IMPACT OF WORK ENVIRONMENT ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG MARRIED FEMALE NURSES AT GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

As the heart of healthcare, married female nurses in Sri Lankan government hospitals face unique challenges in achieving work-life balance due to various factors. The primary goal of this study is to identify the impact of Work Environment on Work-Life Balance among Married Female Nurses working at Government hospitals in Sri Lanka. The current study used a multi-method quantitative study design following the positivism philosophy and deductive approach. A structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data for quantitative data analysis. It also conducted extra interviews to get more thorough information. The sample size was 385 for the quantitative analysis and 12 for the qualitative analysis. Structured interviews were conducted following an interview checklist to gather descriptive data for qualitative analysis. The gathered data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software. Two main statistical methods were used in data analysis. Descriptive statistics summarize the data from a sample using indexes such as the mean, standard deviation, and Inferential statistics to draw inferences about the population using samples such as Hypothesis testing and Simple Linear Regression. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. The findings revealed a positive and moderate influence between the working environment and work-life balance, with a significant coefficient of the three dimensions: workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction. The study highlights the importance of creating a conducive work environment to enhance work-life balance for married female nurses in government hospitals.

Keywords: Government hospitals, married females, nursing officers, working environment, work-life balance.

1. Introduction

The adage "Health is Wealth" states that the most significant factor affecting a nation's overall wealth in the modern world is its citizens' health (Lakshmi et al., 2012). The healthcare industry may be considered a fast-expanding sector because of its top services and rising spending by both public and private entities. People today are increasingly aware of their health and the finest services (Maiya, 2015). When considering Sri Lanka's healthcare system, it has been demonstrated that nurses play a significant part in the hospital network's overall healthcare program (Rolls & De Silva, 2010). As a result, it's essential to look after them and establish a welcoming and modern workplace. Nurses experience stress because they are required to work overtime and are under continual pressure in the healthcare industry, where they are required to work around the clock. Because of this, maintaining a work-life balance is crucial for physical and mental health (Maiya, 2015). According to Azeem and Akhtar (2014), work-life balance and organizational commitment for nurses are the most important variables for them since they play a significant part in the performance of their organization and their family's well-being. The performance and productivity of the hospital are impacted by the nurses' dedication to their jobs and personal lives. Work-life balance impacts employees' views toward their firms and their personal lives.

According to the WHO, there are 59.8 million health professionals worldwide, and according to statistics from the Global Health Observatory, nurses and midwives make up more than half of several nations' national health workforces (World Health Organization, 2022). One of the top responsibilities of healthcare administrators is effective human resource management. According to the World Health Organization (2022), most health workers worldwide, including Sri Lanka, are nurses (World Health Organization, 2022). There is plenty of research that has been conducted worldwide to assess the work-life balance of female nurses, and the majority of them have been focused on factors such as stress, burnout, organizational commitment, etc. (Jameel & Alheety, 2023; Fukuzaki et al., 2021; Alheety, 2023; ensirani & Muthumani, n.d.; Reddy et al., 2010). Nearly 42% of nurses in Sri Lanka reported feeling some burnout, which is one of the work environment-related things that can be partly linked to an unsatisfactory work-life balance, according to a poll by the Sri Lanka Nurses Association. This emphasizes how critical it is to solve this matter quickly to protect nursing workers. Hospital personnel' dedication and work-life balance impact the facility's efficiency and effectiveness (Azeem and Akhtar, 2014). Therefore, the problem statement is to identify the causes of the WLB among nurses working in government hospitals in the Sri Lankan context, all of the elements above.

Prior research on work-life balance has primarily focused on various professional sectors, with a growing body of literature delving into the healthcare domain. Studies have shown that work-life balance has a direct impact on job satisfaction, employee well-being, and overall organizational performance (Susanto et al., 2022; Haar et al., 2014; Ansari et al., 2015; Mendis & Weerakkody, 2018; Khandelwal & Shekhawat, 2018 Divisekara, n.d; Dissanayaka & Hussain Ali, 2013). However, the work-life balance of married female nurses in the specific context of Sri Lankan government hospitals remains relatively understudied. Therefore, there is a gap in the existing literature regarding the specific challenges married female nurses face and the role of the work environment in shaping the work-life balance of married female nurses.

This research paper aims to investigate the influence of the work environment on the work-life balance of married female nurses serving in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data is expected to identify the influence of the working environment on their ability to maintain a satisfactory work-life balance. This research's findings contribute to the existing literature on work-life balance, specifically focusing on the experiences of married female nurses serving in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. The insights gained through this study are beneficial for healthcare policymakers, hospital administrators, and nursing leaders in understanding the influence of the working environment on the work-life balance of these nurses and devising targeted interventions and policies to enhance their well-being and job satisfaction.

As a result, the research focused on examining the impact of the working environment on the work-life balance among married female nurses serving in government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

1.1. Research Question

- What is the influence of the working environment on work-life balance among married female nurses at government hospitals in Sri Lanka?

1.2. Objective of the Study

- To identify the influence of working environment on work-life balance among married female nurses at government hospitals in Sri Lanka

2. Literature Review

The work-life balance of healthcare professionals, particularly married female nurses, has garnered increasing attention in recent years due to its impact on both personal well-being and job performance. Maintaining a healthy work-life

balance is essential for the overall job satisfaction and retention of nurses, contributing to improved patient care and organizational outcomes (Aamir et al., 2016; Holland et al., 2019).

2.1. Work-Life Balance in Nursing

Work-life balance refers to the equilibrium between the demands of work and personal life, allowing individuals to fulfill their professional responsibilities while tending to personal and family needs (Gragnano et al., 2020; Sundaresan, 2014; Gautam, 2018; Poelmans et al., 2008). In nursing, achieving a work-life balance is particularly challenging due to the demanding and often emotionally taxing nature of the profession. Nurses, especially those who are married, face unique challenges in managing work commitments and family responsibilities (Kim & Windsor, 2015; Winwood et al., 2006; Duarte et al., 2020; Bolton, 2000). Understanding the factors influencing work-life balance in this demographic is crucial for fostering a supportive work environment.

2.2. Gaps in Existing Literature

While the literature on work-life balance in nursing has expanded, a dearth of research specifically focuses on married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Limited studies have explored the unique challenges married female nurses face and the work environment's impact on their work-life balance. As the relationship between work environment and work-life balance may not be adequately covered in the literature now in circulation, this research aims to fill this gap by conducting a comprehensive investigation into this specific population.

2.3. Elements of Work Environment

Several scholars have highlighted the impact of the working environment on the work-life balance. Work-life balance has gained considerable attention in the contemporary workforce, especially among married female professionals. In the healthcare sector, female nurses are pivotal in delivering quality patient care. Understanding the factors that influence the work-life balance of married female nurses is crucial, and one of the primary determinants is the work environment. This literature review explores existing research on the impact of work environment, workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction on the work-life balance of married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

2.3.1. Work Environment and Work-Life Balance

The work environment significantly impacts the work-life balance of nurses (Fukuzaki et al., 2021; Sherman, 2004; Boamah & Laschinger, 2016). Research

by Braithwaite in 2008 found that stressful work environments can lead to burnout and hinder nurses' ability to manage their personal lives (Braithwaite, 2008). A supportive work environment, on the other hand, is linked to improved work-life balance (Dehghan Nayeri et al., 2011). Factors such as staffing levels, workload, and management support are integral to a positive work environment (Bruyneel et al., 2023). A study conducted by Ali et al. in 2023 also indicated that the work environment significantly impacts nurses' work-life balance (Ali et al., 2023). This leads to the following hypothesis;

H1: There is a positive influence of the working environment on work-life balance among the married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka

2.3.2 Workstation Satisfaction

Workstation satisfaction, referring to contentment with one's physical workspace, is a critical component of the work environment (Chandrasekar, 2011). A study by Wijaya & Suwandana in 2022 noted that nurses who were satisfied with their workstations reported better work-life balance (Wijaya & Suwandana, 2022). Another study demonstrated that ergonomics, adequate supplies, and a comfortable physical environment contribute to satisfaction and indirectly impact nurses' work-life balance (Applebaum et al., 2010). This leads to the following hypothesis;

$H1_a$: There is a positive influence of workstation satisfaction on work-life balance among married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

2.3.3 Environmental Workability

Environmental workability involves the adaptability of the work environment to the needs of the employees (Herrity, 2021). In a study by Phillips et al. (2022), environmental workability was associated with less work-related stress and improved work-life balance among healthcare professionals, including nurses (Phillips et al., 2022). Another study has revealed that Nurses who had the flexibility to manage their schedules and responsibilities were better able to balance work and personal life (Ng et al., 2017). This leads to the following hypothesis;

$H1_b$: There is a positive influence of environmental workability on work-life balance among married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

2.3.4 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is another crucial factor that interacts with the work environment to influence work-life balance (Susanto et al., 2022). Researchers like Al-Hussami (2008) have highlighted the relationship between nurses' job satisfaction and work-life balance. Satisfied nurses are more likely to find fulfillment in their personal lives, despite the often-demanding nature of their work (Yoder, 2010). Job satisfaction is not solely related to financial compensation but also includes factors like professional development, recognition, and support from superiors (Li et al., 2020). This leads to the following hypothesis;
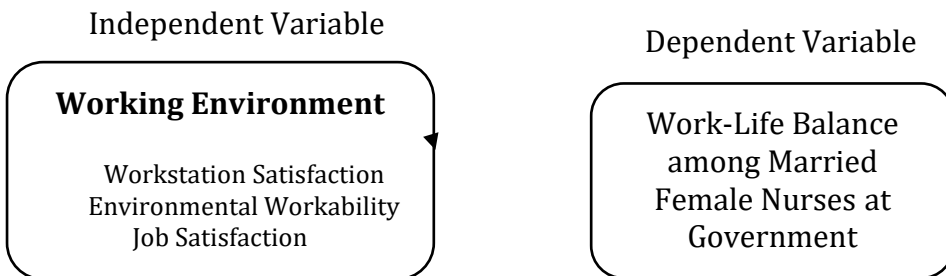
H1$_c$: There is a positive influence of job satisfaction on the work-life balance among married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, the current study identified the working environment as one of the most important factors affecting WFB among Married Female Nurses. Accordingly, the current study identified the working environment as an independent variable. The study hypothesizes that the working environment will significantly affect Work-Life Balance.

3. Methodology

3.1. Conceptualization

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the study

Independent Variable

Working Environment

Workstation Satisfaction
Environmental Workability
Job Satisfaction

Dependent Variable

Work-Life Balance among Married Female Nurses at Government

Source: Developed by the researchers

In this study, "workstation satisfaction" relates to an employee's contentment with the physical workspace and equipment.

"Environmental Workability" refers to the practical feasibility and effectiveness of environmental solutions, policies, or practices.

"Job satisfaction" encompasses a broader range of factors, including overall job contentment, relationships, and career opportunities.

3.2 Hypothesis

H1: There is a positive influence of the working environment on work-life balance among the married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka

3.2.1 Sub Hypothesis

H1$_a$: There is a positive influence of workstation satisfaction on work-life balance among married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

H1$_b$: There is a positive influence of environmental workability on work-life balance among married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

H1$_c$: There is a positive influence of job satisfaction on work-life balance among married female nurses serving at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

3.3 Operationalization of the Study

Table 1: Operationalization

Variables		Dimensions	Measurements		Sources from which the dimensions were obtained
Independe	Working Enviro	Workstation Satisfaction	5 Point Lik	Q1-Q5	Sumaiti & Saad, 2010
		Environmental Workability		Q6-Q10	Weale et al., 2019; Rajeshwari & Chandrika, n.d.

| nt Variable	nment		ert Scale		
		Job Satisfaction	5 Point Likert Scale	Q11-Q15	Weale et al., 2019; A P Muthu Kumarasamy et al., 2015; Umma & Zahana, 2021
Dependent Variable	Work-Life Balance	• Time Balance • Involvement balance • Satisfaction balance		Q16-20	Haar et al. (2014)

Source: A literature survey

3.4. Research Design

Research projects must be well-planned. The current study was developed using the indicators listed below, which comprised several layers such as philosophies, approaches, choices, time spans, and processes. The Saunders Research Onion, created by Saunders et al. (2003), shows the stages involved in creating research. Simply put, the onion layers provide a more complete account of a research study process.
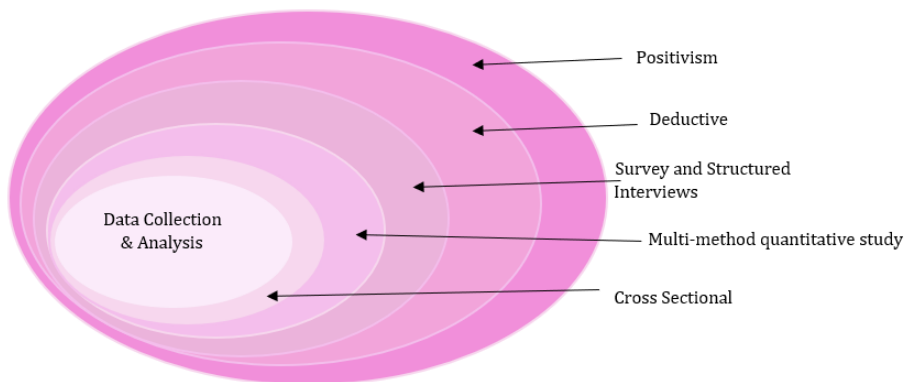
3.4.1 Research Onion

Figure 2: Research Onion
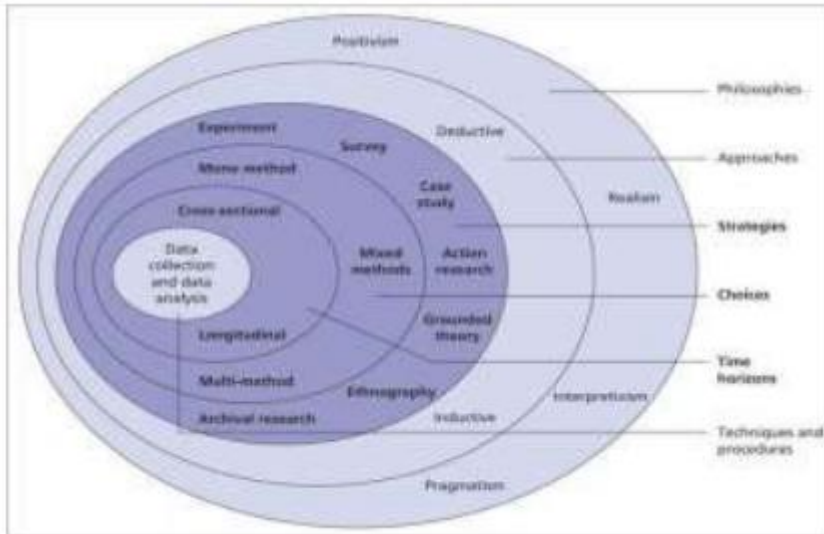
Source: Saunders et al., 2003

Research Onion for the current study

Figure 3: Research Onion for the current study

Source: Developed by the Researchers

3.4.2. Research Philosophy

In terms of research philosophy, positivism-based research philosophy was used in this study. In that context, the research outputs were generally based on logical reasoning, with the rationale primarily based on the information and results of the investigative activity (Park et al., 2020).

3.4.3. Research Approach

The deductive method is appropriate for our study because it enables us to expand upon pre-existing theoretical frameworks, test certain hypotheses, and provide results that can be extrapolated to a larger population. A deductive method offers a structured and systematic technique to examine this connection and add to the body of knowledge (Hinkel, 2005) in the field of nursing and healthcare management due to the complexity of the work environment and its influence on work-life balance.

3.4.4. Research Strategy

The research strategies used structured surveys and structured interviews in this study. The use of structured surveys and structured interviews in this research is justified because it allows for comprehensive data collection, the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, cross-validation of findings, capturing diverse perspectives, exploring complex relationships, and delving into the nuanced aspects of the work environment (Newman & Benz, 1998). This approach is well-suited to address the multifaceted nature of the impact of the work environment on work-life balance among married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

3.4.5. Choice

As the choice, multi-method was used. The decision to utilize a multi-method approach in this study is justified since it allows for a more thorough, balanced, and reliable inquiry into how the work environment affects married female nurses' work-life balance. The depth and breadth of the research results are eventually enhanced by this method because it enables the exploration of complicated linkages, the capturing of many viewpoints, and the generation of valuable suggestions based on quantitative and qualitative data.

3.4.6. Time Horizon

The time horizon is cross-sectional. It is justifiable to utilize a cross-sectional time horizon for this study because it provides a useful, effective, and economical means to examine how the work environment affects married female nurses' ability to combine their personal and professional lives in Sri Lankan government hospitals. It offers timely, pertinent information that can aid in current decision-making as a starting point for future research projects.

3.5. Population and Sample
3.5.1. Population

A population is a large group about which it is necessary to gather particular information (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). All the married female nurses employed by the public health system in Sri Lanka represent the population for this study.

3.5.2. Sample Techniques

Quantitative data were collected using the Convenience sampling technique. The sample selection was done purposefully for qualitative data to ensure diverse viewpoints and representation of different perspectives. Participants were carefully chosen to represent a variety of viewpoints.

3.5.3. Sample Size

To ensure a sufficient and complete representation of viewpoints for the mixed-method inquiry, the quantitative data were gathered from a sample of 385 individuals. In contrast, the qualitative data achieved saturation with 12 participants.

3.6. Data Collection

3.6.1. Quantitative Data Collection

A sample of 385 married female nurses was given self-administered surveys to gather quantitative data.

3.6.2. Survey Instrument

In this study, the researchers developed the measurement scale for each variable in developing the questionnaire. An exploratory analysis validated the questionnaire used in this study.

3.6.3. Qualitative Data Collection

Twelve of the original sample's participants were selected for structured interviews, which were used to collect qualitative data. The structured interviews enabled a thorough investigation of the participants' perspectives and experiences about work-life balance and the effects of the workplace.

3.6.4. Interview Questions and Interview Guide

The interview checklist was a structured instrument designed to guide the structured interviews conducted with the participants.

The structured interview questions for the study consist of 5 categories, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The categories of structured interview questions

Category	Description
Demographic data	It describes the personal information of the research participant.
Workstation Satisfaction	They are assessing the satisfaction of nurses with their physical workstations, including comfort, ergonomics, and equipment.
Environmental Workability	We are exploring the feasibility of environmental initiatives and measures that may affect work-life balance.
Job Satisfaction	We are examining how overall job satisfaction relates to work-life balance and whether satisfaction with job-related factors contributes to or hinders work-life balance.
Work-Life Balance	Exploring the nurses' perception of work-life balance, the challenges they face, and their strategies for achieving and maintaining this balance

Source: Developed by the Researchers

3.7 . Data Analysis

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

SPSS statistical software, a linear regression, which involves one independent variable, is used. The data on work-life balance, job satisfaction, and opinions of

the work environment among married female nurses were statistically analyzed to find trends, correlations, and patterns.

3.7.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Participants' narratives were found using content analysis to provide a deeper insight into their experiences and viewpoints. This study uses a mixed-method approach to give a more thorough and nuanced knowledge of the variables affecting married female nurses' impressions of the work environment, job satisfaction, and work-life balance in Sri Lankan government hospitals.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Validity of the Instruments

When developing or adapting a questionnaire, it is essential to assess its reliability, validity, and the quality of the data it will produce. Exploratory analysis can help to achieve this (Kwon et al., 2014). In researchers developed the measurement scale for each variable in developing the questionnaire. An exploratory analysis was conducted to validate the questionnaire for this research. An item analysis was conducted to assess the performance of individual questionnaire items. It examined the distribution of responses for each item and identified the items with extremely skewed and limited responses. Then, Reliability Analysis was done by calculating the reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha, to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire. High internal consistency indicates that the questionnaire items measure the same underlying construct. Experts can evaluate whether the measurement scales adequately cover the intended construct (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). Accordingly, in this study experts have evaluated whether the questionnaire and the structured interview checklist adequately cover the intended construct. Further, pilot testing was also done with a small sample of 35 to identify any issues with the questionnaire's clarity, wording, or format, and necessary revisions to the questionnaire were made based on the feedback received. To complete the exploratory analysis, Qualitative Feedback was also collected from participants about their experience with the questionnaire and the structured interview checklist. It provided insights into the questionnaire's clarity and relevance.

4.2 Cronbach's Alpha Statistics of Scale

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Statistics of Scale

Scale	Variable type	Items	Real Test Cronbach's Alpha
Workstation Satisfaction	Independent	05	0.713
Environmental Workability	Independent	05	0.728
Job Satisfaction	Independent	05	0.811
WLB	Dependent	05	0.946

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

The results indicate that all the scales, workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, job satisfaction, and work-life balance have high internal consistency, as evidenced by their Cronbach's Alpha values (0.713 for "workstation satisfaction", 0.728 for "environmental workability", 0.811 for "job satisfaction" and 0.946 for "work-life balance"). These values suggest that the items within each scale are strongly correlated and effectively measure the constructs they intend to assess. A high Cronbach's Alpha value is desirable as it increases confidence in the reliability of the measurement. With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.946 for "work-life balance," researchers can have high confidence in the consistency and accuracy of the responses provided by participants related to work-life balance. Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha of 0.750 for the "Working Environment" scale indicates a good level of internal consistency among the items, providing confidence in the reliability of this measure as well.

4.3. Analysis for Descriptive Statistics

Table 4: Results of Descriptive Statistics All Variables

Measures		Workstation Satisfaction	Environmental Workability	Job Satisfaction	WLB
N	Valid	385	385	385	385
	Missing	0	0	0	0

Mean	3.1528	3.6852	3.2157	3.4285
Std. Deviation	0.55642	0.78465	0.67352	0.7156
Skewness	0.865	0.424	0.846	0.715
Kurtosis	-0.243	-1.122	-0.261	-0.282
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.645	0.645	0.645	0.645

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

The table presents the descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variable: Workstation Satisfaction, Environmental Workability, Job Satisfaction, and Work-Life Balance (WLB). The mean values for independent variables indicate the average responses for each variable. The mean scores for all measures are above 3, indicating moderate satisfaction levels. The standard deviations show the degree of variability within the data. It suggests relatively low variability in responses. All variables exhibit positive skewness, implying that most respondents rated their working environment and work-life balance favorably. Additionally, negative kurtosis suggests that the data have relatively lighter tails than a normal distribution.

4.4 Bivariant Analysis of Variables of the Study

The study uses the Pearson Correlation approach to provide a bivariate examination of the impact between exogenous factors and the dependent variable. Based on the Pearson sum displacement correlation matrix, the correlation coefficient displays the influence's strength between two variables. Pearson Correlations statistics of the current study are as follows.

Table 5: Pearson Correlations of Variables

Independent Variable	Pea. Corr.	WLB
Workstation Satisfaction	Pea. Corr.	.779**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	385
Environmental Workability	Pea. Corr.	.752**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

	N	385
Job Satisfaction	Pea. Corr.	.812**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	385

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

The above data represents the correlation between the dimensions of the independent variable (Workstation et al.) and the dependent variable, work-life balance (WLB), in the study. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between each independent variable and work-life balance. The Pearson correlation coefficient values suggest that the working environment positively affects work-life balance. The p-value is zero, which indicates that the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. Accordingly, the findings suggest that a positive work environment effectively improves work-life balance for the government nurses in the study.

4.5 Identification of the influence of Working Environment on Work-Life Balance (Individual coefficients)

The study created an independent coefficient table to discover the influence and validate the study's claim. Individual coefficient values are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Individual Coefficient Table

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		Tolerance	VIF
Workstation Satisfaction	.528	.124	.428	.000	.604	1.647
Environmental Workability	.217	.091	.219	.021	.633	1.562
Job Satisfaction	.264	.090	.272	.017	.674	1.446

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

Table 6 presents a regression model's individual coefficient results for the "working environment" variable. The unstandardized coefficient (B) indicates the change in the dependent variable (work-life balance) associated with a one-

unit change in the predictors (workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction). The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.428, 0.219, and 0.272 represents the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. The T-value of 4.17, 2.34, and 2.72, respectively, represent the associated significance level (Sig.) of 0.010, indicating that the "working environment" variable significantly impacting the dependent variable. Collinearity statistics (Tolerance and VIF) assess multicollinearity, with values close to 1 indicating low collinearity. Since the results are highly significant and have a positive effect, following hypotheses are valid.

Table 7: Results of the Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Pearson Correlation	Significance of Correlation	Conclusion
H1: There is a positive influence of the working environment on Work-Life Balance	.781**	<.000	Accepted
$H1_a$: There is a positive influence of workstation Satisfaction on Work-Life Balance	.779**	<.000	Accepted
$H1_b$: There is a positive influence of environmental workability on Work-Life Balance	.752**	<.021	Accepted
$H1_c$: There is a positive influence of job satisfaction on Work-Life Balance	.812**	<.017	Accepted

According to hypothesis (H1), work-life balance is influenced by the working environment. There is a significant positive association between these variables, as shown by the Pearson correlation value of .781**. This link is statistically significant at the level of .000 significances. As a result, the hypothesis is accepted, supporting the finding that the work-life balance of married female employees in government hospitals in Sri Lanka is significantly influenced by their working environment.

All predictor factors and work-life balance have correlation coefficients higher than 0.70, demonstrating a significant positive influence. All correlation coefficients have p-values indicating less than 0.05, indicating significant statistical significance. Therefore, the three sub-hypotheses (H1a, H1b, and H1c) are accepted. These results indicate a positive association between workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction with work-life balance.

4.6. Qualitative data analysis

It is important to note that quantitative analysis is only a partial analysis to interpret the findings fully, and additional information would be needed to interpret the findings fully, and draw conclusions. Therefore, qualitative data analysis will facilitate a better interpretation of the results obtained through quantitative data analysis. The work environment plays a crucial role in a nurse's work-life balance. The interviews conducted with 12 married female nurses working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka found that nature of work, workability, and peers are the significant factors that impact work-life balance. Regarding the nature of work, the participants identified that bearable is more conducive to a better work-life balance. One nurse stated,

> "Working on a routine schedule helps me balance work and life as I can plan my activities accordingly."

(Respondent 05)

However, some nurses also mentioned that dynamic and challenging work can also be beneficial for work-life balance, as it keeps them motivated and engaged. Regarding workability, the physical settings and working conditions were recognized as important factors. Nurses appreciated the availability of suitable equipment and infrastructure to perform their duties effectively.

> "If the physical environment is not suitable, it affects my mood and performance, which, in turn, affects my personal life too."

(Respondent 03)

One participant stated. Additionally, flexible working arrangements, such as the ability to work from home or adjust working hours, were also mentioned as critical for better work-life balance. The nature of peers also plays a vital role in work-life balance. Supportive and well-trained peers provide a positive work environment that reduces stress and promotes a better work-life balance. One participant stated,

> "If colleagues are well-trained and supportive, the workload can be shared, ultimately leading to a better work-life balance."

(Respondent 01)

However, some nurses also highlighted the challenges they face in maintaining work-life balance due to the nature of their work. For instance, one nurse mentioned,

> "Sometimes, working overtime can be challenging and affect my personal life."

(Respondent 10)

Respondent 10 admits that working more hours might be challenging and detrimental to their personal life. This implies that lengthy work hours can

interfere with their capacity to reconcile work obligations with personal obligations, impairing their general well-being and work-life balance.

> "I find it difficult to maintain a healthy work-life balance, especially when working overtime. It leaves me with limited time for my family and personal activities."

(Respondent 5)

The difficulties of preserving work-life balance are highlighted by respondent number 5, particularly when confronted with the demands of overtime work. Their well-being is impacted by the lack of time for family and personal activities, which emphasizes the need to resolve work-hour rules and foster employee well-being.

> "The constant work pressure and high-stress levels can be overwhelming, making it challenging to juggle my professional duties with my responsibilities at home."

(Respondent 7)

Respondent 7 has a sensation of overwhelm of the ongoing job pressure and stress high-stress levels, which affects their capacity to balance personal and professional obligations. This quote emphasizes the importance of workplace stress-reduction techniques and social support networks for improving work-life balance and general job satisfaction.

> "Balancing work and personal life can be a real struggle, and it is even harder when the workplace demands too much of my time and energy."

(Respondent 3)

The challenge of striking a healthy work-life balance, particularly when the job requires a lot of time and effort, is openly acknowledged by Respondent 3. This conflict highlights the value of setting limits and encouraging a work environment that respects and acknowledges people's personal lives.

> "I believe that the work environment plays a significant role in determining how well I can manage my work and personal life. A supportive and understanding workplace can make a big difference."

(Respondent 9)

Respondent 9 highlights the critical impact that workplace culture has on work-life balance. Improved work-life integration, increased job satisfaction and general well-being for employees, are all made possible by helpful and understanding work environments. Also, they mentioned that work pressure and high stress levels could negatively impact their work-life balance. The study indicates that the work-life balance among married female nurses working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka is influenced by several factors related to the work environment. Employers need to ensure a conducive work environment to improve their employees' work-life balance.

The study emphasizes how important the workplace environment affects nurses' ability to combine their professional and personal lives. The qualitative interviews revealed several factors that significantly affect work-life balance. Participants acknowledged that significant factors impacting their capacity to combine work and home life successfully were the nature of the task, workability, and colleagues. Participants thought that the nature of the work was favorable to a greater work-life balance since the duties were predictable and doable. However, other nurses also pointed out that dynamic and difficult work might be advantageous since it keeps them engaged and motivated. Workability elements, including physical surroundings and working circumstances, were also noted as crucial. Nurses valued a nice physical workplace with quality equipment because it improved their morale, work performance, and, ultimately their personal lives. A better work-life balance was also highlighted as requiring flexible working arrangements, such as working from home or changing working hours. Additionally, the character of peers was crucial. A nice work environment with supportive and well-trained coworkers encouraged stress reduction and improved work-life balance. Nevertheless, because of the nature of their profession, several nurses found it difficult to establish a work-life balance, which led to worries about overtime and its effects on their personal lives. The study highlights how crucial it is to address these issues to improve the work-life balance of married female nurses working in government hospitals.

4.7 Discussion

The current study deals with workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction variables. Literature from various contexts evidences the related factors of the work environment and their impact (Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Roth et al., 2021; Sharma, 2016; Umamaheswari et al., 2021). In the current study, it has only been considered three variables and the impact. The specialty is overlapping factors from similar studies that the selected variables of this study have covered. Factors such as workload, working hours, organizational support, and physical settings can significantly impact their ability to manage work and family responsibilities (Holland et al., 2019; Manyisa & van Aswegen, 2017; NABIRYE et al., 2011). The work environment's supportiveness and flexibility are vital for married female nurses in balancing their roles as healthcare professionals and family members. Excessive workload and long working hours are major stressors affecting nurses' work-life balance (Singh et al., 2020; Skinner et al., 2013; Gribben & Semple, 2021; Kandel, 2022). Married female nurses often find it challenging to allocate adequate time to personal and family commitments due to the demands of their profession. A high workload can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion, negatively impacting their overall well-being and family life (Tayfur et al., 2013; ILIES et al., 2010;

Tayfur & Arslan, 2013). Organizational support, including policies related to flexible working arrangements and family-friendly initiatives, is vital in promoting work-life balance among nurses (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Gatrell et al., 2016; McIntosh et al., 2003; White et al., 2003). Supportive policies, such as adjustable working hours, job sharing, and telecommuting options, give married female nurses greater control over their schedules.

The current study considered the physical work environment under "Workstation satisfaction". The physical work environment, including the availability of adequate resources, modern equipment, and ergonomic facilities, can impact nurses' job satisfaction and well-being (Cohen et al., 2006; Capone et al., 2022; Rechel et al., 2009; Heerwagen et al., 1995). A well-maintained and safe working environment reduces stress levels and increases job satisfaction, positively influencing work-life balance. The peers and relationships were considered under the variable "job satisfaction" in the current research. The support and camaraderie among colleagues and supervisors can significantly influence nurses' work-life balance (Battistelli et al., 2012; Lopes Morrison, 2005; Rashmi et al., 2021; Laschinger et al., 2007). Married female nurses who have supportive and understanding peers are more likely to experience reduced stress and a better balance between their professional and personal lives (Moloney et al., 2017; Rechel et al., 2009)

5. Findings

The study discusses the impact of the work environment on work-life balance among married female nurses working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka. The workplace impacts work-life balance, according to hypothesis (H_1). The sub-hypotheses $H1_a$, $H1_b$, and $H1_c$ are supported by the same conclusion. The study revealed that their working environment greatly impacts the work-life balance of married female employees in the government sector. Through interviews with 12 participants, qualitative data analysis was conducted to complement the quantitative findings. The major factors influencing work-life balance were identified as workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction. Participants mentioned that routine and bearable work schedules allowed them to maintain a better work-life balance, as they could plan personal activities accordingly.

However, some also found dynamic and challenging work to be motivating and beneficial. Workability, including physical settings and working conditions, was also crucial. Good equipment and infrastructure positively influenced mood, performance, and personal life. Flexible working arrangements, like working from home or adjusting hours, were seen as critical for achieving work-life balance. Supportive and well-trained peers helped share workloads and reduce stress, leading to a more positive work environment. Work-life balance was,

however, severely influenced by difficulties, including putting in extra hours, deadline pressure, and high levels of stress. The study underlines the need to create a supportive workplace environment for married female nurses to enhance work-life balance. To assist their workers' well-being and improve their work-life balance, employers should consider these variables.

The report highlights the need for a welcoming and empathetic workplace that provides flexible scheduling and values work-life integration. To encourage better work-life balance for their workers, employers can establish policies and activities that seek to create a welcoming environment. This study provides a thorough knowledge of the dynamics of work-life balance and its link to the workplace via the use of both quantitative and qualitative data, with important ramifications for nursing organizations and practitioners.

6. Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate the impact of the work environment on the work-life balance among married female nurses working in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Employing a multi-method quantitative study design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to gain comprehensive insights into the experiences and perceptions of married female government health sector employees in Sri Lanka. Quantitative analysis using SPSS revealed the working environment's positive and moderate influence on work-life balance. The significant coefficients of working environment; workstation satisfaction, environmental workability, and job satisfaction suggest that improvements in the work environment can lead to better work-life balance outcomes for married female nurses.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge some limitations of the study. The research was limited to government hospitals in Sri Lanka, and the findings may not be generalizable to other healthcare settings or countries. Furthermore, self-reporting biases and the subjectivity inherent in qualitative data analysis might have influenced the results. The current research employs convenience sampling. The drawback of convenience sampling in research is that when participants are selected based on accessibility, there may be selection bias and a non-representative sample as a result (Edgar & Manz, 2017). This may reduce the study's findings' reliability and ability to be applied to a larger group.

Future research endeavors should consider investigating additional workplace components and their impact on the work-life balance of nurses. Instead of relying solely on convenience sampling, researchers may enhance the study's credibility by employing diverse sampling techniques. While the current study centers on married female nurses, it is worth exploring the perspectives of male nurses to offer a more inclusive and gender-diverse understanding of work-life

balance in healthcare. Additionally, with their unique cultural and customs influences, private hospitals may present distinct workplace circumstances. Therefore, replicating the study among married female nurses in the private sector can provide comparative insights into workplace environments. The current research follows a cross-sectional design, offering a snapshot of the influence between the work environment and work-life balance. Future investigations could consider expanding this to a longitudinal study, enabling tracking changes and developments over time. Such an approach would provide a more in-depth exploration of the dynamics at play and facilitate the identification of any discrepancies in work-life balance among nurses.

It is clear that among married female nurses, work-life balance is highly influenced by workstation satisfaction. Government hospitals in Sri Lanka should make investments in ergonomic and pleasant workspaces a top priority to improve this aspect. This entails outfitting nursing stations with adjustable workstations, comfortable seats, and sufficient lighting and ventilation. Nurses' unique workplace demands should be met by implementing regular assessments and feedback methods.

The study emphasizes how crucial environmental workability is to achieving a work-life balance. Hospitals should ensure that their infrastructure, facilities, and resources are easily accessible and kept in good condition to provide a more favorable work environment. Having enough supplies, up-to-date medical equipment, and effective communication methods is crucial. Additionally, keeping the workplace tidy, orderly, and safe might help nurses feel less stressed and have a better work-life balance.

The fact that work-life balance and job satisfaction are positively correlated emphasizes how crucial it is to address the variables that affect nurses' job happiness. The enhancement of nurse-patient ratios, the mitigation of task stress, and the facilitation of training and development opportunities have to be the top priorities for government hospitals. In addition to providing competitive pay and benefits, fostering a culture of appreciation and recognition may improve nurses' job satisfaction, which can favor their work-life balance.

The recommendations mentioned above provide a comprehensive framework for hospitals to create a more supportive and conducive environment that acknowledges the unique challenges nurses face, ultimately enhancing their well-being through work-life balance. Implementing these recommendations can result in a more content and balanced nursing workforce, which is vital for the overall quality of healthcare in Sri Lanka.

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