

# Chapter 3

## What Role Does Work–Life Balance Play in Mediating the Relationship Between Sustainable Management Behaviors and Job Satisfaction?

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study, examines the impact of sustainable management practices in higher education institutions on the job satisfaction of academics, while also uncovering the mediating role of work-life balance in this relationship. To achieve this aim, data was collected through an electronic survey administered to 270 academicians with expertise in various disciplines. The collected data were analyzed utilizing the SPSS and AMOS software applications. The study's findings indicated that work-life balance acts as a partly mediating factor in the association between sustainable management behaviors and job satisfaction. In the proposed model, sustainable management behaviors positively influence both job satisfaction and work-life balance. Accordingly, academics employed in higher education institutions that adopt sustainable management behaviors are significantly more likely to achieve a balance between their work and life, which in turn enhances their job satisfaction.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, sustainability and sustainable management have received considerable point in both the business and academic spheres (McCarten, 2011; Ameer & Othman, 2012; Bottery, 2012; Ehnert & Harry, 2012; Schaltegger et al., 2012; Kantabutra & Rungruang, 2013; Kramar, 2014; McCann & Sweet, 2014; Dalati, 2016; Evans & Sinclair, 2016). While the focus on sustainability has intensified with modernization and structural integration, the concept of sustainability has its roots in historical contexts (Caradonna, 2022). Indeed, the concern of hunters in the Paleolithic era about the extinction of their prey

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or the concern of the first farmers about maintaining the fertility of their land can be given as examples of this situation (Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010). The developments that led to the global recognition and articulation of the concept of sustainability date back to the late 20th century (Imperatives, 1987). These years' sustainability conferences have motivated countries and individuals to enhance their standard of living without endangering future generations (Paul, 2008). Many definitions of the term “sustainable” began to emerge in the subsequent years.

Broadly defined, sustainability refers to the preservation and enhancement of the intrinsic value of beneficial resources and practices over time (Hadders, 2012). Understanding the concept's origins is a crucial first step in developing empathy for the different aspects of sustainability. The United Nations Brundtland Commission report defined sustainability as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987). Sustainability is referred to talking about everything that goes into a decision-making process, such as social, economic and environmental impacts. On the other hand, the concept of “corporate sustainability” has recently gained popularity in modern organizations.

Corporate sustainability refers to everything related to integrating the goals of sustainable development, such as social justice, economic efficiency and environmentally friendly exposures, into the operating atmosphere of organizations (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002; Elkington, 2013; Varsei et al., 2014). In other words, the incorporation of social, economic, and environmental factors into business decision-making processes is known as corporate sustainability (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Crane et al., 2019; Moldavanova & Goerdel, 2021). Corporate sustainability is driven by an organizational culture that fosters sustainability, characterized by shared assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs about addressing sustainability challenges. Therefore, the organization's culture influences corporate behavior through its decision-making processes and practices (Ketprapakorn & Kantabutra, 2022). In this regard, sustainable management carries an operational responsibility or obligation to the forces that shape its implementation.

Sustainable management supports the organization's longer-term plans and ability to compete because it has a proactive management approach. Managers who incorporate the sustainability management process into their organizations facilitate a sustainable workflow within their institutions. These professionals are visionaries who think long-term and bring about change. Managers who embrace a sustainable management approach demonstrate behaviors that include adhering to environmental regulations, researching sustainable policies, setting strategic sustainability goals, developing awareness programs related to sustainability, supporting various initiatives and projects within this framework, leading the teams responsible for their implementation, and measuring and reporting all sustainability-oriented practices (University of Wisconsin, 2020; cited in Demirbilek & Çetin, 2021). In summary, managers who prioritize sustainability foster continuous learning, value social justice issues, develop rather than deplete human and material resources, enhance environmental diversity and capacity, and achieve long-term success (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003).

Rather than viewing sustainable management as a strategy solely focused on financial profit, contemporary organizations should adopt and implement it as a framework that integrates environmental, social, and governance factors (Varsei et al., 2014). As a matter of fact, climate change emerges as a fundamental issue that deepens the environmental dimension of sustainable management and that organizations should care about (George et al., 2021; Abbass et al., 2024). Organizations should enhance their sustainable management practices by implementing strategies to combat climate change, such as reducing their carbon footprint, using resources more efficiently, and developing environmentally friendly production processes (Orazalin et al., 2024). Integrating climate change-related policies into business

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