contributes to scholarly discourse by identifying literature gaps and proposing areas for deeper investigation.

Limitation of the Study

A key limitation of the research is its reliance on self-reported data, which may be affected by response and social desirability biases, as participants might provide socially acceptable answers rather than accurate reflections of their experiences. This could affect the precision and reliability of the findings. Additionally, the results may have limited generalizability, as the study focuses on employed women in Malaysia, and factors such as cultural differences and organizational practices may influence these relationships in other contexts. The research's cross-sectional design also limits its ability to determine causality. While it highlights connections between gender stereotypes, work-life balance, mentoring support, and job satisfaction, it cannot confirm causation or account for other influencing factors. Longitudinal studies or experimental designs would be needed to gain a deeper understanding of the cause-and-effect dynamics at play.

Recommendations for Future Studies

The research's R-square value of 0.373 indicates that the three independent variables explain 37.3% of the variation in job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia, leaving 62.7% unexplained. This suggests that other factors may influence job satisfaction, and future studies should explore additional independent variables. A mixed-method approach, incorporating interviews, can provide deeper insights into respondents' reasoning and reveal overlooked information. Focus group discussions can further enrich the data by gathering diverse perspectives, fostering impartial viewpoints, and uncovering unexpected details. Additionally, job satisfaction is not easily identified or improved in a short period. Future research could employ longitudinal studies to track changes in the relationships between work-life balance and job satisfaction over time, improving accuracy through pre- and post-research analyses.

Conclusion

This research investigated the factors influencing job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia. There are questionnaires invitation had sent for working women in Malaysia. All the collected data were tested by the normality, reliability, correlation, and regression test using the SSPS program. Through the analysis, it was found gender stereotypes, work-life balance and mentoring support significantly affect the job satisfaction among employed women in Malaysia's private sector. There are limitations and recommendations for future researchers interested in studying a related field. All the findings addressed the research questions and successfully met the research 's objectives.

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Disclosure of Interest

No Conflict of Interest

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The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article [and/or] its supplementary materials.

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