

Abstract

Employee well-being has been studied from different perspectives in previous research studies since it is considered as one of the greatest challenges facing managers today. Dramatic changes in workplaces affected work environment and then employee well-being as they spend significant portion of their waking lives at workplaces. Technological advancement, globalization, diversification, increased competition, high female labour force participation, work intensification and distorting the boundaries between family and work boomed the requirement of finding solutions to overcome well-being issues. When compared to the other work contexts, in the global apparel industry, well-being matters a lot especially in countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan though they provide many employment opportunities for women and unskilled workers. However, it was found that there is a limited attention has been paid on identifying the impact of social and contextual factors on employee well-being. Therefore, the present study examined the effect of perceived decent work practices on employee well-being in the context of worker level employees in Sri Lankan apparel industry.

In terms of conceptualizing the aforementioned problem, Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) was used as the base theory. The theory emphasizes that if work environments not considered decent will create subsequent impact on the capability to fulfill needs for survival, social connection and self-determination, which in turn affect well-being of employees. However, PWT is lacking with explaining how employees can further enhance well-being individually by following different strategies since the theory discusses only about social and contextual factors. Effort recovery model depicted these individual recovery strategies that employees can use to temporarily relieved from exposure to work in order to enhance their well-being. Hence, the current study has supported the PWT by incorporating individual recovery strategies based on effort recovery model.

To achieve expected research objectives, the study adopted quantitative and cross-sectional survey approach. The study conducted among worker level employees in Sri Lankan apparel manufacturing companies. Worker level employees in Colombo district were selected through convenience sampling technique. The self-administered questionnaire was used as the survey instrument with the validated measurement scales based on relevant theories. The final sample of the study comprised 324 responses and

gathered data was analyzed by using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the support of SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 24.0.

The findings of the study depicted that there is a significant relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being and this direct relationship partially and fully mediated by fulfillment of survival needs and self-determination needs correspondingly. However, fulfillment of social connection needs does not mediate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being. Moreover, the moderating effect of individual recovery strategies was tested and it was found that individual recovery strategies significantly moderate the relationship between perceived decent work practices and employee well-being.

On the basis of study findings, theoretical and managerial implications were discussed in the last chapter of the study. There were several theoretical and empirical implications in this study. Since there were only very limited previous studies related to how perception of decent work practices influences employee well-being, the present study addressed the literature gap by providing piece of evidence to conceptualize the theory. In addition, the study enriched the theory of Psychology of Working by integrating individual recovery strategies as a moderator. On the other hand, the current study provides many managerial implications for the benefits of managers and practitioners. The study indicated that managers have high responsibility to re-examine the available working conditions in their workplaces and initiate required actions to transform the pace of quality of job creations. Finally, this study has highlighted the areas of future research based on the limitations of the current study.