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The Influenced of Work-life Balance on Emotional Intelligence, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress

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Abstract

Self-management psychology is an important element in self-identity development, especially when balancing job obligations and personal life, in which work-life balance is influenced by various interacting factors. Nowadays, researchers in organizational behavior, human resource management, and psychology are interested in the study of work-life balance. Work-life balance is typically thought of as a notion that applies to each individual and is defined as the lack of conflict or incompatibility between a role in their home and their responsibilities at work. This study aims to examine how military personnel's work-life balance is influenced by emotional intelligence, depression, anxiety, and stress. The study recruited 995 military personnel to respond to a set of questionnaires disseminated across the entire Malaysian military encampments. The study results discovered a significant positive association between overall emotional intelligence (EI) and work-life balance, although an EI dimension, namely self-emotion appraisal (SEA), was insignificantly correlated to work-life balance. Meanwhile, depression, anxiety, and stress possessed significant negative associations with work-life balance. Summarily, emotional intelligence, depression, anxiety, and stress could produce significant impacts, either positive or negative, on Malaysian military personnel's work-life balance. Practically, Malaysian military leaders could apply the findings as guidance in developing pertinent psychological self-control improvement activities for military personnel.

Keywords: *Work-life balance, emotional intelligence, depression, anxiety, stress*

Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) gains attention in the public sector recently, which is particularly emphasized in firms to achieve an optimal equilibrium between job duties and personal lives, including families, hobbies, education, voluntary services, and religious observance (Adkins & Prameaux, 2019). Generally, implementing WLB practices is an organizational improvement in corporate programs and cultures to reduce stress from both work life and personal life in enabling employees to achieve higher work productivity. According to Wong et al. (2017), an optimal equilibrium working life, personal life, and family life would produce quality time, equitable

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involvement, and higher satisfaction levels. Furthermore, the WLB could be perceived as employees' enjoyment of various work and personal responsibilities when the employees are equally involved in and satisfied with their job and family duties (Nwagbara, 2020).

The WLB would cause low levels of motivation, poor health, high rates of absenteeism, decreased productivity, and emotional burnout, which lead to workplace and family conflicts (Arora & Wagh, 2017). Organizations with high absenteeism and turnover rates need to look at WLB and establish an environment where workers will be dedicated, content, and productive (Aruldoss et al., 2022). Therefore, achieving WLB is a critical topic in both government and private sectors in optimally managing workers' accessible assets, including time, job resources, and work tasks (Wolor et al., 2020). Accordingly, two integral aspects were proposed by Wolor et al. (2020) to effectively attain WLB, namely accomplishment, and satisfaction without undergoing emotional turbulence. Moreover, increasing stress and burnout caused by insufficient WLB may result in cognitive deficits such as sleep deprivation, low attention, decreased alertness, worsened physical health, and continuous tiredness (Agha et al., 2017). Reduced work-life balance and stress resulting from more anxieties or expectations are indicators of overall decreased well-being (Landmann & Rohmann, 2022).

Emotions or feelings are a fundamental component of the human character, constantly influencing and impacting behaviors and actions in the workplace (Muthusamy, 2019). Consequently, emotional intelligence is the ability to effectively control and apply one's own emotions (Choudhary & Rao, 2018; Subbalakshmi, 2019). The emotional capacity includes finesses in communication and inter- or intrapersonal skills, which interconnects with cognitive abilities, namely memorization, creativity, comprehension, and reasoning. Specifically, the process involves the approaches to refining personal emotions, perceiving partners' feelings accurately, and manifesting suitable emotions, such as passion, to perform intelligence activities (Applewhite, 2017). Furthermore, emotional intelligence is vital in relational work, which requires adequate interpersonal skills. Five processes exist in executing emotional intelligence, namely, understanding emotions, regulating emotions, inspiring emotions, identifying emotions, and coping with relationships (Baker, 2010; Kumar & Jyothirmal, 2018).

Emotional intelligence, as defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), is a subset of social intelligence that enables individuals to effectively regulate personal thinking and reasoning processes by perceiving and comparing individual feelings with counterparts' during encounters. Emotional intelligence also includes an understanding of personal perspectives and the influences and communications of conventional intelligence with emotions. Meanwhile, individual characteristics, such as resolve, self-control, and preparedness, would also influence emotional intelligence. When individuals with high emotional intelligence possess appropriate self-awareness, judgment, empathy, and social skills, effective assessment of peers' needs during conversations would be resulted before developing strong relationships (Arora & Wagh, 2017; Baker et al., 2019). Therefore, emotional intelligence enables individuals to obtain additional social resources for use in the job, while simultaneously supporting peers in enhancing their emotional intelligence.

The Depression-Anxiety-Stress Scale (DASS) is a commonly a self-report scale to evaluate psychological well-being difficulties, particularly in assessing the emergence of depression, anxiety, and stress in adults to illustrate respective psychometric traits (Le et al., 2017). According to Bernard (2017), depression consists of numerous symptoms, including chronic depression, low mood, a feeling of powerlessness, disturbed sleep or appetite, tiredness, and psychological trauma. The World Health Organisation (WHO) revealed that depression is the

primary contributing factor to the inability to perform daily routines effectively, which became a worldwide phenomenon. Depression could exist permanently and produce major negative effects on job performance and life satisfaction. According to the WHO, depression is a complicated issue caused by the complex interconnections of social, psychological, and biological variables. The conflicts between work and life are minimized, and psychological well-being is encouraged, when people maintain work–life balance (Aruldoss et al., 2022).

Munir and Takov (2017) discovered that anxiety disorder was a general mental health issue with a high recurrence rate. Particularly, anxiety is induced by multiple negative events which elevate personal apprehension levels or severely disrupt mood stability or functional emotional expressions (Adwas, Jbireal & Azab, 2019). Anxiety could also be regarded as continual hysteria influenced by personal dispositions, thought activities, and psychogenic movement disorders. According to the American Psychological Association, anxiety disorders generally encompass repeatedly intrusive thinking or concerns to avoid certain unpleasant circumstances. Similarly, physical symptoms, such as sweating, shaking, dizziness, or a rapid pulse, are apparent in individuals with anxiety disorders.

Fink (2016) believed that stress conveyed different meanings to different individuals under different conditions. Stress arises when an individual perceives as incapable of optimally performing responsibilities (Chakraborty, Gohain & Saha, 2020). Particularly, stress is associated with the degree of self-perceived irritation or personal incompetence in coping with unplanned pressures. Stress emerges as the physiological reaction to encountered pressure or tension coming from a situation or an occasion. The perceived stress level is contingent on every individual's neuroticism tendency, wherein stress changes depending on personal social environments, financial conditions, surroundings, and hereditary makeup (Mental Health Foundation, 2021). On that account, the objective of this study is to evaluate the correlations between anxiety, depression, and stress in addition to WLB, as well as the relationships between the dimensions of emotional intelligence (SEA, OEA, ROE, and UOE) and WLB among members of the Royal Malaysian Army (RMA).

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence and Work-life Balance

Vidhya (2019) manifested that emotional intelligence was essential to achieving WLB to distinguish the boundaries between work duties and personal life. Emotional intelligence is important to perform work effectively while arranging quality time with the family. Work–life balance is the interplay between work and nonwork activities including family, community, and individual development. The core of WLB is finding the appropriate or suitable balance between work and other elements of life. (Aruldoss et al., 2022). In addition, Subbalakshmi (2019) disclosed that employees in the Information Technology (IT) sector could accomplish WLB through self-regulation, awareness, and motivation, both at work and at home. The observation was conducted at Madhapur and Gachobowli companies in Hyderabad City, with 360 IT employees randomly selected to participate in the study to gather the respondents' insights on how emotional intelligence could positively impact WLB in the IT sector. Similarly, Sakalle et al. (2017) appraised 170 IT employees' emotional intelligence and the relevant effects on WLB in Mumbai and Pune. The findings revealed that IT professionals with higher IT expertise possessed higher levels of emotional intelligence, which subsequently contributed to their WLB positively. Contrastingly, employees with limited IT experience would exhibit lower emotional intelligence, resulting in a work-life imbalance due to the increased time required to

complete work assignments.

Applewhite (2017) investigated the WLB topic by analyzing the correlation between (a) emotional intelligence and absenteeism, and (b) the equilibrium between emotional intelligence and the working life of parents in South Carolina. 200 caregivers participated in the study to answer the questionnaire comprising the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale (WRQoL) and the Emotional Social Competency Inventory (ECI). Although the findings demonstrated that emotional intelligence was insignificantly associated with absenteeism, a significant correlation was revealed between emotional intelligence and WLB. Meanwhile, Kumar and Jyothirmai (2018) explored the connection between emotional intelligence and WLB in north coastal Visakhapatnam, India by analysing secondary data and conducting interviews with retail workers. Specifically, Kumar and Jyothirmai (2018) aimed to examine the benefits of emotional intelligence in resolving job-related difficulties while enhancing work quality and satisfaction, which could boost employee productivity overall. The findings demonstrated that retail employees with a preference for self-regulation and high levels of emotional appreciation and acknowledgement could successfully and accurately demonstrate personal emotions to promote self-performance, self-evaluation, and self-expression on the job. The findings suggested that emotional intelligence and WLB would enhance organizational performance and produce competitive advantages for retail businesses.

Mathew (2019) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and WLB amongst 200 pre-university and college academicians via a descriptive research design. The academicians were instructed to complete a set of questionnaires to disclose the approaches to expressing personal feelings to achieve an equilibrium between work and life. The results demonstrated that emotional intelligence was moderately associated with WLB positively. Simultaneously, 450 employees in three leading private universities in Tamil Nadu, India were assessed on personal emotional intelligence and relevant impacts on WLB (Vasumathi & Sagaya, 2017) by completing the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) and the Quality of Work Life Scale (QOWLS) to improve job efficiency and satisfaction. Accordingly, age, work perceptions, and time commitment to work were also unique factors in each employee's emotional intelligence. The findings demonstrated that elder employees possessed reduced abilities to accurately identify emotions, persistently adhere to work objectives, and accept constructive criticisms. Moreover, private university employees were more exposed to pressure-related complications, which were influenced by educational level, annual income, marital status, number of children, and availability of monetary aid. Similarly, Vasumathi, Sagaya, and Poranki (2019) assessed the impacts of emotional intelligence on 466 private college employees' WLB in Tamil Nadu, India through multivariate analysis. The study revealed employees with high emotional intelligence would plan their tasks systemically to boost productivity while preventing long working hours for sufficient personal time.

Madan and Raja (2019) examined the association between emotional intelligence and WLB amongst 183 employees at Thangamayil Jewelry by applying a descriptive research methodology. The results discovered that an effectual alignment on both employers' and workers' expectations should be achieved to allow flexible working hours and implement contemporary approaches in elevating productivity without compromising employees' well-being, social relationships, and personal lifestyles. Employees who retain WLB are anticipated to be innovative, productive, and satisfied. Because of that, companies that recognize the advantages of WLB will provide programs to assist employees in balancing the demands of work and non-work life. Organizations that encourage flexible schedules, work from home,

childcare facilities for families, healthcare facilities, etc. aims to keep WLB and inspire employees (Aruldoss et al., 2022). Concurrently, Messigah and Adeogun (2019) included organizational justice to analyze the linkage between emotional intelligence and WLB. 10 Guaranty Trust Bank officers in Lagos State with 150 employees aged between 22 and 55 years old were recruited to participate in the study. The results demonstrated significant positive correlations between emotional intelligence and WLB and between emotional intelligence and organizational justice.

Anxiety, Depression, Stress, and Work-Life Balance

The DASS is frequently employed to evaluate psychological states, especially the presence of negative emotions (Basha & Kaya, 2016; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The DASS allows efficient symptom tracking on the emergence of depression, anxiety, and stress, particularly amongst clinical samples. Depression is defined as a constant low mood composed of dysphoria, hopelessness, absence of energy, and anhedonia, while anxiety is due to high neuroticism levels with typical traits, including irritability, emotional instability, and impatience. For instance, anxiety is generated when being confronted with a significant challenge at work, before sitting a test, or before performing a crucial decision. The feeling could aid in coping with encountered challenges from the energy boost produced by anxiety to assist in concentration. Nonetheless, individuals with anxiety disorders would exhibit persistent and overwhelming worry levels. Sprung and Rogers (2019) applied a cross-sectional approach to delineate the relationships between WLB, perceived stress, anxiety, and depression amongst 111 Midwestern undergraduates. The study sought to discover the negative effects of work-life imbalance on undergraduates' anxiety and depression. The results revealed that the negative associations between WLB and anxiety and also between WLB and depression were significantly mediated by perceived pressure. Hence, the findings suggested that accomplishing an equilibrium between work and life was essential to undergraduates' mental health, before subsequently improving their learning process. Practically, educational institutions should prioritise undergraduates' WLB to enhance their academic achievement while protecting them from mental disorders.

A study conducted by Aruldoss et al., (2022) on workers in India found that job stress has a significant negative relationship with work-life balance. Meenu et al. (2016) determined the negative impact of work stress on WLB to advocate the importance of an optimal balance between personal and professional life in supporting organisational and employee growth. The study focused on secondary data, such as newspapers, websites, news articles, government documents, books, work papers, reports, and doctoral theses, to gather and summarise different positive WLB effects on job satisfaction and professional development while reducing absenteeism, turnover, and work stress. Consequently, an optimal WLB would significantly enhance workforce productivity. Kalpna and Malhotra (2019) concentrated on the association between WLB and work pressure amongst female personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in India. Purposive sampling was executed to recruit female respondents to participate in the study. The results discovered that work stress would contribute negatively to WLB. Inversely, increasing WLB amongst the CISF female personnel would minimize stressors in the workplace. A greater sense of connectedness has been linked to lower stress levels, better work-life balance, and improved psychological well-being (Landmann & Rohmann, 2022). Lee et al. (2019) explored the relationships between WLB, cognitive abilities, and mental health among 347 Korean transport drivers. Correspondingly, the findings demonstrated that insufficient WLB would lead to diminished cognitive functioning revealed by the covariance analysis. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was also conducted to determine the mediating

roles of mental health on the association between WLB and the CFQ. Resultantly, anxiety was a mediating factor in the relationship between WLB and CFQ, in which the positive effect of WLB on functional cognitive abilities would be reduced when the mediator relationship of anxiety increases.

Tariq et al. (2012) evaluated and elucidated five WLB models, namely the segmentation model, spillover model, compensation model, instrumental model, and conflict model, developed by Guest (2001). Specifically, the segmentation model proposes a distinctive boundary between work and family which is not apparent physically as the boundary is established psychologically by an individual to account for the overlapping areas between work and personal life. The spillover model explicates that both work and family constantly influence one another, either positively or negatively, which requires discretion to prevent negative impacts from one domain to another. Meanwhile, the compensation model postulates that WLB is achieved by allowing a specific domain to compensate for the incomplete areas in either work or personal life, whereas the instrumental model posits that activities in a certain domain could produce significant progress in another, which highlights the constructive elements in the positive association between work and family. Conversely, the conflict model suggests that high demands from the workplace and family respectively would engender significant stress and conflicts, which might be influenced by time availability, the presence of work or family pressure, or personal actions in managing the demands. Swathi and Mohapatra (2015) also discussed WLB in India through another five models, namely:

Working Hours Model
Career Progression Model
Emotional Exhaustion Model
Work Commitment Model
Job Satisfaction Model

Particularly, the working hours model recommended that companies should permit shorter working hours with five to seven hours as the most optimal option to achieve adequate WLB. The rationale was due to pressures from both family and work would cause emotional exhaustion amongst employees, which would reduce their productivity and subsequently corporate revenue.

Faltas (2017) defined emotional intelligence as consisting of an eclectic range of skills, abilities, and capacities to pertinently exhibit certain emotions by an individual depending on a specific circumstance. Three emotional intelligence models were propounded, namely the capacity model, mixed model, and attribute model (Kanesan & Fauzan, 2019), and were employed by past scholars. The three models originated from different definitions by different researchers to incorporate the attributes of personal intelligence and social intelligence to expound emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). For instance, Goleman (1983) included mindfulness, self-management, self-motivation, compassion, and social skills in explicating emotional intelligence. Cognitive ability was also perceived by Goleman (1983) as a crucial feature in performing abstract thinking and forethought to appropriately manifest personal emotions. Meanwhile, Bar-On (2005) model emphasized self-perception, stress management, decision-making, self-expression, and intrapersonal skills in measuring emotional intelligence, as expressing personal emotions was performed through interconnected actions guided by social skills. In addition, Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey's (2000) framework encompassed four actions, which were interpreting, facilitating, understanding, and regulating personal emotions (Faltas, 2017).

Therefore, this study will examine the relationship between depression, anxiety, stress, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence, and work-life balance in the context of the career of the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN), so the hypothesis proposed in this study is:

H₁: *There is a significant relationship between anxiety and WLB.*

H₂: *There is a significant relationship between depression and WLB.*

H₃: *There is a significant relationship between stress and WLB.*

H₄: *There is a significant relationship between OEA and WLB.*

H₅: *There is a significant relationship between ROE and WLB.*

H₆: *There is a significant relationship between UOE and WLB.*

H₇: *There is a significant relationship between SEA and WLB.*

Concept and Theory

Emotion involves both internal and external reactions to a particular situation, which would influence psychological, cognitive, motivational, and experiential dimensions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). As such, a specific condition could trigger either a positive or negative reaction, which subsequently affects an individual in the personal thinking process, action, feeling, and behavior (Weinzimmer & Esken, 2017). Gardner (1993) proposed the theory of multiple intelligences, which classified various forms of intelligence into linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal. Accordingly, the current study focused on intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence is related to an individual's capability to understand personal emotional states, feelings, and motivations through self-reflection and analysis. Meanwhile, interpersonal intelligence is the ability to detect and comprehend other individuals' emotions, desires, motives, and goals (Gardner, 1993). According to Weinzimmer and Esken (2017), intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence were important in achieving an optimal equilibrium between work and life.

Prior studies revealed that individuals with appropriate emotional intelligence will efficiently handle work and family responsibilities without experiencing burnout or excessive stress (Carmeli, 2003; Lenaghan et al., 2007). Wilensky (1968) also discovered that low emotional intelligence would allow experienced job dissatisfaction to negatively impact personal family, as suggested by the spillover model. Similarly, Near et al. (1980) disclosed that an individual's mentality could influence personal demeanors in different circumstances, such as outside of the work environment and vice versa. Accordingly, employees with positive sentiments experienced at work might exhibit similar emotions at home and vice versa, which would simultaneously contribute to higher work and life quality (Weinzimmer & Esken, 2017). Hence, to achieve WLB as proposed by the spillover theory, emotional intelligence is an integral component to adjusting personal emotions in both the workplace and personal life to prevent a negative spillover effect from one environment to another (Weinzimmer & Esken, 2017).

Materials and Methodology

Sampling and Procedures

The present study implemented a quantitative methodology by distributing a set of survey questionnaires to 995 Malaysian military personnel, who were recruited from selected Malaysian regiments. The collected data were subsequently analyzed by performing inferential

techniques, namely structural equation modelling (SEM) and partial least squares (PLS) regression.

Research Instruments

The Wong and Law EIS (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002) with 16 items was adopted to examine and quantify recruited respondents' EI in the current study due to the high reliability at Cronbach's alpha value (α) of 0.947. Simultaneously, the Depression-Anxiety-Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) in the Bahasa Malaysia variant was employed to measure depression, anxiety, and stress (DAS; Rani et al., 2018). Specifically, the instrument comprised 21 items with every variable addressed by seven items respectively, and the overall reliability value was satisfactory ($\alpha = 0.882$). Meanwhile, the instrument with seven items assessing WLB was adopted from Omar (2013), which achieved a high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.945. The three instruments employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 as "Strongly Disagree" to 5 as "Strongly Agree".

Data Analysis and Results

Respondent Demographic Details

Data collection was conducted at seven Malaysian military encampments, wherein the questionnaires were disseminated to 1,400 military personnel before a total of 995 completed questionnaires were collected at a response rate of 71.1%. Table 1 depicts that most respondents (91.8%) were males, with the majority aged between 21 and 30 years old (43.9%), followed by between 31 and 40 years (42.4%). Concurrently, Malays (81.2%) and Muslims (87.1%) were the largest sample composition with over two-thirds of the respondents being married (66.8%). More than half of the respondents were holders of the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM; 51.4%). The respondents mainly achieved the military ranks between lance corporal and between corporal, who were junior non-commissioned officers (30.6%) serving between 11 and 20 years old (41.1%) with a monthly income of below RM 3,000 (47.4%).

Table 1. Respondent Demographic Details (N = 995)

Variable	Frequency (%)
Gender	
Male	913 (91.8)
Female	82 (8.2)
Age	
< 20 years old	53 (5.3)
21 – 30 years old	437 (43.9)
31 – 40 years old	422 (42.4)
41 – 50 years old	72 (7.2)
> 50 years old	11 (1.1)
Race	
Malay	808 (81.2)
Chinese	11 (1.1)
Indian	14 (1.4)
Sabah / Sarawak ethnic	145 (14.6)
Others	17 (1.7)
Religion	

Variable	Frequency (%)
Islam	867 (87.1)
Christianity	103 (10.4)
Buddhism	10 (1.0)
Hinduism	12 (1.2)
Others	3 (0.3)
Educational Level	
Sijil Rendah Pelajaran (SRP)/Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR)	81 (8.1)
Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)	511 (51.4)
Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM)/Diploma	76 (7.6)
Degree	260 (26.1)
Master / Doctorate	67 (6.7)
Marital Status	
Single	317 (31.9)
Married	665 (66.8)
Divorced	13 (1.3)
Military Rank	
Recruit/Private	200 (20.1)
Lance Corporal to Corporal (Junior NCO)	304 (30.6)
Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class 1 (Senior NCO)	116 (11.7)
Lieutenant to Captain (Young Officer)	197 (19.8)
Major (Field Officer)	155 (15.6)
Lieutenant Colonel to General (Senior Officer)	23 (2.3)
Military Service	
< 6 years old	346 (34.8)
6 – 10 years old	197 (19.8)
11 – 20 years old	409 (41.1)
21 – 30 years old	30 (3.0)
➤ 30 years old	13 (1.3)
Monthly Income	
< RM3000	472 (47.4)
RM3000 – RM5000	317 (31.9)
RM5001 – RM7000	155 (15.6)
> RM7000	51 (5.1)

Note. NCO = Non-commissioned Officer.

Measurement Model

The collected data were classified into respective categories through the PLS approach in the SmartPLS version 3.0 software to appraise the current measurement (outer) and structural (inner) models (Henseler et al., 2009; Ringle et al., 2015). The PLS approach is a commonly employed analysis technique in the social science discipline, especially regarding corporate management and data analysis (Hair et al., 2017). Before conducting data analysis, the measurement model reliability in terms of composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha value was evaluated by performing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Table 2 portrays all questionnaire items fulfilled the CR and Cronbach's alpha threshold values, which were above 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally & Bernstein,

1994).

The measurement model discriminant validity was examined to discover the percentage of a latent variable explained by other constructs. Specifically, the average variance extracted (AVE) square root of each construct was assessed by determining the correlational values between the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Fornell and Larcker (1981) stipulated that the latent variable AVE should exceed 0.50 to be sufficiently explained by the variance of other constructs. Table 2 illustrates that all scales possess the AVE square root values above inter-construct correlational values, thus demonstrating sufficient discriminant validity. The factor loadings of all items within respective scales were above 0.8 at the significant level of a p-value below 0.01, while the factor loadings between other scales were under 0.4, hence establishing adequate construct validity.

Table 2. Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity of the Current Study Scales

	AVE	CR	α	Anxiety	Depression	OEA	ROE	SEA	Stress	UOE	WLB
Anxiety	0.602	0.900	0.867	0.776							
Depression	0.670	0.924	0.901	0.701	0.818						
OEA	0.673	0.860	0.758	- 0.141	- 0.173	0.820					
ROE	0.659	0.885	0.828	- 0.218	- 0.266	0.534	0.812				
SEA	0.683	0.866	0.768	- 0.208	- 0.244	0.539	0.703	0.826			
Stress	0.647	0.901	0.863	0.725	0.786	0.151	0.285	0.199	0.804		
UOE	0.605	0.859	0.782	- 0.247	- 0.300	0.605	0.670	0.708	0.254	0.778	
WLB	0.753	0.955	0.945	- 0.256	- 0.334	0.378	0.424	0.405	0.323	0.472	0.868

Note. OEA = Others' Emotion Appraisal; ROE = Regulation of Emotion; SEA = Self-Emotion Appraisal; UOE = Use of Emotion, WLB = Work-Life Balance. Bold diagonal elements are the AVE square roots. Off-diagonal elements are correlation coefficients amongst the variables.

Structural Equation Modelling

Table 3 and Figure 2 describe the current structural model to observe the hypotheses. The findings demonstrated significant relationships between the OEA ($\beta = 0.097$, t-value = 3.091), the ROE ($\beta = 0.063$, t-value = 2.078), the UOE ($\beta = 0.193$, t-value = 5.053), depression ($\beta = -0.157$, t-value = 2.244), anxiety ($\beta = 0.146$, t-value = 2.193), stress ($\beta = -0.116$, t-value = 2.542), and the WLB respectively, hence supporting hypotheses H₁, H₂, H₃, H₄, H₅, and H₆. Nevertheless, hypothesis H₇ was not accepted owing to the insignificant association between the SEA and the WLB ($\beta = 0.232$, t-value = 1.312).

Table 3. Structural Model Analysis

No	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	P-value	Significance Level	Result	R ²
H ₁	Anxiety → WLB	- 0.146	2.193	0.028	*	Supported	0.29

H ₂	Depression → WLB	- 0.157	2.2440.025	*	Supported
H ₃	Stress → WLB	- 0.116	2.5420.011	*	Supported
H ₄	OEA → WLB	0.097	3.0910.002	*	Supported
H ₅	ROE → WLB	0.063	2.0780.038	*	Supported
H ₆	UOE → WLB	0.193	5.0530.000	***	Supported
H ₇	SEA → WLB	0.232	1.3120.190	N.S.	Unsupporte d

Note. *** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; N.S. = Not significant at p > 0.05.

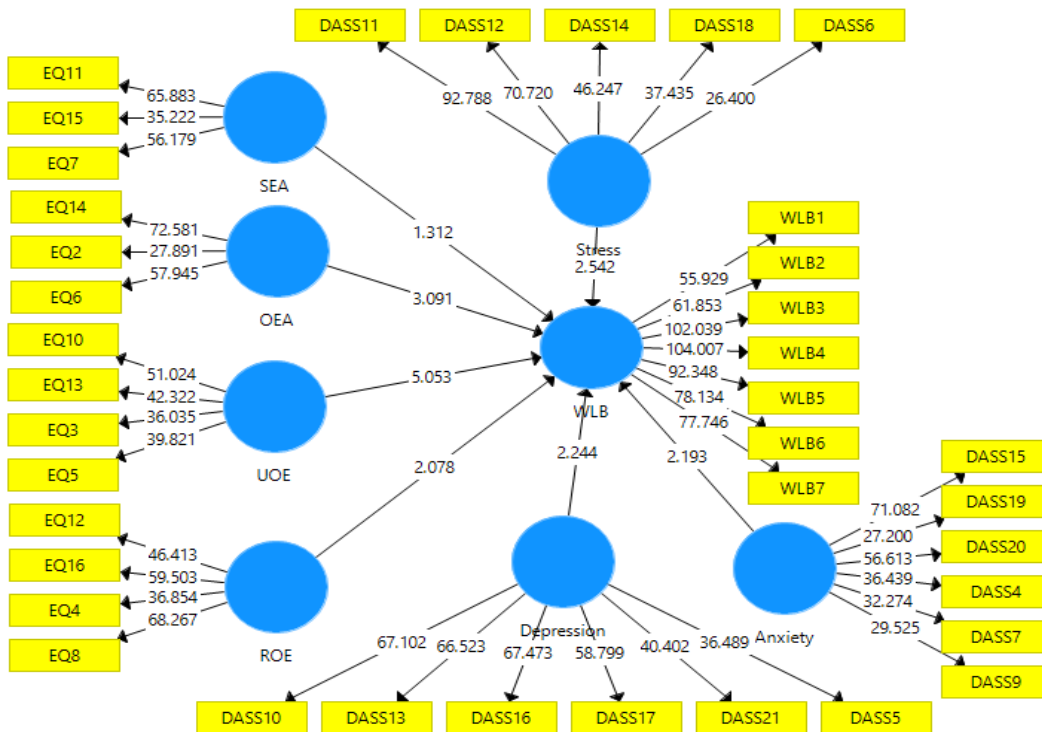


Figure 2. The Structural Model of the EI, the DAS, and the WLB

Conclusion

Anxiety, depression, and stress possessed negative significant relationships with WLB, which postulating that lower levels of anxiety, depression, and stress would generate a higher satisfaction level of WLB. The dimensions of EI (OEA, ROE and UOE) also demonstrated positive significant relationships with WLB, which posited that higher OEA, ROE, and UOE degrees would produce a higher satisfaction level of WLB. Nevertheless, no significant relationship was discovered between SEA and WLB, which suggested that SEA would not influence the satisfaction level of WLB among personnel.

The present study sought to discover the impacts of EI, depression, anxiety, and stress on the WLB. Contrary to prior studies, this study did not discover a significant association between SEA (an EI dimension) and WLB. Johari (2013) advocated organizational management, especially the military, to implement strategic action plans in promoting employees' WLB to achieve life well-being while increasing workforce productivity. Practically, the current study

revealed a pertinent opportunity for organizations to identify practices that could ensure an optimal equilibrium between work and family. Particularly, engaging in a positive group would be conducive to acquiring high levels of EI while resolving the persistent DAS issue. Similarly, this study could serve as a guideline for the Malaysian military to improve the personnel's WLB.

The current findings contributed to the existing knowledge corpus as a reference framework for future academicians. Specifically, the present empirical evidence was pertinent to organizational behavior in terms of DAS, EI, and WLB, which previous researchers less focused on. Furthermore, the DAS receives higher traction from relevant social science researchers, especially in clinical research, which could be further explored. Nonetheless, the current study employed only a cross-sectional approach without qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews, owing to time and cost constraints. Moreover, data collection was only conducted amongst Malaysian military personnel. As such, future studies could investigate the present study variables in the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF), the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN), and other organizations.

Programs that encourage WLB may provide a number of challenges for organizations to adopt. To ensure that workers feel comfortable and can maintain a balance between work and life, these programs may include childcare, flexible working hours, daycare facilities, and healthcare facilities. However, it is reasonable to anticipate that any investment in these initiatives will benefit both businesses and people. To sum up, having a thorough grasp of the effects of WLB is beneficial for everyone—individuals, organizations, and society at large.

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