Interactive Effects of Decent Work Practices, Individual Needs Satisfaction and Self-recovery Strategies on Employee Well-being

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Abstract

Though employee well-being has been studied from different perspectives in the existing literature, there have hardly been any studies that have considered employee well-being from the perspective of decent work. Therefore, this paper develops three arguments based on the Psychology of Working Theory and the effort recovery model. First, the study establishes the effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being. Then, the role of individual needs satisfaction is considered as a mediator, while finally, the study addresses the moderating effect of self-recovery strategies. The study adopts a quantitative and cross-sectional survey approach. Based on the convenience sampling technique, a self-administered questionnaire was administered to 324 operational-level employees in the Sri Lankan apparel industry. The data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling with AMOS. The findings reveal that perceived decent work practices have a significant impact on employee well-being, and that this relationship is partially and fully mediated by the fulfillment of survival needs and self-determination needs, respectively. Self-recovery strategies strengthen the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. Therefore, this study enriches the Psychology of Working Theory by adding self-recovery strategies as a moderator. Hence, the study recommends that practitioners establish an appropriate working environment for their employees, one that provides sufficient opportunities to experience decent work and that encourages self-recovery strategies.

Keywords: Decent work, Employee well-being, Individual needs satisfaction, Self-recovery strategies, Psychology of Working Theory.

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Introduction

In recent years, organisations across the world have been operating in a highly uncertain and competitive environment, which is subject to sudden changes. Increased competition, advances in technology, diversification of the workforce and work intensification are some of the changes which are highly diverse and related to a vast range of issues (George et al., 2016). These issues impact the work environment (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2012), and consequentially, employee well-being as well, since working adults spend at least one third of their lives in their workplaces (Jayasinghe, 2017). However, despite organisations having recognised their employees as the greatest potential they have to acquire competitive advantages, employers have not looked out of the box to find sustainable ways to enhance employee well-being (Jayasinghe, 2017). In Sri Lanka, the Healthiest Workplace Survey of 2018 reported that the majority of Sri Lankan employees suffer from increasing challenges in the workplace, including a lack of well-being (AIA Vitality, 2018). The report further stated that 91.5 percent of employees in Sri Lankan organisations do not have healthy diets, 60 per cent of them suffer from occupational stress, and 12.9 per cent suffer from mental stress, pointing to an overall lack of well-being among employees. Therefore, the trend towards increasing well-being issues has become an evolving concern in the Sri Lankan context. There is evidence from various organisational disciplines to prove that the survival of employees cannot be ensured without addressing the issues related to the work environment (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2012). As a solution, recent scholars have highlighted the significance of work in employees' lives, and have suggested that organisations contribute to efforts to foster access to decent work for a large portion of the working population as a key to achieving human needs and enhancing employee well-being (Duffy et al., 2016; Blustein et al., 2019). Therefore, the reason for the trend in declining employee well-being in Sri Lanka needs to be investigated, and it is accomplished in this paper using the psychology of working perspective.

The effects of working environments on the work life of all employees can be explained using the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) (Duffy et al., 2016). The PWT captures how contextual factors influence one's ability to secure decent work, and how decent work impacts on well-being (Duffy et al., 2016). According to the theory, decent work will have subsequent effects on employees' capability to meet basic human needs, such as the need for survival, social connection and self-determination, which, in turn, impact well-being (Blustein et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2019; Vigonoli et al., 2019; Blustein et al., 2020). Though employee well-being has been studied in the existing literature (Zhang

et al., 2020; Zhong et al., 2020; Duan et al., 2019) from different perspectives, such as Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, leader humility and organisational helping behaviour, there have hardly been any studies which have considered employee well-being from the perspective of decent work. Furthermore, while these studies have examined the link between decent work and employee wellbeing, to the best of the authors' knowledge, there is only one prior study (e.g. Duffy et al., 2019) that has examined the mediating effects of employee needs satisfaction on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. It is noteworthy, however, that no study has been carried out to integrate the moderating effect of self-recovery strategies, which provides further insights into the causal effects of decent work practices on employee wellbeing. To address this gap, the present study attempts to answer the following research questions; Do perceived decent work practices influence employee well-being? Does individual needs satisfaction mediate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being? and do self-recovery strategies moderate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and well-being among operational level employees in the Sri Lankan apparel industry? In answering these three questions, the current paper addresses the lacuna in research, examining the association between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being, by considering needs satisfaction as a mediator, and self-recovery strategies as a moderator of this relationship. Further, the novelty of this study lies in the extent to which the perspective of the PWT helps integrate self-recovery strategies presented by the effort recovery model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998) into the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. Inclusion of self-recovery strategies will help explore how recovery strategies, along with decent work practices, benefit individual employees to function successfully in a given work context.

Thus, this paper contributes to the literature both theoretically and empirically. In terms of its theoretical contribution, the current study uses the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) to conceptualize employee well-being, and incorporates both direct (i.e. decent work practices on employee wellbeing), and mediating (individual needs satisfaction) effects in a single study to reveal a broader picture. In addition, by recognizing the PWT's limited scope in explaining how self-recovery strategies impact on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being, the current study integrates self-recovery strategies based on the effort recovery model in order to enhance the scope of the PWT. Therefore, the study enriches the scope of the PWT through an integration of self-recovery strategies as a moderator to the existing model. Hence, the current study fills the above theoretical gap, and argues that the effect of decent work

practices on employee well-being can be stimulated by employees engaging in self-recovery strategies. Such an inquiry would provide an overarching theoretical view of the interaction between perceived decent work practices and self-recovery strategies to enhance employee well-being. In terms of its empirical contribution, the current study investigates the interactive effect of perceived decent work practices, individual needs satisfaction, and self-recovery strategies on employee well-being in the context of the Sri Lankan apparel industry. There is limited empirical evidences on the relationship between decent work and employee well-being in the global and local literature. Thus, the present study adds confirmatory evidence to the existing body of knowledge in the research area, since there are no similar studies conducted relating to the Sri Lankan context.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: in the following section, the literature on the topic is comprehensively reviewed. In the third section, the hypotheses are developed based on the proposed conceptual model. In the fourth section, the findings of the study, its theoretical and practical implications, its limitations and directions for future research are presented. The paper ends with the conclusion.

Literature review

Employee well-being

Employee well-being is defined as the quality of employees' functioning and experiences in organisations (Grant et al., 2007), and is recognized as a key variable in the social psychology and personality literature, where it is conceptualized in a context-free fashion (Duan et al., 2019). Considerable attention has been paid to employee well-being at workplaces, such as work well-being and job satisfaction, in the career and vocational literature (Judge et al., 2010). With reference to the positive outcomes of employee well-being, it is clear that well-being influences organisational performance, and that it happens in two ways (Jaiswal & Dyaram, 2019). First, employees with a high level of well-being tend to be more committed, creative and engaged with their work, and this will directly lead to increased organisational performance (Zheng et al., 2015). Second, employee well-being indirectly impacts on organisational performance by affecting healthcare costs, absenteeism, turnover, organisational citizenship behaviour, discretionary effort and job performance (Pawar, 2016).

Previous studies have identified that poor employee well-being creates negative impacts such as high staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced performance, disloyalty and low motivation on both employees as well as organisations, (Holland et al., 2013). It has an adverse impact on organisational productivity and functioning as well (Le et al., 2016). Sharma et al. (2016) revealed that employees who are working under pressure are more likely to be abused or lie about sick days, cover up incidents at work, cut corners on quality control, deceive customers and otherwise reduce their contribution to the workplace.

In terms of the factors leading to employee well-being, previous research has revealed several factors such as organisational culture, meaningful work, supportive leadership, enriched jobs as well as workplace diversity as determinants of employee well-being (Jaiswal & Dyaram, 2019). In addition to these factors, recent literature has suggested decent work practices as a determinant of employee well-being (Duffy et al., 2016), and these decent work practices are discussed in the following section.

Decent work

The term decent work was officially introduced by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1999, and it involves forming and maintaining opportunities for both men and women to achieve productive work with security, dignity, freedom and equity (Kazimna et al., 2020). According to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, decent work is described in terms of four interrelated attributes; employment creation, rights at work, social dialogue and social protection (Blustein et al., 2020).

First, employment creation ensures that reasonable employment opportunities are available for all who are motivated to work. Second, decent work comprises rights for workers, which reflect access to collective bargaining, freedom of association and other legal standards. Third, decent work ensures social dialogue, which facilitates opportunities for controlling the world of work, and sharing ideas with different stakeholders. Fourth, decent work includes social protection, which ensures that both males and females can experience safe working conditions, adequate compensation and healthcare, with the protection of social and family values.

Recently, Duffy et al. (2016) operationalized decent work in a manner that goes beyond macro-level perspectives, and focuses on the predictors and outcomes of decent work. Based on this operationalization, decent work can be defined in terms of (a) physically

and interpersonally safe working conditions, (b) adequate compensation, (c) access to healthcare, (d) hours that allow for free time and rest and (e) organisational values that complement family and social values. The PWT proposes that the higher the availability of these components, the higher would be the opportunities for satisfying the three basic requirements, namely, survival needs, social connection needs and self-determination needs. These needs are discussed below from the perspective of the PWT.

Survival needs satisfaction

The survival needs of employees refer to access to resources such as food, shelter and social capital. Simply having employment is not adequate to sustain one's ability to survive (Blustein et al., 2019). Therefore, implementation of decent work practices in the workplace is essential since it contributes to fulfilling survival needs in several ways. Firstly, decent work will lead to the satisfaction of survival needs through safety, reliable income and security. Secondly, safe working conditions, fair wages and security for families help employees to access resources which are required for survival (Blustein, 2006). However, compressed wages and other forms of social marginalization often constrain survival needs. If work has the capability to fulfill an individual's survival needs, it can then provide a basis for achieving well-being as well (Duffy et al., 2016).

Social connection needs satisfaction

In addition to fulfilling survival needs, decent work provides pathways to meet social connection needs as well (Blustein, 2006). Social connection needs of employees refer to the basic human needs which are required to feel a sense of belonging within one's society and connection to others (Duffy et al., 2016; Blustein, 2011). Social connection is extensively observed as a fundamental human need which influences a broad spectrum of requirements in life. Previous studies indicate the effects of social connection needs on employee physical and psychological well-being. Need for connection, belonging and attachment are influenced by the spectrum of workplace environments, roles and hierarchies. If the workplace does not allow employees to make connections with others and share ideas, then such an environment might contribute to workplace stress, interpersonal stress and impaired health and well-being through the inability to fulfill social connection needs.

Self-determination needs satisfaction

Finally, decent work provides pathways to fulfill the self-determination needs of employees, which refer to their being engaged with employment that is extrinsically or intrinsically motivating in a self-regulated and meaningful fashion (Ryan & Deci, 2002; Autin et al., 2019). The existing literature conceptualizes three basic psychological needs; autonomy, relatedness and competence, which are essential for achieving integrity, wellness and psychological growth, self-motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Employees feel more control in their work, and a trustworthy connection to it when these three needs are met in organisations (Broeck et al., 2016).

First, the need for autonomy refers to the needs of individuals to act with a sense of ownership of their behaviour, and to feel psychologically free (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Broeck et al. (2016), the need for autonomy does not reflect a need to act independently from others' desires; it rather implies the need to act with a sense of volition and choice. Second, the need for competence is defined as the need to feel a sense of mastery over the work environment, and to cultivate new skills (White, 1959 as cited in Broeck et al., 2016). Therefore, the need for competence is essential to our natural tendency to explore and manipulate the environment and find optimal challenges. Third, the need for relatedness represents the need to feel connected to others, to care for and love others and to be cared and loved by others in turn (Broeck et al., 2016). This is considered as the most recent addition to the category of psychological needs.

Self-recovery strategies

Self-recovery strategies refer to the process during which individual functional systems come back to their pre-stressor levels (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). As per Kinnunen et al. (2011), if recovery strategies are not enough, employees have to allocate more effort during work in order to maintain satisfactory levels of performance. It has been revealed that sufficient recovery is crucial to foster employee well-being (Kazemi, 2017), and this can be understood from the perspective of the effort recovery model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). This takes place because recovery after work allows employees to feel more vigorous and energetic (Singh et al., 2016).

Based on the effort recovery model, Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) have introduced two types of recovery strategies: psychological detachment and relaxation. In the case of psychological detachment, employees cognitively disengage from work during

time off the job (Molino et al., 2015). It means employees do not think about work responsibilities and being engaged in work-related activities and problems when they are not at work. Relaxation means engaging in leisure activities which are calm and peaceful, and characterized by low activation and enhanced positive affect (Singh et al., 2016). The regular practice of these two types of recovery strategies allows employees to avoid depletion or to replenish their resources, and control the amount of effort they expend while on the job (Kinnunen et al., 2010). These strategies are significant when addressing issues related to employee well-being because they are not only crucial to recovery after work, but are also to those instrumental in conditioning employee well-being over time.

Theoretical background

The current study drew on the PWT to expand the extant theoretical understanding of the association between decent work and employee well-being. Due to the insufficient focus on micro-level or psychological factors which drive decent work, the PWT emerged as an attempt to fill this gap (Blustein et al., 2019). This theory is based on the perspective of the psychology of working. Indeed, previous research on working has found (a) how work has been studied in psychology, and how organisations and individuals can achieve well-being, and has (b) focused on people who have choice in their working lives compared to those who do not, and has (c) estimated the effect of social barriers in the questioning of unequal access to work (Atitsogbe et al., 2020). This perspective has enabled scholars to focus on contextual factors which might contribute to access to opportunity. In merging the Psychology of Working and the findings of the existing literature, Duffy et al. (2016) proposed that decent work enhances employee well-being via fulfillment of basic needs. As such, the PWT can be recognized as an encircling theory which attempts to explain how individuals who work and who need to work can achieve decent work, and foster well-being in different work contexts (Blustein et al., 2019).

However, Bakker and Demerouti (2018) found that in addition to these contextual factors, further involvement in other individual strategies is important to replenish or mitigate the depletion of personal and workplace resources, that can otherwise have an adverse impact on employee well-being. According to Demerouti (2015), the most relevant strategies that employees use to avoid the pressure of a heavy workload are self-recovery strategies, which help them return rapidly to pre-stressor levels. This shows that there are strategies that individuals should follow in order to have a break and

generate new resources (Molino et al., 2015). Hence, it is evident that the relationship between decent work and employee well-being is not straightforward. In light of this, there is sufficient evidence for a moderating effect. Based on the literature, the study presents self-recovery strategies as a moderator of the aforementioned relationship, and builds the argument that these strategies stimulate the causality between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

To address the gap in the PWT, this study incorporates the effort recovery model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998), which explains the centrality of self-recovery strategies (i.e., psychological detachment and relaxation) by which employees attempt to restore energy and maintain well-being, despite stressful work responsibilities (Kinnunen et al., 2011).

Hypotheses and conceptual model

Perceived decent work practices and employee well-being

Increase in access to decent work leads to the achievement of well-being for all employees who work and need to work (Bluestein et al., 2019). Hence, the psychological importance of acquiring decent work for the social and economic well-being of large communities and the wider society has been recognized. Based on this pemise, the existing literature has explained how decent work practices can be used to enhance employee well-being. In line with this, Erdogan et al. (2012) state that there are several channels that allow decent work to improve employee well-being. First, decent work practices will improve well-being by enabling people with adequate income and livelihood empowerment to fulfill their economic and financial needs. This is because being unemployed negatively impacts on well-being as well as life satisfaction (Pittau et al., 2010). Thus, decent work can provide opportunities for adequate compensation to satisfy individuals' needs, which enhances their well-being. Second, it was found that job security, as an element of decent work, positively impacts on the well-being of people through uplifting their levels of happiness and satisfaction (Silla et al., 2009), as most people relish their personal and income security. In other words, well-being is less among vulnerable worker groups, including contract and casual workers, compared to permanent workers (Analesinya et al., 2020). This may be because these contract and casual workers do not have employment security, and might fear non-renewal of contracts as well as unemployment, which is also very stressful. Therefore, these factors will impact on the well-being of vulnerable workers, and those who experience decent

work deficits. Third, decent work is a source of pride for people, since they can engage in prestigious and attractive employment (Analesniya et al., 2020). This also provides employees more opportunities for participation, and therefore, results in enhanced well-being. Consequently, based on the existing literature and theoretical perspectives, the study builds the following hypothesis.

H_1: *Perceived decent work practices impact on employee well-being.*

Perceived decent work practices and survival needs satisfaction

The PWT hypothesizes that experience in decent work practices in organisations creates pathways to satisfy three groups of needs, namely, survival needs, social connection needs and self-determination needs (Duffy et al., 2016). The theory also emphasizes the major components of decent work that are needed to fulfill employee survival needs. First, it is evident that most people are unable to satisfy all of their survival needs due to compressed wages. This reflects the importance of having adequate compensation for employees to fulfill their basic needs of food, shelter and social capital (Blustein et al., 2019).

Second, physically and interpersonally safe working conditions are optimally available through decent work, and it is important to have satisfactory access to such resources for survival, since such working conditions in workplaces are directly related to the physical health of employees (Duffy et al., 2019). Third, in order to have a healthy life, employees should have access to healthcare, which is another pathway to achieving a successful and healthy lifestyle. Health statistics in the USA reveal that only a small number of workers have access to employer-sponsored healthcare due to the increase in temporary, part-time and short-term jobs (Satrya et al., 2017). Hence, employees who are uninsured are less likely to be hospitalized for certain conditions that could have been prevented at the initial stage. As a result, lower-positioned employees tend to die from seriously acute conditions, and this becomes a threat to employees' very survival. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is developed to test the relationship between perceived decent work practices and survival needs satisfaction.

H_2: *Perceived decent work practices impact on the fulfillment of survival needs.*

Perceived decent work practices and social connection needs satisfaction

Employee social connection needs refer to the direct and indirect relationships and attachments within and outside the workplace (Beauregard, 2010). Work can provide a way to fulfill these basic human requirements for social connection, mainly formed in the workplace; in this way social connection is an optimal outcome of decent work (Duffy et al., 2016). According to the PWT, social connection needs can be satisfied in two different ways. First, decent work facilitates opportunities for interpersonal relationships with supervisors, colleagues and co-workers, and this often enhances relationships in the workplace that help to develop a sense of connection and meaning in life (Blustein, 2011). Second, decent work contributes to the improvement of social connections by connecting workers with the broader society. This will enable employees to feel that they are committing to the economic, social and political worlds, and even furnishes connections for employees to cultural contexts (Blustein, 2011).

In contrast, inequality in workplaces often inhibits employees from accessing relational needs satisfaction at work (Duffy et al., 2016). For instance, the existence of aversive workplaces has been linked with major problems, especially for females working in non-traditional environments such as work contexts that are dominated by males (Fouad et al., 2016), for irregular migrants and for other marginalized employees. This might restrict maintaining productive support within the workplace, resulting in a more isolated workforce with lower interrelations. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that there is a relationship between perceived decent work practices and social connection needs satisfaction.

> H_3: *Perceived decent work practices impact on the fulfillment of social connection needs.*

Perceived decent work practices and self-determination needs satisfaction

Finally, employment offers avenues to fulfill self-determination needs, which refers to the experience of being involved in activities which are both intrinsically and extrinsically inspiring in a meaningful and self-regulated fashion (Deci et al., 2017). According to previous research, employee self-determination consists of autonomy, relatedness and competence, and these factors are essential for integrity, psychological growth and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

The existing literature has revealed that there are two ways that self-determination needs can be fulfilled under the psychology of working perspective. First, most people in the world do not have opportunities for accessing purely intrinsically rewarding employment, which underscores the need to understand how greater meaning and purpose could be generated and achieved at work (Blustein, 2006). Decent work practices certainly explain the importance of providing adequate compensation for work, but it also reveals that employees should be able to obtain all the other rewards and benefits in addition to their fixed wages and salaries (Blustein et al., 2020). Once employees intrinsically acquire all these rewards, it would enhance their level of competence, and they begin to care about and love their workplaces, which means that their relatedness will be high. Second, Kalleberg and Vallas (2017) have indicated that the effect of precariousness at the workplace has an adverse impact on the ability to work to satisfy self-determination, in particular for employees who are marginalized from decent work. Therefore, this paper hypothesizes that for perceived decent work practices in organisations to operate at their optimal level, it is necessary to stimulate the circumstances that foster self-determination.

H_4: *Perceived decent work practices impact on the fulfillment of self-determination needs.*

Survival needs satisfaction and employee well-being

In terms of the survival needs of employees, numerous studies have depicted the effect of financial resources on employee well-being, representing a consistent pattern in the relationship between happiness and income (Kahneman & Deaton, 2010). In other words, even though money does not, in itself, make people happier, a lack of financial resources does weaken one's sense of overall well-being. Here, Kim et al. (2017) further state that satisfaction of survival needs strongly links with psychological well-being among midlife adults, and the above study suggests that a basic level of financial security is more strongly related to eudemonic well-being than the need for self-determination. However, this study is concerned only with items related to monetary concerns in measuring survival needs, while other fundamental components of survival needs such as social capital and safe working conditions (Duffy et al., 2016) have not been included. The study reflects the compensatory phase of decent work as hypothesized by Duffy et al. (2016), which acts as the most significant and largest determinant in predicting employee well-being. Diener et al. (2015) further supported this argument by pointing out that the happiest countries are those that are economically developed

and comparatively wealthy. This reveals the association between national income and employee well-being, which is likely because people's basic needs and desires are met to a larger extent when they live in rich nations.

In addition to the financial aspect, the previous research study reflected the significance of fulfilling survival needs by accessing healthcare, which in turn leads to the improvement of employees' well-being (Diener et al., 2015). The examination of several characteristics of healthcare access around the world revealed that healthcare has the potential to determine subjective well-being. Consequently, the following hypothesis is developed to assess the association between survival needs satisfaction and employee well-being.

H_5:   *Fulfillment of survival needs impact on employee well-being.*

Social connection needs and employee well-being

Several studies have emphasized that belongingness at work, and high connectedness are related to favourable functioning inside and outside the workplace (Simon et al., 2010, as cited in Duffy et al., 2016), since relational interactions in the workplace provide significant psychological resources such as social support, shared purpose and community. These are most remarkable when they are not available or are taken away. Employees who are connected to the beneficiaries of their work, and whose job roles are linked with the larger society, have higher self-esteem, a stronger sense of identity as well as greater social worth resulting from higher employee well-being (Grant, 2007).

Conversely, past studies have shown different ways in which well-being is adversely affected by the lack of social connections. First, Wright et al. (2006) stated that loneliness at work predicts lower life and job satisfaction as well as a lack of organisational commitment. In other words, lower access to expanding relationships with coworkers and those outside the workplace leads to a sense of isolation, while simultaneously lowering the level of employee well-being (Blustein et al., 2019). Second, Kenny and Medvide (2013) highlighted that, extensive social connections subsequently promote employee well-being, and if all these social relationships and opportunities for discussion and conversation in the work context are not positive, and employees are agonized by workplace harassment, their well-being might suffer (Blustein, 2011). Therefore, a relationship between social connection needs satisfaction and employee well-being can be surmised.

H_6:   *Fulfillment of social connection needs impacts on employee well-being*

Self-determination needs and employee well-being

Fulfillment of self-determination needs, including autonomy, relatedness and competence, is required for people to achieve integrity, growth and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, having individuals' needs satisfied leads to autonomous forms of motivation and enhanced well-being (Ferraro et al., 2018). If it is assumed that needs are inborn rather than learned, an aspiration or goal denotes a true need only if its level of satisfaction relates directly to the level of well-being (Deci et al., 2001).

Several studies have provided evidence to prove the association between satisfaction of self-determinations needs and employee well-being in different contexts. First, at the organisational level, Deci et al. (2001) argued that there is a positive relationship between the degree of satisfaction of self-determination needs and well-being. Gagne and Deci (2005) attempted to support this argument further by pointing out that a work environment that fulfills basic psychological needs will promote intrinsic motivation, and full internalization of extrinsic motivations of employees, and that this will result in significant work outcomes such as organisational citizenship behaviour, job satisfaction, effective performance, positive attitudes related to work, psychological adjustment and employee well-being. In addition, Baard et al. (2000) highlighted that employees' perceptions of their supervisor's autonomous support and workers' individual differences in self-directed positioning, independently determine their ability to achieve autonomy, competence and relatedness, and that this, in turn, forecasts employee performance and later, their well-being.

Second, at the personal level, Reis et al. (2000) found that all measures of self-determination needs and aggregates of all measures contribute independently to well-being by reflecting personal level relationships between psychological needs satisfaction and well-being. Moreover, Ilardi et al. (1993) revealed that employees who are highly satisfied with the aforementioned three needs within the factory environment have reported more positive attitudes towards the job, higher self-esteem, and lesser symptoms of ill-being compared to their colleagues who experience less self-determination at work. This indicates that there is a relationship between self-determination needs satisfaction and employee well-being.

H_7:   *Fulfillment of self-determination needs impacts on employee well-being.*

Mediating effect of survival needs satisfaction

In line with the PWT, Duffy et al. (2019) recognized survival needs as a partial mediator, reflecting the fact that decent work practices lead to increased employee well-being, since work allows employees to meet their needs for survival. This may make instinctual sense, considering that survival needs comprise factors such as nutritious food, adequate housing and basic utilities, which are closely and directly related to health and well-being. This indicates that employees who are working in jobs they considered as decent are more likely to be healthy, and have high levels of well-being, in part due to these jobs helping to satisfy survival needs. Further, Kim et al. (2017) emphasized that survival needs strongly related to psychological well-being in the context of midlife adults, implying that financial security is more strongly linked with eudemonic well-being. In terms of decent work practices, this financial security can be considered as one aspect of adequate compensation, and it enables the survival of individuals. Therefore, it is evident that availability of decent work practices within workplaces allows employees to survive and will lead to fostering employee well-being.

H_8:   *The relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is mediated by the fulfillment of survival needs.*

Mediating effect of social connection needs satisfaction

Decent work promotes employee well-being through satisfaction of social connection needs as well. The loss of decent work often leads to a sense of isolation, which can torment unemployed people (Blustein et al., 2019). A working climate with favourable social connections offers significant psychological resources including social support, and there is an adverse effect on employees when they are not available in the workplace (Blustein et al., 2019). As per Kenny and Medvide (2013), extensive social connections and relationships that decent work can fulfill, subsequently enhance employee well-being. If individuals do not have positive social connections due to an indecent work climate in their workplaces, their well-being is bound to suffer (Blustein, 2011). Hence, the study tests the following hypothesis related to the mediating effect of social connection needs satisfaction.

> H_9: *The relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is mediated by the fulfillment of social connection needs*

Mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction

Recent empirical studies found that the precariousness of the workplace has an adverse impact on the ability to fulfill self-determination, particularly for employees who are marginalized from decent work, which in turn leads to a weakening of their well-being (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2017). In addition, Gonzalez et al. (2016) studied a sample of full-time employees, and found that self-determination needs satisfaction mediates the relationship between socioeconomic status and physical and mental well-being. The study implies that individuals with lower socioeconomic status are less likely to experience the fulfillment of basic self-determination, leading to a lower level of health and well-being. For example, employees who experience frustration in fulfilling self-determination needs have lower levels of job satisfaction and higher levels of stress and exhaustion. Therefore, it can be surmised that fulfillment of self-determination needs mediates the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

> H_{10}: *The relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is mediated by the fulfillment of self-determination needs.*

Moderating effect of self-recovery strategies

Recovery can be considered as the process during which individual functioning returns to pre-stressor levels, and reduces the strain brought about by stressors at work (Demerouti et al. (2009). According to Siltaloppi et al. (2009), recovery from stressors related to work allows individual employees to replenish their resources, which can be threatened in many ways during their daily work routine. Thus, self-recovery strategies act as a moderator between decent work practices and employee wellbeing. In this case, when the capability to recover from work is lower, employees have to put in an additional effort at work in order to accomplish their tasks, which might impose pressure in the long run, and hence, weaken the impact of decent work on their wellbeing. On the other hand, when employees practise sound recovery strategies, the impact of decent work practices on wellbeing is stronger. Though several studies have examined the moderating role of self-recovery strategies on the relationship between

various organisational and individual factors such as workload, workplace incivility, work-family conflict, and turnover intention (Molino et al., 2015), and employee well-being, existing research has not yet fully addressed whether self-recovery strategies can alter the effects of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being. Therefore, the present study attempts to address the moderating effect of self-recovery strategies on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

Recent work practices reveal that current technological advancement has created more opportunities to work from anywhere and at any time, even when employees are at home or when they are travelling. This trend has resulted in a 24-hour working culture in modern society, while increasing non-standard work schedules which reflect the inadequacy of decent work practices in the workplace. Thus, an increase in non-standard work schedules results in irregular working patterns, and hampers the fostering of employee well-being. This negative impact has been stimulated due to the lack of opportunities for employees to plan their recovery strategies, while also lowering access to recovery (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Moreover, if the existing recovery strategies are not adequate to avoid job stressors, employees must exert extra effort to accomplish their tasks, and, in the long run, this may lead to physical discomfort and sickness absence (Siltaloppia et al., 2009), which in turn lead to poor physical well-being among employees.

Further, successful social dialogue allows individuals to obtain the maximum benefits from social and human capital while enhancing their well-being (Duffy et al., 2016). Even though a heavy workload and other adverse working conditions in the workplace can lead to an inability to adequately maintain social relationships, this situation may not necessarily occur if employees have opportunities to spend time to recover from work efforts (Molino et al., 2015). Pevalin and Goldberg (2003) point out that poor recovery from work may increase the deterioration of social relationships, thus generating poor well-being among employees. This demonstrates the need for recovery after work on a sustained and regular basis to replenish employees' resources (Singh et al., 2016). As long as employees have regular respite from heavy workloads, then recovery can occur, which leads to a more stable state of well-being (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Based on the above arguments, this study hypothesizes a moderating role of self-recovery strategies on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

H_{11}: *Self-recovery strategies moderate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.*
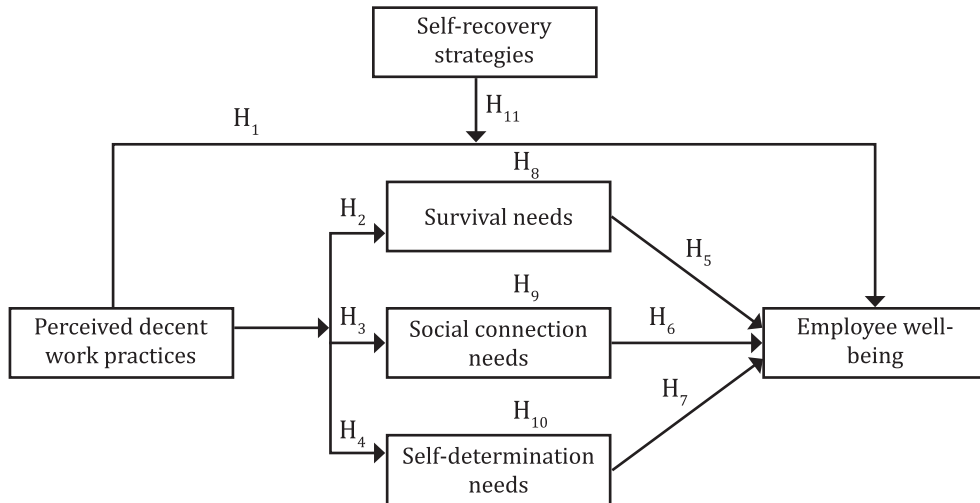

Figure 1: Conceptual model

Methodology

Participants and procedures

The population of the present study consists of operational-level employees in the Sri Lankan apparel industry. Therefore, the unit of analysis of the study is an individual employee. Satrya et al. (2017) state that employees in the apparel industry are frequently exposed to physical hazards, high depression and traumatic stress, all of which have adversely affected well-being among employees, both at the workplace and at home. As such, the Sri Lankan apparel industry provides a rich context in which to test the current research problem. A sample of 324 employees was drawn from seven (7) apparel manufacturing companies. The convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample, since there is inadequate information about the total number of observations in the population (Saunders et al., 2019). A self-administered questionnaire with different Likert scales was used to collect data, and it was prepared based on the scales developed by Duffy et al. (2017), Zheng et al. (2015), Autin et al. (2019) and Sonnentag and Fritz (2007). In addition, demographic profiles of the employees were also compiled.

Measures

Employee well-being

The 18-item scale developed by Zheng et al. (2015) was used to measure employee well-being. This scale includes three dimensions, namely, life well-being (six items), job well-being (six items) and psychological well-being (six items). The respondents were asked to provide their responses to each item using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from '1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree'. Some sample items are: "I feel satisfied with my life", "I am satisfied with my work responsibilities" and "I generally feel good about myself and I am confident". The overall Cronbach's alpha of the scale is 0.95. Zhang et al. (2020) have used this scale to measure employee well-being in the context of employees working in various Chinese industries.

Decent work

The 15-item decent work scale developed by Duffy et al. (2017) was used to measure decent work practices in organisations. The decent work scale comprises five subscales, namely, physically and interpersonally safe working conditions, adequate access to healthcare, adequate compensation, hours that allow for free time and rest, and organisational values that correspond with family and social values. Each of these scales measures a unique component of decent work. Participants of the study were asked to respond to each item based on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from '1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree'. Sample items, one from each subscale, include the following: "At work, I feel safe from emotional or verbal abuse of any kind", "My employer provides acceptable options for healthcare", "I am rewarded adequately for my work", "I have no time to rest during the work week", and "The values of my organisation match the values within my community". Duffy et al. (2019) have used the decent work scale to examine the link between decent work and employee health, and the internal consistency of the scale was reported to be 0.90.

Basic needs satisfaction

The 20-item scale developed by Autin et al. (2019) was deployed to measure three basic needs satisfaction, namely, survival needs, social connection needs and self-determination needs (autonomy, relatedness and competence). Though the original scale was based on a seven-point Likert scale, in the current study, respondents were

instructed to provide their responses based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from '1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree' to mitigate common method bias. Sample items from each respective subscale, include the following: "Have the resources to provide nutritious food for myself and my family", "Makes a contribution to the greater social good", "Feel like I am good at my job", "Feel like I fit in" and "Do tasks the way I want". Duffy et al. (2019) used the needs satisfaction scale, and the estimated internal consistency reliability for each subscale was 0.93 (Survival needs), 0.93 (Social connection), 0.95 (Competence), 0.95 (Relatedness) and 0.87 (Autonomy).

Self-recovery strategies

The study assessed self-recovery strategies using 8 items of the 16-item scale developed by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007). This scale has been commonly used in research on recovery strategies in different contexts (Kinnunen et al., 2010; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Respondents of the survey were asked to respond to the items related to self-recovery strategies on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from '1 = Strongly disagree' to '7 = Strongly agree'. Psychological detachment was measured through four items (Cronbach Aplha= 0.95), and relaxation was measured through another four items (Cronbach Alpha= 0.95). The study used four items for each factor: "During time after work I forget about work" and "During time after work I do things that challenge me".

Data analysis and results

For data collection, 460 questionnaires were administered, but only 360 questionnaires were collected, and then checked for incompleteness. Nine (9) questionnaires were removed and 351 completed questionnaires were forwarded for SPSS to conduct missing value and outlier analysis. The effective response rate of the present study was 78 percent, which can be considered a satisfactory response rate (Miller & Smith, 1983). The useable sample of the study (n=324), after removing 27 questionnaires with outliers. comprised 9.6% males (31) and 90.4% (293) females, and the respondents' ages were between 18 and 60 years. Most respondents were married (64.2%, n=208), while 33.6% (n=109) were single. The majority of respondents (55.6%, n=180) belonged to the monthly income category Rs. 10,000 – Rs. 20,000.

Measurement model

Data were tested for Common Method Bias (CMB) and multivariate assumptions, including normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity, before performing the measurement model (Colombage & Galahitiyawe, 2020). Thereafter, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to refine the model. Based on Hair et al. (2014), items which loaded less than 0.45 were eliminated. Subsequently, the refined model was tested for reliability and validity using the standardized factor loadings. Table 1 depicts the results of reliability and validity testing.

Table 1: Reliability and validity measures

Variable/ Construct	No. of items	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE Vs SMC					
					EWB	SNS	SCNS	SDNS	DW	IRS
EWB	12	0.607	0.947	0.823	0.607					
SNS	4	0.738	0.918	0.919	0.376	0.738				
SCNS	4	0.710	0.907	0.905	0.011	0.017	0.710			
SDNS	10	0.630	0.943	0.767	0.440	0.490	0.008	0.630		
PDW	14	0.575	0.834	0.764	0.579	0.537	0.040	0.746	0.475	
IRS	8	0.582	0.915	0.925	0.521	0.563	0.004	0.570	0656	0.582

Notes: (1) EWB- Employee Well-being; (2) SNS- Survival Needs Satisfaction; (3) SCNS- Social Connection Needs Satisfaction; (4) SDNS- Self-determination Needs Satisfaction; (5) PDW- Perceived Decent work; (6) IRS- Self-recovery strategies.

As illustrated in Table 1, all latent variables in the proposed models have convergent validities above 0.5, which reflect an appropriate level of validity. In addition, both internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) and composite reliability of all latent variables are greater than the acceptable level of (0.70). However, discriminant validity was not fulfilled for the variables PDW and IRS, since their AVE<SMC.

Structural model

Hypotheses were tested to examine the relationships among all latent variables in the proposed model. As stated by Hayes (2009), structural models, with reference to hypotheses, are performed to obtain standardized estimates, and are then checked for significance at the 5 percent level.

In line with Colombage and Galahitiyawe (2020), all direct paths were first tested and checked for significance before testing moderating and mediating effects. The direct effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being, the direct effects of perceived decent work practices on survival needs, social connection needs and self-determination needs, and the direct effects of the fulfillment of survival, social connection and self-determination needs on employee well-being were tested before proceeding to the mediating and moderating impacts on these relationships. The results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Hypotheses testing results of direct paths

Path	β value	p value	Decision
PDW---EWB	0.576	0.036	Supported
PDW---SNS	0.723	0.000	Supported
PDW---SCNS	-0.194	0.001	Supported
PDW---SDNS	0.892	0.000	Supported
SNS---EWB	0.147	0.030	Supported
SCNS---EWB	0.037	0.402	Not Supported
SDNS---EWB	0.144	0.619	Not Supported

Notes: (1) PDW – Perceived Decent Work; (2) EWB – Employee Well-being; (3) SNS – Survival Needs Satisfaction; (4) SCNS – Social Connection Needs Satisfaction and (5) SDNS – Self-determination Needs Satisfaction.

As per Table 2, the direct effects of fulfillment of social connection needs and self-determination needs on employee well-being (H6 and H7) are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). Apart from these, all direct paths are significant at the 5% level. However, fulfillment of survival needs does not have a strong impact on employee well-being, and it accounts for only 14.7% of employee well-being.

Second, the bootstrapping method with AMOS was applied to test the mediating effects of the three needs satisfactions on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being (H8, H9 and H10). The results are depicted in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of hypotheses testing for the mediating effects of the three needs satisfaction

Hypothesis	Indirect Path		Decision
	β value	p value	
H_8: Perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is mediated by survival needs satisfaction.	0.179	0.003	Partial mediation
H_9: Perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is mediated by social connection needs satisfaction	-0.003	0.781	No mediation
H_{10}: Perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is mediated by self-determination needs satisfaction	0.346	0.076	Full mediation

Notes: (1) PDW – Perceived Decent Work; (2) EWB – Employee Well-being; (3) SNS – Survival Needs Satisfaction; (4) SCNS – Social Connection Needs Satisfaction and (5) SDNS – Self-determination Needs Satisfaction.

The significance levels of all direct and indirect paths were compared to examine the roles of the three mediators. It was evident that the impact of survival needs satisfaction on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is significant (p=0.003) at the 10% level. Also, the direct effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being is still significant (p<0.1) even after inserting a mediator. As elucidated by Kline (1998), a variable is considered a partial mediator if both direct and indirect paths are statistically significant. Thus, it can be concluded that survival needs satisfaction is a partial mediator of the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being, where there is a stronger association between the variables through the direct path.

In addition, though the direct effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being is significant (p=0.002), it is notable that social connection needs satisfaction does not significantly mediate the effects of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being (p=0.781). Therefore, social connection needs satisfaction is neither a partial mediator nor a full mediator of the relevant relationship, and H9 is rejected. It can be concluded, therefore, that social connection needs satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

Furthermore, the effect of self-determination needs satisfaction on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being is significant (p=0.076) at the 10% level. However, the direct effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being is not significant (p=0.593). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a full mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being, and H10 is accepted.

Table 4: Results of hypothesis testing of the moderating effect of IRS

	Hypothesis	Indirect Path		Decision
		β value	p value	
Mode_IRS---EWB	H_{11}: Self-recovery strategies moderate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being	0.669	0.000	Supported

Notes: (1) IRS – Self-recovery strategies; (2) EWB – Employee Well-being.

In terms of the third research objective, self-recovery strategies were hypothesized as a moderator of the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. In this case, multiplication of the mean values of an independent variable and a moderating variable was used to derive the interactive effect in testing the moderating impact. It is evident from the analysis that self-recovery strategies significantly moderate (p=0.000; β = 0.669) the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. Therefore, H11 is accepted. This implies that the impact of implementation of decent work practices on employee well-being can be stimulated by employees engaging in recovery strategies.

Discussion

The main purpose of the present study is to examine the interactive effect of perceived decent work practices, individual needs satisfaction, and self-recovery strategies on employee well-being. Towards this end, the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being was examined using three individual needs satisfaction and self-recovery strategies as mediators and a moderator, respectively.

The results of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. This finding aligns with the PWT and the existing literature, wherein it has been emphasized that decent work leads to positive functioning in the workplace, and consequently, to employee well-being (Blustein et al., 2019; England et al., 2020). The analysis reflects the fact that in Sri Lanka, operational level employees in the apparel industry who perceive decent work practices in their workplaces are more likely to experience higher levels of well-being. Most of these apparel employees work in stressful, demanding work environments, and earn comparatively low wages. In addition, excessive working hours (10 hours and more) have been linked to health complaints including poor sleep quality, and therefore, many of these employees have reported negative health symptoms. Thus, operational level employees in the apparel industry experience relatively lower levels of decent work practices, and thus, enjoy lower levels of wellbeing. Virtanen et al. (2012) also found that employees working overtime have 2.43 times greater chances of suffering from a consequent depressive disorder than those working 7 to 8 hours per day. Hence, implementation of decent work practices in the workplace provides pathways for employees to achieve dignity, freedom and security in their work, which, in turn, foster well-being.

It was found that perceived decent work practices are positively related to the fulfillment of survival needs, and this is in line with the results of previous research studies (Duffy et al., 2019; Satrya et al., 2017). The result has now been verified with evidence from the context of the Sri Lankan apparel industry. It is evident that the components of decent work, such as adequate access to healthcare and compensation, enable employees to satisfy basic human requirements which are needed for survival. When these lower-level employees achieve a high level of income with which they can comfortably satisfy their survival needs, this relationship become strongly positive. This is because employees who are higher paid have more access to healthcare, which is an essential requirement for survival, compared to employees with inadequate compensation, since many lower-level employees die from acute diseases which are a threat to human survival.

Moreover, the findings revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between perceived decent work practices, and the fulfillment of social connection needs, in contrast to the PWT and the existing literature (Duffy et al., 2019). For instance, Blustein (2011) suggested that a favourable work environment allows employees to experience meaningful relationships with each other. The current negative effect may partly be due to the fact that when employees maintain closer social contact with their

co-workers and supervisors, these interactions may lead to increased conflicts and frequent disagreements. Hence, increased opportunities for social dialogue sometimes weaken social connections as they can lead to the disruption of relationships.

In line with the extant literature, the present study revealed that perceived decent work practices positively relate to the fulfillment of self-determination needs. Implementation of decent work practices determines the level of compensation and other intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, which will, in turn, satisfy the needs for self-determination of apparel sector employees. When employees are allowed to acquire all available rewards, it increases their levels of competence and relatedness since they then begin to love their workplaces.

Further, it was found that there is a significant relationship between fulfillment of survival needs and employee well-being. This is in line with the study conducted by Diener et al. (2015), wherein it was found that income significantly related to employee well-being, and higher income provided access to the satisfaction of more basic needs, resulting in enthusiastic individuals with enhanced well-being.

The findings also revealed that there is no significant relationship between fulfillment of social connection needs and employee well-being. This result contradicts those of previous research studies, where Duffy et al. (2016) and Kenny and Medvide (2013) revealed that higher levels of social connections promote employee well-being, while inadequate opportunities for conversations and discussions in workplaces result in more harassment. However, this was not evident in the Sri Lankan apparel industry.

Further, it was found that fulfilment of self-determination needs is not significantly related to employee well-being. In contrast, previous studies confirm that when competence, relatedness and autonomy are satisfied in the workplace, employees would be able to experience more self-motivation, vitality and well-being (Deci et al., 2017). This argument cannot be applied to the current work context since there was a noticeable lack of autonomy among operational level employees. These employees do not have opportunities to make decisions regarding their daily operations. Frequently, they are just commanded to achieve targets, and have no decision-making power regarding production.

As far as the mediating effects of the three types of needs satisfaction were concerned, first, it was found that there was a partial mediation of survival needs satisfaction on the

relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. This links the previously explained relationships; the relationship between perceived decent work practices and survival needs, and the relationship between survival needs and employee well-being. The partial mediation implies that the implementation of decent work practices leads to enhanced employee well-being though it may not always fulfill survival needs. Kim et al. (2017) also obtained similar findings, and they revealed that the fulfillment of survival needs were strongly related to the psychological well-being of midlife adults.

Second, this study revealed that fulfillment of social connection needs does not significantly mediate the association between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. In contrast, the existing literature proposed that a favourable work environment offers the opportunity for workers to connect with the economic, social, and political world, and also helps them connect with their cultural contexts, which will contribute to increased levels of well-being (Blustein et al., 2011). However, Duffy et al. (2019) found that even though fulfillment of social connection needs mediates the relationship between decent work practices and mental health, it does not significantly mediate the relationship between decent work practices and physical health in the case of employed adults. This is because social connection needs may influence physical health via different mechanisms such as impacting health behaviours, social support or mental health. This finding might apply to the current (Sri Lankan) context as well, since the study did not examine these factors when measuring social connection needs satisfaction.

Third, it was found that self-determination needs satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being, and this was explained by the PWT and existing literature (Duffy et al., 2016; Deci et al., 2017). The result indicates that better working conditions provide a pathway to self-determination, which is related to experiencing intrinsically and extrinsically motivating activities in a meaningful way. Therefore, greater motivation, achievement of competence, relatedness and autonomy will contribute to individual psychological growth as well as overall well-being.

With regard to the moderating effect of self-recovery strategies on the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being, the findings imply that self-recovery strategies significantly moderate this relationship, where the association is stronger when employees follow strategies to recover after work.

This finding is further supported by previous studies, which reveal that continuous engagement in work even after working hours, and the inability to switch off from work, can be considered to be part of an unhealthy pattern which results in lower well-being among employees (Leitjen et al., 2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that self-recovery strategies moderate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

In conclusion, it could be stated that perceived decent work practices foster employee well-being via fulfillment of the needs for survival and self-determination. In addition, when employees perceive decent work practices in the workplace, and if they use recovery strategies, they will ultimately achieve a higher level of well-being.

Theoretical implications

There are several theoretical implications emanating from this study. Firstly, the present study sought to provide evidence that would facilitate the conceptualization of the PWT. In the literature, the PWT has been used to conceptualize employee well-being as an outcome of securing decent work practices, and this relationship was found to be mediated by three basic needs. The manner in which the current study conceptualizes the phenomenon incorporates the direct and mediating effects in a single study to reveal a broader picture which includes the cross relationships involving the study variables.

Although the PWT has made efforts to explore decent work as a predictor of well-being from a perspective of seeking to integrate economic and social factors with psychological factors, it has not recognized the importance of individual strategies in mitigating adverse work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018). This shows that the PWT does not adequately address these individual strategies, and this was recognized by the current study as a significant theoretical gap.

Secondly, this study includes a moderating effect in order to analyze the loop of relationships connecting the variables. This is a novel contribution to the exiting theory, and it was determined by inserting the concept of self-recovery strategies taken from the effort recovery model into the conceptual model.

Further, although the relationships between other organisational factors and employee well-being have been studied in the previous literature (Pawar, 2016; Zhang et al., 2020; Zhong et al., 2019), the impact of decent work practices on employee well-being has not

been extensively scrutinized. Moreover, in the domain of decent work, most studies have examined only the predictors of decent work practices (England et al., 2020; Vigonoli et al., 2019; Blustein et al., 2020), while only a few studies have empirically tested the outcomes of the PWT. Therefore, the present study contributed empirically to the existing literature by identifying a significant positive relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being in the context of the Sri Lankan apparel industry.

Managerial implications

The present study provides several managerial implications for the benefit of practitioners. The findings indicate the significance of implementing decent work practices to foster employee well-being. Therefore, managers have a responsibility to re-examine the available working conditions in their organisations in collaboration with HR management, and implement the necessary initiatives to transform the pace of quality job creation. It is important to give sufficient priority to features that improve decent working conditions in implementing public policies to promote well-being among marginalized populations. For instance, healthcare should not be limited to certain categories of persons in the workplace; but rather, these healthcare initiatives should be generalised, and made available to all employees. Further, managers and supervisors should investigate how important these decent work practices are for their employees, and how access to decent jobs can positively impact their lives, those of their relatives and friends, as well as the organisation.

Based on the association between decent work practices and employee well-being, the study emphasised five components of decent work in line with the PWT and other empirical research studies. Amongst these components, organisations can implement strategies to uplift interpersonal relationships among co-workers with the support of the HRM department of the company. This may mitigate the conflicts experienced by employees at the workplace. In addition, managers can execute flexible work schedules, especially for female employees in order to strengthen the relationships between employees and their loved ones, as this may also help reduce work-family conflicts. Moreover, an enhancement of opportunities for healthcare facilities and adequate compensation are also required to increase the well-being of the employees. Employees who receive greater support from the organisation will believe that the organisation can empower them with sufficient resources and assistance that may help them mitigate adverse experiences and improve well-being.

With regard to self-recovery strategies, the study found that successful recovery after work stimulates the impact of decent work practices on employee well-being. Hence, organisational curricula should not only include organisational tasks and challenges, but also non-work activities, issues and challenges that employees have to face outside the workplace. This is because a healthy and pleasant non-work life is essential for employees to recover fully from their work, as otherwise, both individual and organisational health and well-being will suffer. In this context, managers and employers should design jobs in such a way that enables quick recovery from weekly, stressful work responsibilities during the weekend. This means that the workload of every employee must not exceed a certain level, and under such conditions, employees can successfully recover from their work during weekends. In addition, there are some organisations such as those examined in the context of the current study (the apparel industry in Sri Lanka) where workers have to meet tough targets which drain them emotionally, making it more difficult for them to recover quickly after work. In such situations, organisational involvement is absolutely necessary. Slow individual recovery is known to be an early indicator of reduced well-being, and such situations need to be monitored in the organisation as well.

Limitations and directions for future research

The present study has a few limitations that require further examination in future research. Firstly, the data were collected at one point in time, and therefore, the results may be adversely affected by the time aspect. Due to the nature of cross-sectional studies, it is very difficult to establish causal relationships between variables. Secondly, the present study could not collect data from some major apparel manufacturing companies in Sri Lanka for lack of accessibility during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this may have influenced sample representativeness.

In terms of future research, it is first proposed that future scholars conduct longitudinal studies to examine the relationships between variables comprehensively. Collecting data at more than one particular time period enables researchers to control heterogeneity. Introduction of a one- year lag (Wooldridge, 2010 as cited by Weerasinghe & Jayawardana, 2019) between collecting data related to the independent and dependent variables would facilitate future studies due to many reasons. Firstly, it would allow researchers to control for omitted variables, and thereby mitigate the impact of common method variance, and measurement errors due to the use of self-administered data. Secondly, future studies can select respondents from small-scale, medium-scale as well as large-

scale apparel manufacturing companies to enhance sample representativeness. Thirdly, the proposed model can be used to study other industries and countries, since the impacts of decent work practices on employee well-being are largely country-specific. Therefore, future researchers must move beyond the developing country context to examine differences in findings related to developed and developing countries. Also, if adequate data is available, the number of countries could be increased, and through increased generalizability, such studies could provide substantial insights to the literature on the association between decent work and well-being.

Conclusion

The aim of the current study was to examine the interactive effect of decent work practices, individual needs satisfaction and self-recovery strategies on employee well-being. The key findings show that there is a significant, direct effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being, and this direct relationship is partially and fully mediated by fulfillment of survival needs and self-determination needs, respectively. However, social connection needs satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. Moreover, an investigation of the moderating effect of self-recovery strategies found that such strategies significantly moderate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. Accordingly, this study resulted in some theoretical implications for the well-being literature and the PWT by explaining the factors that stimulate the effects of decent work practices on employee well-being by incorporating self-recovery strategies as a moderator. This study has several managerial implications as well, such as the importance of implementing a decent work environment in the workplace, and providing opportunities for employees to recover after work in order to foster well-being. Overall, the study not only contributes to the existing theoretical perspectives on decent work and employee well-being, but also emphasizes the significance of implementing decent work practices along with certain strategies that encourage recovery after work, to provide roadmaps that foster employee well-being.

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