Effect of Work Life Balance and Job Stress on Turnover Intention with the Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction: A Study of Commissioned Officers in Sri Lanka Military Forces

M. D. E. Sameera Jayamanne[1] and Indika P. Kaluarachchige[2]
[1]MBA in HRM Programme, The Open University of Sri Lanka
[2]Senior Lecturer, University College of Matara, University of Vocational Technology, Sri Lanka
eroshans@gmail.com, indikapri@gmail.com

Abstract: Employee turnover has been an important research area in social science over the past involving the discipline of human resource management. But these types of studies in the military are very few. This paper makes use of quantitative research methods to assess the effect of work life balance and job stress as predictor variables on job satisfaction which is intervening variable towards the turnover intention as the outcome variable in the schematic diagram of the study. Data were collected from 327 Commissioned Officers of the military in Sri Lanka through a structured questionnaire and processed those data by using correlation and regression analyses. The results of the analyses indicated that the survey was reliable, and the study model is significant. Data analysis of the research study revealed that the correlations among turnover intention, job satisfaction, job stress and work life balance are highly significant. As per the regression results, both work life balance and job stress affect both job satisfaction and turnover intention of Commissioned Officers. But job satisfaction doesn't mediate the relationships between work life balance and turnover intention as well as job stress and turnover intention. The fallouts indicated that job stress and work life balance are the determinants of the turnover intention of commissioned officers although there is no significant mediating relationship of job satisfaction between them. Based on the study, it is suggested that remedial actions should be proposed to reduce the job stress in order to mitigate the turnover intention while encouraging work life balance practices. Moreover, it is suggested that management needs to put more emphasis on improving the counselling and stress reducing aspects while enhancing working conditions to minimize the turnover intention among military officers.

Keywords*: Job Satisfaction, Job Stress, Military, Turnover Intention, Work Life Balance*

Background

Every organisation takes special interest to retain their employees for a considerable period thus employees are the most important asset for any organisation (Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2018). Moreover, organisations try to achieve sustainable competitive advantage through their human resource competencies in the modern context (Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2018). However, employee turnover has a high impact on organisational performance as well as the effectiveness of the operation (Bosman, Buitendach & Rothmann, 2019). Employee Turnover can be defined as the thoughts occupying employees regarding voluntarily leaving their organisations or quitting their jobs (Watrous et al, 2016). An employee's decision to quit an organisation is an undesirable outcome for the organisation and the employee as it affects both of them in many ways (Abbasi and Hollman, 2008).

Employee turnover is also defined as the ratio of the number of organisation

members who have left during the period being considered divided by the average number of people in that organisation during the period (Price, 2001). It refers to the turnover as the entire process associated with filling a vacancy. Each time a position is vacated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, a new employee must be hired and trained. This replacement cycle is known as employee staffing (Woods, 1995). Moreover, employee turnover can be termed as the situation where an employee fails to report for work when he is supposed to be working or when he is scheduled to work.

The study conducted by Zhang (2016) reveals that various factors can be identified to be influencing employee turnover among the employed personnel in an organisation. These factors include workload, issues in the home-front and physical as well as emotional stress and the job satisfaction. As per the study these factors are absolutely influencing the employee turnover (Zhang, 2016). As stated by Hee and Ann (2019), it is understandable that, if an employee develops a negative feeling of employment, it creates a feeling of leaving the employment. This feeling develops the intention on the employee's mind that the employment is worthless. Further, Hee and Ann (2019) discussed that these factors are negatively influencing employee work life balance, job stress and personal job satisfaction.

Particularly in military organisations, a service person who absent for the duty/ work becomes an offender who could be taken into custody either by the military authorities under the relevant Service Acts or by the Civil Police under the prevailing law of the country. Subsequently, respective military organisation has to utilize more resources (i.e. in terms of funds and time) to investigate absentees and carry out disciplinary actions against the offenders subsequent to recruiting and training the forces to replace them. Therefore, employee turnover can be identified as a huge burden for the military forces.

Considering the above aspects, it is important to identify the factors influencing turnover intention of service personnel in the Sri Lanka Armed Forces. Therefore, this research is aimed to find out the effect of work life balance and job stress on job satisfaction towards turnover intention of commissioned officers in Sri Lankan military forces. The main objective of this research study is to ascertain the effect of work life balance and job stress on the turnover intention of Commissioned Officers in Sri Lanka Military forces with the mediating relationship of job satisfaction.

Literature Review

There are several research studies on employee turnover among organisational context as well as industry wise. Employee Turnover can be defined as thoughts occupying the employees regarding leaving their organisations voluntarily or quitting their occupations (Watrous et al, 2006). The decision of an employee to quit an organisation is an undesirable. That decision affects both the organisation and the employee in many ways (Abbasi and Hollman, 2008). There are many reasons of employee turnover, which include an employee's personal attitudes and their potential, management culture, organisational configuration, appraiser, peers, external compatible job demands, and self-attitudes (Berry, 2010).

Employee turnover is defined by scholars in a number of ways. Even though such definitions are different by vocabulary, the ultimate meaning remains the same. Henha (2017) defined employee turnover as the situation where an employee ceases to be a member of an organisation. Further, Abbasi and Hollman, (2000)

elaborated that employee turnover is the entrance of new employees into the organisation and the departure of existing employees from the organisation.

Many studies have conducted to measure the factors influencing employee turnover and relative aspects. Existing literature shows in human resource aspects, absenteeism is the term given when an employee is habitually and frequently absence from work. It is not including the paid leave which are authorised nature and occasions where the employer has allowed certain time offs for the employee. Voluntary absenteeism occurs when employees decide to stop working with their organisations and resign, whereas involuntary absenteeism refers to organisations choosing to dismiss employees (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000). It is considered very important to understand its predictors to minimize its negative impact on an organisation's performance. This has attracted the attention of researchers to focus more on employee leaving an organisation rather than entering it (Price, 2001). Several factors affect an employee's turnover. Employee's assessment of job-related organisational decision, compensation, job satisfaction, union, experience in the organisation, demographic variables, family size, trust, commitment, etc. (Watrous et al, 2006).

Turnover intention is defined as the likelihood that an employee will leave the organisation of his or her own will within the near future. Even though there is a number of research studies done on the real turnover of organisations, it is a challenging task to determine the real reasons or factors which cause the turnover. Additionally, the turnover intention is identified as the reflection of employees' attitude towards the organisation as a behavioural intention is a reliable measure of possibilities that humans express a particular behaviour (Henha, 2017). The turnover intention and actual turnover have been studied as both strong and positive relationship between each other. Therefore, the turnover intention has always been a major concern for management in almost every business entity (Lee et al., 2017). Regardless of the fact that all the employees who have turnover intentions, do not translate into actual turnover, still, such intentions have adverse effects on the organisation such as poor performance, lowered morale etc. (Lee et al., 2017). Having considered the above-reported evidence on turnover, intention it can be concluded that the turnover intention is the most reliable and affordable predictor of actual employee turnover that organisations can focus on so that preventive actions can be taken either to reduce the actual employee turnover or to mitigate the adverse effects of leaving talented employees (Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012).

Job Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, demand or resource related to employee's desires, which are both uncertain and important in respect of the employee as per Abbasi and Hollman, (2000). Job stress is the outcome of various organisational and individual stresses relevant to once' occupation (Zhang, 2016).

As highlighted by Zhang (2016) job stress has become a critical problem in modern business organisations and it does not only impact on leave of job dissatisfaction and impacts on employees and families as well. Stress refers to the pressure or tension people feel in life. According to the existing research, solid evidence was provided by various organisational stresses such as role conflict, role ambiguity, role overloads and task demand etc. Job-related stress can cause job related dissatisfaction. Hence it may also lead to lesser motivation of employees (Van Dyk, 2012). Domestic

issues refer to pressure from families and employees will not be getting sufficient salaries to fulfil their needs and expectations. When they did not receive the pay and benefits which they expected, his or her family will negatively impact on employment. However, the family can negatively or positively impact absenteeism (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000). It also occurs when the employee going through intense pressure while working in an organisation.

Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or an affective reaction to one's job (Abbasi and Hollman, 2000). Further, job satisfaction can be identified as a worker's sense of achievement and success on their job. The definition suggests employees themselves form attitudes towards their jobs by considering feelings, beliefs and behaviours. One's job satisfaction may lead to personal well-being as well. Because the satisfaction of the job also implies that the job is enjoyed by the employee, happiness and enthusiasm are embedded and the employees are suitable for getting rewarded for their efforts. As per Zhang, (2016), job satisfaction can be identified as multidimensional and such domains are satisfaction with pay, promotion opportunities, fringe benefits, job security, the importance of the job etc. Therefore, it can be identified that job satisfaction as a variable directly proportionate to recognition, income, promotion and the achievement of job-related goals which can eventually cause the employee to have the feeling of self-fulfilment (Abbasi and Hollman, 2000).

In military background, the employee who is a militant may release the pressure from whoever is vulnerable around him. In most situations, the spouse and the children will have to face the repercussions of the intense pressure and depression of the militant, and it may result in many other implications. This is the situation where affairs representing home issues entering the workplace. The proposition that family disturbances could encourage the employee to consider leaving their job/organisation is well supported. Therefore, employees are experiencing greater disturbances at home that intrude into the workplace become encouraged to seek employment elsewhere, perhaps in search of a workplace where he could attend to family affairs conveniently. In this endeavour, the employee experiencing family disturbances may be looking to reduce their working hours or rearrange their work schedule so that their pattern of work will have an impact on turnover in military forces. Present context, organisations streamline their working processes to make work-life balance to achieve competitive advantage through the workforce. Flexible conditions for working hours, relationship with management and supervisors and favourable policies and procedures enhances the work life balance (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000).

Methodology

The research model which suggests the relationships between the different variables in the study along with the research hypotheses are given below.

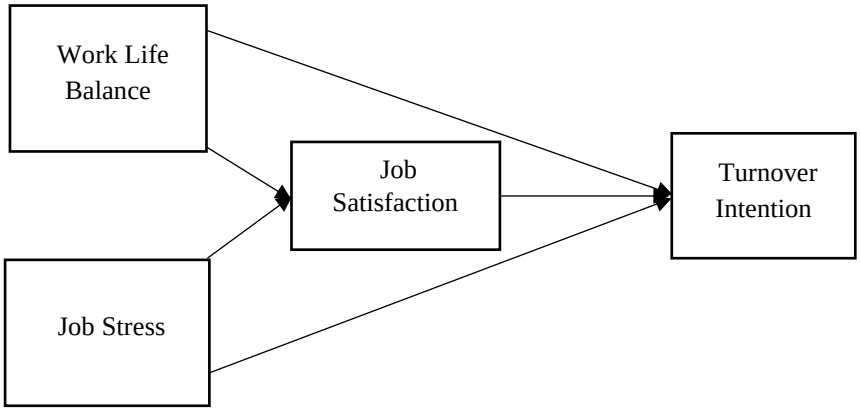

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature and the conceptual model; the following hypotheses were developed.

H1: There is a significant effect of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction
H2: There is a significant effect of Job Stress on Job Satisfaction
H3: There is a significant effect of Work Life Balance on Turnover Intention
H4: There is a significant effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention
H5: There is a significant effect of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention
H6: There is a significant effect of Work Life Balance on Turnover Intention mediated by Job Satisfaction
H7: There is a significant effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention mediated by Job Satisfaction

The study focused on 327 commissioned officers who are currently serving in Sri Lankan military and a structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analysed using descriptive, correlation and regression analyses.

Data Analysis and Results

The Cronbach's Alpha is used to test the degree of the consistency of an instrument (Sekaran, 1992). The higher the Alpha is more reliable. The range is within value from 0.00 to 1.00. The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.00 shows poor reliability and 1.00 shows the perfect reliability. As per Nunnally (1978) it has indicated that 0.7 and above as acceptable reliability coefficients. The Cronbach's Alpha is more than 0.7 in all variables. Therefore, it is established that the data of the main survey is reliable.

The turnover intention of respondents was assessed using five indicators as, intention to early retire from the job, intention to resign the job, intention to look for other jobs, searching for job vacancy and holding similar appointments which measured by five questions. As per the statistics, most important item related to the turnover intention of commissioned officers is individual interest on finding another job opportunity which has mean value of 3.16 and the decision to leave the job early prior to the entitled retirement period which indicates a mean value of 2.91.

The job satisfaction of respondents was assessed using five indicators as level of

satisfaction, satisfaction on salary, level of intention to remain, referring others for job vacancy and recommendation for others which measured by eight questions. According to the statistics, the most important item is enjoyment of the work at the current job which has a mean value of 3.14 and next is satisfaction with the present job which the mean value is 2.99. The least important items are managing the requirements with the present salary and satisfaction on the salary received from the present job which have mean value of 2.06 and 2.04 respectively.

The job stress of respondents was assessed using five indicators as level of work pressure, workload increment, level of job security, support of superiors, support of subordinates which measured by eight questions. As per the survey data, highest contributary item is work pressure at the present job which the mean value is 3.21. Other important factors are, workload incensement, job security, support from subordinates and assistance from juniors.

The work life balance of respondents was assessed using five indicators as organisational culture, commitments of own work, commitments of family matters, healthy work environment and family/ work interface which measured by eight questions. As per the research data, the most important item is manageable workload at the job while other factors are organisational culture, pleasing nature of work to be performed, gratification on the working environment at the organisation and ability to manage job work with personal and family matters are least important items.

The correlation analysis was used to find the associations existing between the variables. The consequences of the correlation analysis are presented in bellow matrix.

Table 1: Correlations

		Turnover Intention	Job Satisfaction	Job Stress	Work Life Balance
Turnover Intention	Correlation Sig.	1	-.289** .000	.226** .000	-.406** .000
Job Satisfaction	Correlation Sig.	-.289** .000	1	-.525** .000	.555** .000
Job Stress	Correlation Sig.	.226** .000	-.525** .000	1	-.548** .000
Work Life Balance	Correlation Sig.	-.406** .000	.555* .000	-.548** .000	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

According to the correlation matrix, correlation between job satisfaction, job stress and work life balance with turnover intention are highly significant. These factors are strongly associated with the turnover intention. All correlation coefficients of study variables show relationships among the variables, and these are statistically significant. The strongest significant association shows in between work life balance and job satisfaction and its coefficient of correlation is 0.555 at a 0.01 significant level. The next significant association shows in between work life balance and job stress and its coefficient of correlation is 0.548 at a 0.01 significant level and the association between job satisfaction and job stress which coefficient of correlation is -0.525 at a 0.01 significant level. The

association between work life balance and turnover intention has coefficient of correlation of -0.406 at a 0.01 significant level. And the association between job satisfaction and turnover intention received coefficient of correlation of -0.289 at a 0.01 significant level. As well as the association between job stress and turnover intention has coefficient of correlation of 0.226 at a 0.01 significant level.

Multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to investigate the effects between the variables. This study formulated seven hypotheses, and the coefficients of multiple regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses. Further, the mediating relationship of job satisfaction was tested using the Baron & Kenny (1986) method which mainly includes four steps to test the mediational hypotheses.

Table 3: Mediating Relationship of Job Satisfaction between Work Life Balance and Turnover Intention

Steps	Relationships		R^2	Beta	t	Sig
	IV	DV				
1	Work Life Balance	Turnover Intention	.164	-.406	-7.997	.000
2	Work Life Balance	Job Satisfaction	.308	.555	12.033	.000
3	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intention	.083	-.289	-5.439	.000
4	Work Life Balance	Turnover Intention	.170	-.354	-5.824	.000
	Job Satisfaction			-.092	-1.514	.131

Step 1 - Work Life Balance on Turnover Intention; Regression coefficient is -.406 at a 0.01 level of significance. The model explains 16.4% of the variance in Turnover Intention based on Work Life Balance. As Work Life Balance increases, there is a significant negative impact on Turnover Intention ($\beta = -0.406$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that employees with better work-life balance are less likely to have intentions to leave.

Step 2 - Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction - Regression coefficient is .555 at a 0.01 level of significance. The model now explains 30.8% of the variance in Job Satisfaction based on Work Life Balance. A significant positive impact ($\beta = 0.555$, $p = 0.000$) suggests that employees with better work-life balance tend to have higher job satisfaction.

Step 3 - Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention - Regression coefficient is -.289 at a 0.01 level of significance. The model explains 8.3% of the variance in Turnover Intention based on Job Satisfaction. A significant negative impact ($\beta = -0.289$, $p = 0.000$) indicates that higher job satisfaction is associated with lower turnover intention.

Step 4 - Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention – there is a significant negative relationship between work life balance and turnover intention ($\beta = -.354$, $p = 0.000$). Here the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention is not significant ($\beta = -.092$, $p = 0.131$). The model explains 17.0% of the variance in Turnover Intention based on Work Life Balance and job satisfaction.

When only the first three steps are satisfied, job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between work life balance and turnover intention. If all four of these steps are met, then the data is consistent with a full mediational effect. Here, only the first three steps are satisfied, then partial mediation is observed in the data.

Table 4: Mediating Relationship of Job Satisfaction between Job Stress and Turnover Intention

Steps	Relationships		R^2	Beta	t	Sig
	IV	DV				
1	Job Stress	Turnover Intention	.051	.226	4.191	.000
2	Job Stress	Job Satisfaction	.276	-.525	-11.124	.000
3	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intention	.083	-.289	-5.439	.000
4	Job Stress	Turnover Intention	.091	.103	1.659	.098
	Job Satisfaction			-.235	-3.770	.000

Step 1 - Job Stress on Turnover Intention - Regression coefficient is .226 at a 0.01 level of significance. The model explains 5.1% of the variance in Turnover Intention based on Job Stress. A significant negative impact (β = -0.226, p = 0.000) suggests that higher levels of job stress are associated with higher turnover intentions.

Step 2 - Job Stress on Job Satisfaction - Regression coefficient is -.525 at a 0.01 level of significance. The model now explains 27.6% of the variance in Job Satisfaction based on Job Stress. A significant positive impact (β = 0.525, p = 0.000) indicates that higher levels of job stress are associated with lower job satisfaction.

Step 3 - Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention - Regression coefficient is -.289 at a 0.01 level of significance. The model explains 8.3% of the variance in Turnover Intention based on Job Satisfaction. A significant negative impact (β = -0.289, p = 0.000) suggests that higher job satisfaction is associated with lower turnover intentions.

Step 4 - Job Stress and Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention – the relationship between job stress and turnover intention is not significant (β = 0.103, p = .098) and here there is a significant impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention (β = -0.235, p = 0.000). The model explains 9.1% of the variance in Turnover Intention based on Job Stress and job satisfaction.

If all four steps of Baron & Kenny's procedures are met, then the data is consistent with the mediational hypothesis. Here, only the first three steps of Baron & Kenny's procedures are satisfied, then partial mediation is observed in the data.

As per the above results, hypotheses have been tested as follows,

Table 5: Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Results
H1 - There is a significant effect of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction	Accept (Significant at 0.01 Level)
H2 - There is a significant effect of Job Stress on Job Satisfaction	Accept (Significant at 0.01 Level)

H3 - There is a significant effect of Work Life Balance on Turnover Intention	Accept (Significant at 0.01 Level)
H4 - There is a significant effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention	Accept (Significant at 0.01 Level)
H5 - There is a significant effect of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention	Accept (Significant at 0.01 Level)
H6 - There is a significant effect of Work Life Balance on Turnover Intention mediated by Job Satisfaction	Partial Mediation (Only first three steps of Baron & Kenny's procedure are satisfied)
H7 - There is a significant effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention mediated by Job Satisfaction	Partial Mediation (Only first three steps of Baron & Kenny's procedure are satisfied)

Discussion

Profile of respondents were analysed demographically. 8% respondents are female and the other 92% respondents are male. The majority (53%) of the respondents were between 26-35 years. 41% respondents were between 36 and 45 years old. Below 25 years and above 46 years' respondents are 3% each. Further, majority (70%) of the respondents were married, while another 29% were single. The majority (66%) of sample is senior officers while the rest (34%) is junior officers. Moreover, the majority of respondents are qualified with bachelor's degree and master's while 41 respondents having Advanced Level qualification. Additionally, the majority of respondents are having more than 5 years of service.

Commissioned officers of the sample seem to have an intention towards the decision to leave early before the entitled retirement period. The standard deviation suggests some variability in responses, indicating that opinions on this matter may vary among employees. Further, the means and standard deviations provide insights into the average levels of these indicators and the variability of responses among employees. The higher means suggest stronger inclinations (e.g., interest in finding another job), while standard deviations indicate the extent of variation in responses across the workforce. These findings could be valuable for understanding the potential turnover intentions of employees and identifying areas that may need attention or improvement to enhance retention of the commissioned officers. Employees generally express moderate satisfaction and willingness to stay in the current job. However, there are clear indications of dissatisfaction with the salary and the perceived ability to manage requirements with the current salary. These insights can guide administrators in addressing specific areas of concern related to job satisfaction and retention. It may be valuable to explore strategies to improve satisfaction with salary and financial well-being to enhance overall employee retention.

Sample of the officers generally experience work pressure and stress, perceive a reasonable level of job security, and report moderate satisfaction with supervision and assistance from colleagues. However, there is variability in individual perceptions, indicating that some employees may experience these factors more positively or negatively than others. The findings can guide organisations in addressing specific areas of concern to improve overall job satisfaction. Employees generally perceive an encouragement from the organisational culture, satisfaction with the nature of work, and manageability of

workload. However, there is variability in perceptions, especially regarding the fulfilment of expectations and achievements and the ability to balance personal and family matters with the job. Organisations can use these insights to address specific areas of concern and enhance the overall work experience for employees.

The correlation coefficients and their significance levels provide insights into the relationships between the study variables. The negative correlations between turnover intention and job satisfaction/ work life balance suggest that higher satisfaction and better work life balance are associated with lower turnover intentions. The correlations between job satisfaction/ job stress and job satisfaction/ work life balance indicate that higher job satisfaction is associated with both lower job stress and better work life balance. These findings can be valuable for understanding the interplay of these factors in the workplace and informing strategies for retention and wellbeing of officers.

The regression model, including the predictors of job stress, and work life balance, is statistically significant in predicting turnover intention as per the findings. As the overall model is significant, variables have a significant effect on turnover intention. Job stress has a significant effect on turnover intention. As job stress increases, turnover intention tends to increase. Employees experiencing job stress may be less satisfied contributing to turnover intension. Examining job satisfaction as a multifaceted driver of well-being, this reference could provide insights into how job stress influences job satisfaction. Existing studies are primarily discussing employee turnover and support the hypothesis by acknowledging the role of job satisfaction, job stress and work life balance in employee.

Work life balance has a direct negative relationship with turnover intention. Work life balance is positively related to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intention. After controlling for job satisfaction, the direct negative relationship between work life balance and turnover intention remains significant. The indirect effect of work life balance on turnover intention through job satisfaction is not statistically significant, suggesting that job satisfaction may not fully mediate the relationship between work life balance and turnover intention. Job stress has a direct relationship with turnover intention. Job stress is negatively related to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intention. After controlling for job satisfaction, the direct relationship between job stress and turnover intention is not statistically significant. The indirect effect of job stress on turnover intention through job satisfaction is statistically not significant, suggesting that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between job stress and turnover intention. These results indicate that while there is a direct negative relationship between job stress and turnover intention, a significant portion of this relationship is explained by the mediating role of job satisfaction. Improving job satisfaction might mitigate the impact of job stress on turnover intention.

Conclusion

Employee turnover is a critical problem for every organisation, and it is similar to the military organizations as well. Previous studies revealed that there are number of factors influence to the turnover intention and the research questions pertinent to the study formulated accordingly. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the effect of work life balance and job stress on job satisfaction towards the turnover intention

of commissioned officers in Sri Lankan military forces as the primary objective of the study while the specific objectives as to assess the effect of work life balance and job stress on job satisfaction, to evaluate the impact of job satisfaction on the turnover intention, to ascertain the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between work life balance and the turnover intention and to analyse the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between job stress and the turnover intention among commissioned officers in the military.

Accordingly, this study formulated seven hypotheses as per the research model. Collected data was analysed and the coefficients of multiple regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses. It's important to note that the significance level (p-value) helps determine whether the relationships observed are likely to be due to chance. The findings suggest that, in general, job stress and job satisfaction play significant roles in explaining turnover intentions, with job satisfaction being a particularly strong predictor in this context. Further, these findings suggest that both work life balance and job satisfaction independently contribute to explaining turnover intentions. The repeated inclusion of work life balance and job satisfaction in different steps indicates their unique contributions to understanding employee outcomes.

Work life balance is consistently and significantly associated with lower turnover intention. Work life balance has a strong positive association with job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is negatively associated with turnover intention. Higher job stress is consistently associated with higher turnover intention. Job stress is negatively associated with Job Satisfaction, indicating that as stress increases, job satisfaction tends to decrease. Job satisfaction is negatively associated with turnover intention, supporting the idea that more satisfied employees are less likely to have intentions to leave.

Practical Implications

Employee turnover is an essential element for consideration in any organisation specially for military forces. As illustrated by the research problem, there is an increasing trend of employee turnover of commissioned officers in Sri Lankan military. The findings of the research are aimed to provide the required details for Human Resources professionals and the policymakers to initiate required decisions to reduce the employee turnover as well as to uplift the working conditions and uplift job satisfaction while reducing job stress whereas looking into their work life balance.

The findings revealed that commissioned officers have an intention toward the early retirement. These findings could be valuable for understanding the potential turnover intentions of employees and identifying areas that may need attention or improvement to enhance retention of the employees. Officers have generally express moderate satisfaction and willingness to stay in the service. However, there are indications of dissatisfaction due to perceived ability to manage requirements. These insights can attend by the hierarchy addressing specific areas of concern related to job satisfaction and retention. Moreover, officers experience moderate work pressure and stress. Also, employees generally perceive a moderate level of encouragement from the organisational culture and manageability of workload. However, there is concerns on balancing the personal and family matters with the job. Management can use these insights to address specific areas of concern and enhance the overall work experience for

employees in order to retain the employees.

Conducting periodical counselling sessions and avenues for free counselling for commissioned officers since effective counselling could be provided solutions for problems that may cause job stress and turnover intention. Available communication channels should be made more effective and also to reduce the communication gap between the hierarchy and the commissioned officers. Non-financial incentives could be provided to reduce the job stress at work. Ex. sports activities, entertainment activities etc. Develop decent working environment and enhance the flexible working conditions. Ex. Pleasing office place with adequate facilities, flexible leave management to attend family/ personal commitments etc.

The researchers investigated the turnover intention in the sample of commissioned officers in the Sri Lankan armed forces and it is difficult to generalise the same to all employees. Therefore, human resource professionals can consider conducting research focusing different level of employees. The results of a study conducted on similar aspects can help the decisionmakers to reassess the existing procedures and make suitable amendments towards the retention of staffs by discouraging the turnover intention of employees.

References

Abbasi, S. M., & Hollman, K. W. (2000). Turnover: The real bottom line. *Public Personnel Management*, *37*(3), 333-342

Abbasi, S. M., & Hollman, K. W. (2000). Job satisfaction: The multifaceted driver of employee well-being. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, *21*(3), 281-300

Berry, J. N. (2010). Understanding employee turnover: A comprehensive review. *Human Resource Management Review*, *20*(2), 131-144

Bosman, J.P, Buitendach, J. H., & Rothmann, S. 2019. Impact of Employee Turnover on Organizational Performance. A study of a South African retail company. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, *45*(1), a1496

Hee, C., & Ann, Y. S. (2019). Understanding the factors influencing employee turnover in the modern workplace. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *40*(2),

Henha, J. (2017). Employee turnover: Categorization, causes, and consequences. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *28*(4), 471-494

Lee, J. J., Chung, Y. J., Kim, S. S., & Lee, Y. K. (2017). Turnover intention and actual turnover: Exploring the moderating role of psychological contract breach. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *27*(4), 541-556

Nunnally, J. C. (1978). Psychometric Theory. McGraw-Hill.

Price, J.L. (2001). Reflections on the determinants of voluntary turnover. *International Journal of Manpower*, *22*(7), 600-624

Sekaran, U. (1992). Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach. John Wiley & Sons.

Van Dyk, J. and Coetzee, M. (2018) Employee retention: A systematic review of empirical studies. *Human Resource Management Review*, *28*(2).

Van Dyk, J., & Coetzee, M. (2018). Relationships between work-life balance, job satisfaction, turnover intention, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, *16*(0), a963

Van Dyk, J., and Coetzee, M. (2012). Predicting turnover intentions in the South African hospitality industry: The role of burnout and job satisfaction. *South African Journal of Business Management*, *43*(2), 35-47.

Watrous, K. M., Wheeler-Smith, S. L., Hammer, L. B., & Hezlett, S. A. (2006). The impact of absenteeism on organizational performance: A review and recommendations. *Human Resource Management Review*, *16*(3), 341-354.

Watrous, K. M., Wheeler, A. R., & Zimmerman, R. D. (2006). Employee turnover intentions: A moderating influence of employer–employee relationship quality. *Hospitality Management*, *25*(4), 490-507

Watrous, K. M., Wheeler-Smith, S. L., Hammer, L. B., & Hezlett, S. A. (2016). Family-supportive organization perceptions and employee outcomes: Testing a structural model. Journal publication.

Watrous, K.M., Huffman, A.H. and Pritchard, R.D. (2006). When co-workers and managers quit: the effects of turnover and shared values on performance. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *21*(1), 103-126.

Woods, D. (1995). The dynamics of employee staffing: The link between turnover processes and vacancy duration. *Academy of Management Journal*, *38*(6).

Zhang, Y. (2016). Understanding employee turnover in the context of job satisfaction: A comprehensive literature review. *Human Resource Management Review*, *26*(3), 297-325.

Zhang, Y. (2016). The interplay between job stress, job satisfaction, and turnover intention: A multiple-source study. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *27*(1), 35-58.