

Saudi Female health workers job performance: Examining the Influence of job burnout (JB), work-life balance (WLB), and work environment (WE)

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Abstract

Work-life balance is becoming increasingly popular as female employees struggle to reconcile their personal and professional lives, leading to burnout. Providing adequate facilities and a positive work environment enhances job performance. The present study employs a quantitative methodology to investigate the investigated variables and their relative relationship. In Saudi Arabia, questionnaires were distributed to female healthcare workers. 200 finalized questionnaires were processed as competent and complete responses for data analysis. SPSS and AMOS statistical techniques were utilized for data analysis and hypothesis testing. WLB and job performance (JP) and WE and JP were found to have a statistically significant relationship, according to the results. JP was a significant moderator between JB and WLB but did not affect the relationship between JB and WE. The present study has different theoretical and practical benefits as it contributes to expanding knowledge and literature regarding the variables under investigation. Practically, the research provides the health sector of Saudi Arabia with valuable insights regarding the importance of work culture and work-life balance in fostering a caring and considerate environment for their employees.

Keywords: Work-life balance, job burnout, performance, organizational culture, stress, mental health.

1. Introduction

The global healthcare industry relies heavily on the contributions of female healthcare employees. In addition to providing essential patient care, female healthcare professionals are responsible for most nursing and other crucial care tasks (De Henau, Himmelweit, & Perrons, 2017; Himmelstein & Venkataramani, 2019; Shabir & Gani, 2020). Despite their essential role, female healthcare workers face several challenges in the industry, including work-life balance, non-supportive work environments, job burnout, and other factors that can negatively impact their overall job performance

(Bani-Issa et al., 2020; Çelmeçe & Menekay, 2020; De Hert, 2020). The professional effectiveness of female healthcare providers is diminished due to job fatigue, which is a consequence of persistent and long-term job stress. Work-life equilibrium for women in this industry is also unhealthy and places them under substantial stress (Gragnano, Simbula, & Miglioretti, 2020; Shabir, Khan, & Gani, 2022; Starmer et al., 2019).

In addition, the work environment is unwelcoming due to the lack of autonomy, the heavy burden, the absence of social support, the long work hours, and the low overall job security. All of these factors substantially impact the efficacy and satisfaction of female healthcare professionals. Overall, women in healthcare are subjected to high levels of job-related stress due to their physical and emotional labor, resulting in unbalanced work and personal lives, increased burnout, adverse mental and physical health, and decreased job performance (Asante et al., 2019; Çelmeçe & Menekay, 2020; Chemali et al., 2019; Purwanto, 2020).

The context and scope of this paper's research are Saudi Arabian female healthcare professionals. Determining the effect of work-life balance, work environment, and job burnout on the job performance of Saudi female health professionals is, therefore, the problem. Social and cultural barriers such as gender inequality, workplace discrimination, stereotyping, etc., all of which contribute to hostile work environments, are pervasive in the context of Saudi female healthcare providers (Almaghaslah et al., 2019; Rizvi & Hussain, 2022)). Inadequate support for working mothers is also a significant barrier that generates conflicts in work-life balance and can harm job performance (Abou-Moghli & Al-Abdallah, 2019; Al-Katufi et al., 2020; Alsadaan et al., 2021). Providing adequate support can enhance women's job satisfaction and performance (Al-Alawi et al., 2021; Cherif, 2020; Helmi & Abunar, 2021). In addition, long-term conflicts between work and family can lead women to leave the workforce or negatively affect their mental or physical health. Fair management, supportive workplace policies, and transparent communication have never been so crucial. Considering the significance of these factors, the current study seeks to investigate the impact of work-life balance and work environment on Saudi Female Health Workers' Job Performance and the role of job burnout in these relationships. Therefore, the following objectives are derived from the objective.

- How does work-life balance impact Saudi Female Health Workers' Job Performance?
- How does the work environment impact Saudi Female Health Workers' Job Performance?
- What is the moderation role of job burnout on the relationship between work-life balance and Saudi Female Health Workers' Job Performance?
- What is the moderation role of job burnout on the relationship between the work environment and Saudi Female Health Workers' Job Performance?

The current study makes numerous contributions. First, the study examines the job efficacy of Saudi Arabian female healthcare professionals. The Saudi Arabian female workforce is understudied in organizational and managerial literature. Second, the role of job fatigue in moderating the job performance of healthcare workers will be the subject of additional research as the existing literature is expanded (Al Sabei et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2020; Fasbender, Van der Heijden, & Grimshaw, 2019; Wu, Hu, & Zheng, 2019). The influence of these variables on job performance is mapped based on the theory of work-life balance and organizational culture. By analyzing the job performance of female healthcare workers in Saudi Arabia, the researcher emphasizes the need for policies that facilitate work-life balance for women in the workforce. The remaining components of the paper are the literature review, methodology, results and analysis, and discussion and conclusion.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical background

Globally, the proportion of women entering the healthcare profession has increased. Today, women hold various positions in the healthcare industry, including those in hospitals and medical education contexts. Even though the times have changed and women now work in numerous organizations to provide their skills and services, female employees continue encountering numerous workplace-related obstacles. Factors such as workplace environment, part-time employment, and schedule flexibility can assist women in obtaining superior facilities (ALobaid et al.,

2020). According to [Albejaidi and Nair \(2019\)](#), Saudi nationals comprise 44% of the health workforce, and 29.5% of physicians are expected to be employed by health systems. Females are grossly underrepresented in all healthcare-related professions, except for nursing, where Saudi women are readily available. Consequently, the health workforce statistics reveal disparities in gender selection, skill provision, and accessibility.

Quality of work life (QWL) is a worldwide phenomenon used to assess the emotional condition of employees regarding their work and personal lives. The QWL is based on several factors, including the job's content, the working environment for employees, a description of their job activities, career advancement opportunities, workplace safety, job-related stress, incomes, and, most importantly, the management of work and life balance ([Alreshidi & Alsharari, 2021](#)).

2.2. Impact of Work-Life Balance on job performance (JP)

The character of work-life depends on work-life balance (WLB), which is essential for producing satisfactory results at work. However, research indicates that work-life balance significantly impacts job performance. Work-life conflicts occur when work interferes with family life, which is a work-to-family conflict, or when family interferes with work life, which is a family-to-work conflict ([Subbarayalu, Prabakaran, & Devalapalli, 2021](#)). Work-life balance concerns the care of children and families or working less and working wise strategies ([Houston, 2005](#)). This will provide employees a new beginning and motivate them to work harder towards their professional goals. To assess the significance and relevance of work-life balance about work-health and work-family balance. [Gragnano et al. \(2020\)](#) investigated the findings and concluded that health is crucial to maintaining WLB. Therefore, employees should be aware of the influence of health on their job performance. Moreover, work-health balance is not an age-related consideration; it is recommended that all employees view it as a crucial factor.

The theory of work-family conflict, as presented by [Barnett and Gareis \(2006\)](#), clarifies the perspective and position of women in society. In the past, sex-role attitudes were more prevalent than they are today, and women were considered the

only responsible gender for household labor and activities. Married women with children who take on additional responsibilities, such as employment, tend to experience increased melancholy or workload. Generally, women are responsible for household chores and infant care, which are her primary responsibilities. Therefore, family and daily life activities significantly impact women's working environment, adversely affecting job performance.

H1: *Work-life balance has a significant effect on job performance*

2.3. Role of Working Environment and its Effect on job performance

The working environment and its effect on job performance play a significant role in determining employees' loyalty, interest, and commitment to organizations. According to [Wiskow, Albrecht, and De Pietro \(2010\)](#), substandard working conditions can potentially compromise the health care supply, the workforce, and the quality of patient care. A good and attractive work environment encourages healthcare professionals to join healthcare teams and remain in the health workforce field for extended periods. Therefore, work environments aid in the recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals. Similarly, if the working environment is unfavorable for employees, it has negative consequences for both the employees and the organizations. Bullying in the workplace has been linked to causing severe tension, anxiety, and depression at work, resulting in high costs for both employers and employees, according to [Salin \(2015\)](#). In addition, a stressful work environment has detrimental effects on employees' health and job performance. According to [Thayer et al. \(2010\)](#), the work environment may also influence the physiological stress response by influencing heart rate variations or the morning rise in cortisol levels.

The working environment significantly impacts both genders, but in this male-dominated society, women are far from attaining equal employment privileges. Through their research, [Foss, Woll, and Moilanen \(2013\)](#) determined that men's ideas, innovations, and inventive planning are more likely to be captured or implemented than women's. As a result, working environments should be equitable and equal for all employees, as they significantly impact job loyalty, job satisfaction, commitment,

and performance. Furthermore, [Raziq and Maulabakhsh \(2015\)](#) asserted a positive correlation between the working environment and employees' job satisfaction levels, which ultimately leads to outstanding job performance.

H2: *Work environment has a significant impact on job performance*

2.4. Moderating effects of job burnout on job performance

Burnout syndrome is characterized by psychological, emotional, and physical stress from work-related stressors. Previous research demonstrated that healthcare employees are more susceptible to burnout syndrome, which results in a lack of motivation, abuse, and low self-esteem. It eventually leads to a higher rate of employee attrition and absence from work and causes them to commit more medical errors. Burnout results from long-term work stress, manifesting as anxiety, mood changes, insomnia, and irritability ([Al-Omari et al., 2019](#); [Dugar & Fox, 2022](#)). Therefore, the causes of job fatigue should be evaluated and measured to improve employee job performance. [ALYami et al. \(2021\)](#) also suggested that monitoring the factors contributing to exhaustion and stress levels among medical healthcare professionals in various fields, specialties, and levels is essential. Increasing levels of tension or job burnout result in low employee satisfaction. [Halawani, Halawani, and Beyari \(2021\)](#) also asserted, based on their research on Saudi healthcare employees, that an increase in job burnout, anxiety, stress, depression, and overload on staff leads to the production of low- or poor-quality care, which in turn impacts their job performance. In addition, sociodemographic factors such as the nature, duration, and burden of work, age, gender, salary, and evaluation rates directly affect employee job performance. Employee fatigue affects their job performance and also agitates their mental health status. According to [Gorji \(2011\)](#), there is a direct correlation between occupational stress and employee health. Therefore, it is necessary to treat it seriously, and precautionary measures should be taken in advance to mitigate its adverse effects.

H3: *Job burnout significantly moderates the association between work-life balance and job performance.*

H4: *Job burnout significantly moderates the association between work environment and job performance.*

3. Methods

The researcher examined the impact of job fatigue, work-life balance, and work environment on Saudi female healthcare workers' job performance in Saudi Arabia. A quantitative research approach was used in this study to examine this relationship. The researcher has adopted quantitative techniques and methods for data collection and analysis.

3.1. Research Design

This study's research design is based on the popular and well-known research design paradigm known as the "research onion" (Saunders et al., 2015). By adhering to this paradigm, the research has adopted the appropriate approaches and techniques for an efficient methodology.

3.2. Target Population

Saudi Arabian healthcare department employees are the population of interest for this investigation. This study focuses primarily on female healthcare professionals, but to reduce gender bias in the study's findings, the researcher collected data from both male and female employees. This also aided the researcher in understanding the perspective of male employees regarding the investigation topic. This study employed a non-probability convenience sampling method to collect data from its intended respondents. The information was collected via an online survey. The study only collected information from participants who volunteered to participate.

3.3. Time Horizon

According to the time frame, the current investigation is cross-sectional. It indicates that the researcher collected the numerical data without a break or delay (Wang & Cheng, 2020).

3.4. Data Collection Tool

This study employs a survey as its research methodology. Initially, the data was collected via a closed-ended survey. Google Forms was used to create the questionnaire.

These questions were developed by repurposing question items from previously adopted measurement instruments, which were then modified to fit the context of the present study. The questionnaire contained a total of 20 questions. The researcher emailed the respondents the questionnaire and requested their consent to participate in the study. From a sample of 550 respondents, 320 responses were collected, which were then reduced to 200 after a thorough preliminary examination of all responses.

3.5. Data Analysis

For this analysis, the current research utilized the statistical software AMOS, with which the study's hypothesis and theoretical model were analyzed, and the results were interpreted.

3.6. Measurement Scales

The researcher measured four variables in the present study: job performance, work-life balance, work environment, and job fatigue. Previous researchers' measurement scales were obtained and modified to measure these variables. The study employed these scales due to their reliability and authenticity, as they were rigorously tested before their first use. Each survey question contains five options from a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 = firmly disagree to 1 = strongly agree (Tanujaya, Prahmana, & Mumu, 2022). The information regarding measurement scales is provided in the table below:

Variable	Nature of Variable	No. of items	Adopted from	Example of an item
Work-life Balance	Independent	4	(Banu & Duraipandian, 2014)	"My organization allows me to work from home when required."
Work Environment	Independent	5	(Moos, 1994)	"Management uses rules and pressure to keep employees under control."
Job Performance	Dependent	5	(Villagrasa et al., 2019)	"On my initiative, I started a new task when my old tasks were completed."
Job Burnout	Moderator	6	(Srivastava, Misra, & Madan, 2019)	"I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with."

4. Results

4.1. Demographic characteristics of participants

Table 1 presents the respondents' demographic information, including participation rates by gender, age, and experience. The sample consisted of 200 accurate responses, 50.5% of the interviewees were males, and 49.5% were women. The age of survey respondents was also evaluated as a demographic factor. When the survey data was collected, 13.5% of the participants were under 25, followed by 32.5% in the 26 to 30 years category and 37.5% in the 31 to 35 years category. 16.5 percent of respondents were older than 35. In addition to demographic information, respondent experiences are included in the demographic data. 11.5% of the respondents had less than two years of experience. 52.5% of participants, or the plurality, had between two and five years of experience. 32.5% of the population was between 5 and 8 years old. Moreover, 3.5% of respondents have more than eight years of experience.

Table 1. Demographic data

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	101	50.5
	Female	99	49.5
	Total	200	100.0
Age	Less than 25Y	27	13.5
	26 to 30Y	65	32.5
	31 to 35Y	75	37.5
	More than 35Y	33	16.5
	Total	200	100.0
Experience	Less than 2 Years	23	11.5
	2 to 5 years	105	52.5
	5 to 8 years	65	32.5
	More Than 8 years	7	3.5
	Total	200	100.0

4.2. Descriptive Summary

In addition to other descriptive statistics, the data's mean, standard deviation, and skewness are presented in [Table 2](#), along with other descriptive statistics. On a scale from 1 to 5, each item was measured. All constructs, including JP, WLB, WE, and JB, have mean values greater than 3.5, with JP having the highest mean at 3.8. Second, we examined the data's skewness to determine whether it was normal. The values ranged from -2 to 2, as shown in the table below, which satisfies the requirement ([Hair Jr et al., 2021](#)).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error
JP	200	1.00	5.00	3.8340	.93273	-1.275	.172
WLB	200	1.25	5.00	3.7863	.92678	-.972	.172
WE	200	1.20	5.00	3.7380	.87268	-.881	.172
JB	200	1.33	5.17	3.5758	.87122	-.570	.172
Valid N (listwise)	200						

4.3. Factor Loadings

The researcher also conducted the KMO and Bartlett's tests and concluded that the data were sufficient. [Table 3](#) displays the sample adequacy and the effective correspondence in variance contribution. As indicated by the sample's acceptable KMO & Bartlett test value of .958, the collected data were sufficient for evaluating the variance inquiry and testing factor loadings. The significance of Bartlett's test ($p=0.000$) demonstrates that the correlation between items across various included components does not form an identity matrix, as shown in [Table 3](#). [Table 4](#) displays the factor loadings' values. There are no redundant items or cross-loading issues, as each of the four variables contains items that appear in their respective column.

Table 3: KMO & Bartlett test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.958
	Approx. Chi-Square	2662.555
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix^a				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
JP1	.713			
JP2	.780			
JP3	.772			
JP4	.741			
JP5	.745			
WLB1			.730	
WLB2			.711	
WLB3			.657	
WLB4			.710	
WE1		.533		
WE2		.781		
WE3		.642		
WE4		.465		
WE5		.521		
JB1				.838
JB2				.594
JB3				.456
JB4				.647
JB5				.851
JB6				.639

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

4.4. Validity Analysis

The scale's internal consistency is assessed via convergent validity, which is quantified via composite reliability and extracted average variance. The respective thresholds for both are 0.70 and 0.50. [Table 5](#) demonstrates that both criteria are

satisfied, establishing convergent validity. We examined CR and AVE to ascertain convergent validity. CR readings were observed to exceed the measure's defined minimum threshold of 0.7. AVE, which displays the average squared loadings of each construct, must be greater than 0.5. (Iqbal & Mia, 2020). This condition was also satisfied, establishing the convergent validity of the data.

Table 5: Reliability & Validity Test

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	JPR	WRE	WRLB	JBR
JPR	0.938	0.754	0.880	0.944	0.868			
WRE	0.815	0.468	0.832	0.816	0.912***	0.684		
WRLB	0.854	0.593	0.880	0.855	0.938***	0.901***	0.770	
JBR	0.829	0.449	0.823	0.834	0.830***	0.907***	0.842***	0.670

4.5. Confirmatory factor analysis

CFA was utilized to assess the degree of compatibility. The adequacy of the model was determined based on the indicators outlined in Table 6. The results indicate that the ranges matched the threshold range, demonstrating that the measurement model was appropriate, as depicted in the figure.

Table 6: Model fitness

CFA Indicators	CMIN/DF	GFI	IFI	CFI	RMSEA
Threshold Value	≤ 3	≥ 0.80	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≤ 0.08
Observed Value	1.571	0.884	0.964	0.964	0.054

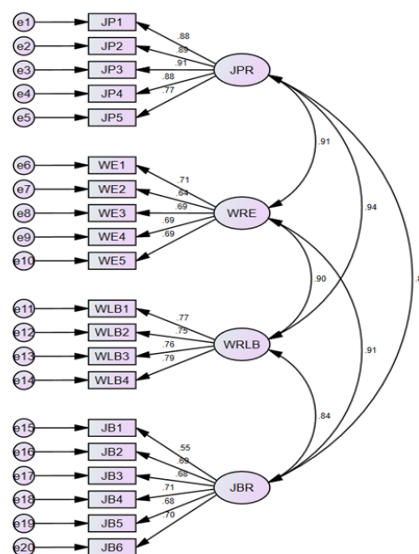


Figure 1. CFA

4.6. Structural Equation Modelling

Using structural equation modeling, the hypothesis has been evaluated. With a p-value of .007, the influence of JP on WLB has been determined to be significant. The impact of JP on WE is also considerable.

Table 7. Hypotheses testing

	Parameter		Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
JP	<---	WLB	.576	.449	.688	.007
JP	<---	WE	.363	.251	.474	.012



Figure 2: SEM

Table 8 illustrates the moderation results between variables. JP has become a significant moderator between JB and WLB. At the same time, JP has become an insignificant moderator between JB and WE.

Table 8. Moderation effects of Job burnout

	Parameter		Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
ZJP	<---	ZJBXWLB	-1.366	-2.573	-.604	.009
ZJP	<---	ZJBXWE	.234	-.959	2.035	.734

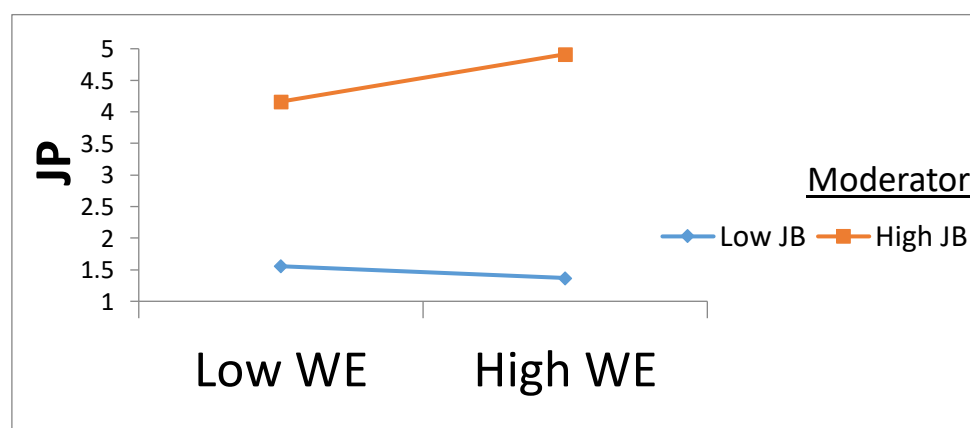


Figure 3: Moderation of JB between WE and JP

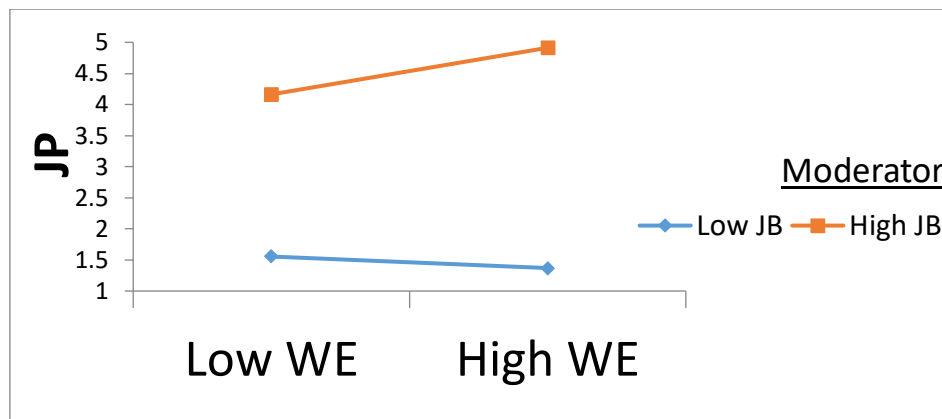


Figure 5: Moderation of JB between JP and WLB

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study analyzed the job performance of Saudi female health professionals and examined the impact of job burnout, work-life balance, and work environment. The findings indicate that JP has a substantial effect on WLB and WE. JP has served as a powerful moderator between JB and WLB.

According to [Kerdpitak and Jermstittiparsert \(2020\)](#), work-life balance is establishing a balance between one's career, family obligations, and other private interests. It examines workers' perception of a healthy balance between their personal and professional existence. It illustrates how individuals should execute their personal and professional obligations to avoid situations of overlap. In a dynamic workplace, employees can balance professional and personal responsibilities. Organizations must resolve the issue of work-life balance to boost employee performance and effectiveness. Indeed, employees with a healthy work-life balance frequently express their appreciation to their employers. They give the company their all to demonstrate their gratitude, enhancing job performance. Therefore, a healthy work-life balance worker may be highly effective and perform well ([French et al., 2020](#)). According to [Preena \(2021\)](#), finding a healthy balance between work and family obligations has become exceedingly challenging for nearly every organization in the modern era. In addition, a lack of work-life balance negatively affects employee performance. It is crucial to comprehend how work-life balance impacts employee performance. Individuals with a work-life balance are more satisfied with their jobs because

they can concentrate on their work while in the office and do not have to stress about personal matters. Additionally, a healthy work-life balance will increase employee engagement, thereby preventing issues with employee turnover (Silaban & Margaretha, 2021).

According to Zhenjing et al. (2022), when employees work in a pleasant environment, they dedicate themselves more completely to their responsibilities, ultimately improving their performance. Consequently, ecological systems have much to offer in terms of modifying the workspace. In response, employees make every effort to achieve the goals set by their employers and to function effectively in a positive work environment. Employees spend a considerable amount of time at work, and the environment profoundly impacts their performance. Work efficacy is more likely to increase when employees are satisfied with their workplace (Wang, Zhang, & Chun, 2022). Hafeez et al. (2019) noted that an unsuitable and disagreeable workplace environment causes anxiety.

Additionally, it contributes to employee mistakes. In addition, deplorable working conditions result in underutilizing employees' potential. Additionally, it increases job-related tension among employees. Burnout has a direct negative effect on the job performance of younger competent individuals. According to Lemonaki et al. (2021), burned-out employees struggle to satisfy the requirements of their roles because they are too physiologically, cognitively, and emotionally exhausted to do so. This leads to substandard work performance. Those who are exhausted also begin to treat their employment insensitively. They cannot exert effort in the workplace due to thoughts of leaving and detachment, resulting in subpar performance.

6. Implications of the study

Implications of the theory are essential to the significance of the current study. This study examines the connections between job performance, work-life balance, and the work environment. This study is an expansion of the work of several previous scholars. It strengthens the foundation of previous research on the significant topic by providing more comprehensive perspectives and evaluations. Given the lack of

literature to support the present theory in the Saudi context, this work has substantial theoretical implications, particularly for Saudi Arabia. The purpose of the research, which is to examine the effect of a pleasant work environment on employee productivity, is to add to the existing corpus of knowledge theoretically. From a practical standpoint, this study suggests that firms should focus on providing a positive work environment to improve employee performance. In the same way, a productive work environment encourages people to strive for success, and businesses should focus on enhancing employees' abilities to achieve success through a positive work environment.

7. Limitations of the study and future directions

While this study contributes substantially to the body of knowledge, it does have limitations that can be addressed in future research. The first disadvantage is its cross-sectional structure prevents us from presuming cause-and-effect relationships. Future research should focus on recreating this model using multiple research strategies, as this could contribute to a deeper comprehension of longitudinal study methodology. This study utilized a limited number of businesses, and its geographical scope was limited to Saudi Arabian businesses. Additional research must investigate larger sample sizes and cross-national industries for more consistent data. We have just considered one aspect of the working environment; in the future, we should investigate additional categories of working conditions. In addition, if a larger sample size is selected for this investigation in the future, it will be able to provide more comprehensive evaluations and perspectives on how the working environment influences employee performance. The study recommends that future research incorporates data from newcomers because the fact that this study relied solely on data from experienced personnel raises concerns about the possibility of information bias. Finally, future research should investigate how work-life balance and job satisfaction influence unethical behavior. Unhappy employees with an imbalanced work-life balance are likelier to engage in deviant behavior.

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