

The Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction on the Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Employee Retention Among Government Engineers

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Abstract

This study examined the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention among government engineers in the Department of Public Works and Highways in Davao del Norte. Anchored in the Job Demands-Resources Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the study employed a quantitative, non-experimental descriptive-correlational design. Using stratified random sampling, 160 government engineers, consisting of 58 permanent and 102 Job Order personnel, participated in the study. Data were collected using adapted and validated questionnaires on work-life balance, employee retention, and job satisfaction and were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, regression, and mediation analysis. Results showed high levels of work-life balance ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.50$), employee retention ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.67$), and job satisfaction ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.55$). Work-life balance was significantly related to employee retention ($r = 0.710$, $p < 0.001$) and job satisfaction ($r = 0.796$, $p < 0.001$), while job satisfaction was significantly related to employee retention ($r = 0.800$, $p < 0.001$). Mediation analysis confirmed that job satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention, with a Sobel z -value of 7.475 and $p < 0.001$. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening flexible work arrangements, manageable workloads, employee recognition, compensation and benefits, professional development, and workplace support to sustain employee satisfaction and retention. The study supports SDG 3—Good Health and Well-Being and SDG 8—Decent Work and Economic Growth by promoting supportive working conditions and workforce well-being. Its sustainability contribution lies in strengthening institutional workforce stability, preserving organizational knowledge, reducing turnover-related disruptions, and supporting the continuity of infrastructure-related public services.

Keywords: Decent Work; Employee Retention; Government Engineers; Job Satisfaction; Public Sector; Sustainable Development; Work-Life Balance

1. Introduction

Employee retention remains a significant concern in public-sector organizations, particularly among government engineers whose expertise is essential to infrastructure development and public service delivery. Turnover increases recruitment and training costs, disrupts operations, and contributes to the loss of institutional knowledge. For government engineers, retention may be influenced not only by employment conditions but also by their ability to balance work and personal responsibilities and by their satisfaction with their jobs. This study examines the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention

among government engineers in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Davao del Norte. It focuses on how supportive work arrangements, working conditions, and employee satisfaction may contribute to workforce stability. In doing so, the study addresses an important public-sector human resource concern while contributing to the promotion of employee well-being, decent work, institutional effectiveness, and sustainable public service.

Employee retention is critical to organizational continuity because the departure of skilled personnel may increase hiring costs, interrupt operations, and weaken institutional knowledge. This concern is particularly relevant to government engineering organizations, where employees perform technical responsibilities that directly support infrastructure, economic activity, and social welfare. Work-life balance is an important factor in this context because government engineers must manage professional responsibilities alongside personal and family demands. Work-life balance concerns an employee's ability to perform work duties and individual responsibilities (Kossek et al., 2014). According to Khairunneezam, Siti, and Nurul (2017), it involves allocating personal resources between work and other important areas of life. It is therefore not simply an equal division of time but the effective management of competing responsibilities and the reduction of work-life conflict (Otuya & Andeyo, 2020). Job satisfaction is likewise relevant because employees who perceive their work environment, supervision, compensation, recognition, and development opportunities positively may be more inclined to remain in the organization. The present study therefore considers job satisfaction as a psychological mechanism through which work-life balance may influence employee retention among government engineers.

Existing literature establishes work-life balance as an important organizational and employee concern. Asiedu and Appiah (2013) emphasized its contribution to employee performance both at work and at home. When organizations reduce conflict between professional and personal responsibilities, employees may develop more positive attitudes, motivation, and performance (Hao et al., 2015). Workplace and social support also influence employees' experiences in managing multiple responsibilities (Russo et al., 2016). Work-life balance is closely associated with job satisfaction. Kelliher and Anderson (2010) reported that employees with greater freedom in managing their work and personal responsibilities experience higher job satisfaction, which may subsequently contribute to retention. Job satisfaction itself is multidimensional and includes perceptions of the job, working environment, remuneration, and interpersonal relationships (Judge et al., 2021). Working hours can also influence satisfaction (Mohnen and Holly (2012)), while positive psychological experiences characterized by empathy, understanding, and trust contribute to employee satisfaction (Haider et al., 2017). Communication between supervisors and subordinates is likewise important (Kim et al., 2016). Employee outcomes are consequently associated with satisfaction at work. Riyanto et al. (2021) found that better employee performance is associated with higher job satisfaction, whereas dissatisfaction may reduce motivation and performance. Among public-sector employees, satisfaction is also strongly associated with retention because employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to remain longer in their organizations (Pfeffer, 2021). More importantly, literature supports the possible mediating function of job satisfaction. Employees who successfully balance their professional and personal responsibilities may experience greater satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens their intention to remain with the organization (Tremblay et al., 2020). Linton and Smith (2021) similarly found among public-sector employees that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between work-life balance and retention, suggesting that satisfaction serves as a psychological pathway through which work-life balance influences employees' decisions to stay.

Employee retention is a concern across different labor markets. In the United States, workforce demand remained strong while resignation rates stayed elevated, with resignations continuing to present organizational challenges even during periods of inflation and economic slowdown (HR.com, 2022). In the Philippines, employee retention has likewise been identified as a concern, with low retention contributing to productivity and financial losses and requiring organizations to repeatedly recruit and train replacement personnel (Negros, 2022; Magellan Solutions, 2023). The issue is particularly relevant to DPWH offices employing substantial numbers of Job Order personnel. In the Davao del Sur District Engineering Office, Job Order workers are not classified as government employees under Joint Circular No. 1, s. 2017 by CSC-COA-DBM and therefore do not receive the same employment security and benefits as regular government personnel. Experienced Job Order personnel may leave after developing technical knowledge and skills, creating operational disruptions and additional training requirements (Candones, 2021). A comparable situation has been observed in DPWH Davao del Norte, particularly among younger Job Order engineers who leave after gaining professional experience and attending training and seminars. Office records cited in the study show increasing resignations among Job Order engineers, from one in 2023 to four in 2024, 17 in 2025, and 41 in 2026. Such turnover highlights the importance of understanding the factors that encourage qualified engineers to remain in government service. International evidence further supports examining job satisfaction as an intervening factor. European research reported that job satisfaction weakened the negative relationship between work-life imbalance and intention to leave (Lee & Lee, 2024), while Asian research found that job satisfaction mitigated the influence of workload on employee turnover (Han & Park, 2022). These findings provide a broader context for examining whether comparable relationships occur among government engineers in the Philippines.

The study is anchored in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory. Bakker and Demerouti (2017) explain that excessive job demands may contribute to burnout and dissatisfaction, whereas job resources such as autonomy and wellness-related policies can strengthen motivation and job satisfaction. Within this study, work-life balance functions as an important job resource, while job satisfaction represents a psychological mechanism that may strengthen employees' commitment to remain in the organization. The study also draws on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which emphasizes reciprocity between employees and organizations. Employees who perceive organizational support through flexible work arrangements, welfare provisions, and appropriate leave benefits may respond through greater satisfaction, loyalty, and commitment. From this perspective, work-life balance initiatives represent organizational support that may enhance job satisfaction and ultimately improve retention. Moreover, the research is based on Herzberg's Two-factor Theory (1959), which distinguishes hygiene factors, such as salary, working conditions, and organizational practices, from motivators such as recognition, achievement, and growth. Work-life balance provisions, including flexible schedules, benefits, and family support, may reduce dissatisfaction, while recognition and career advancement may strengthen satisfaction and motivation. Together, these conditions may encourage employees to remain with the organization. Conceptually, the study examines three interconnected variables. Work-life balance is the independent variable and includes leave policies, flexible work practices, family support, and work demands. Flexible working arrangements help employees manage both personal and professional responsibilities (Kasau, 2017), while Grzywacz and Carlson (2007, 2012) conceptualized work-life balance in terms of fulfilling mutually agreed expectations across work and family roles. Employee retention is the dependent variable and is assessed through organizational commitment, retention intention, and career stability. Johnson et al. (2000) describe retention as an organization's ability to maintain its workforce and sustain employees' connection with the organization. Job satisfaction serves as the mediating variable and encompasses the work environment, leadership and supervision, recognition and rewards, compensation and benefits, and professional development. The conceptual relationship therefore proposes that work-life balance may directly influence employee retention and may also influence retention indirectly through job satisfaction.

Although the relationships among work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee retention have received considerable scholarly attention, much of the existing research has been conducted in private-sector settings (Frenkel et al., 2021). Comparatively limited research has examined these relationships among government employees, particularly engineers operating within bureaucratic structures characterized by public accountability, formal organizational procedures, and distinct employment arrangements. Research in the Philippines is also limited regarding the mediating effect of job satisfaction within the engineering sector. While previous studies have established relationships between work-life balance and job satisfaction and between job satisfaction and retention, fewer studies have examined whether job satisfaction explains how work-life balance affects retention among public-sector engineers. This gap is particularly relevant to DPWH Davao del Norte because of continuing turnover among engineers, especially Job Order personnel. Examining job satisfaction as a mediator may provide a clearer understanding of whether favorable work-life conditions directly encourage retention or operate substantially through employees' satisfaction with their work. The findings may consequently provide a basis for human resource policies and practices intended to strengthen workforce stability and organizational effectiveness.

The study is directly aligned with SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being because work-life balance and job satisfaction are associated with employees' ability to maintain healthier and more supportive working conditions. By examining work demands, flexible work practices, family support, and workplace satisfaction, the research addresses factors relevant to the well-being of government engineers. The study also supports SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, which promotes productive employment and decent working conditions. Favorable work-life balance and higher job satisfaction may strengthen employee commitment, motivation, productivity, and retention. Retaining skilled government engineers can also support institutional performance and the continued implementation of infrastructure projects that contribute to national and local development.

The study contributes to sustainability through the intersection of human resource management, public administration, employee well-being, engineering, and institutional performance. From a public health and well-being perspective, sustainable working conditions require attention to work demands, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. These factors can help organizations maintain a workforce capable of fulfilling professional responsibilities without unnecessarily compromising personal and family responsibilities. From a socio-economic sustainability perspective, retaining experienced government engineers reduces the repeated organizational costs and operational disruptions associated with turnover and supports the continuity of infrastructure-related public services. Stable and satisfied employees can contribute to organizational productivity and the effective delivery of government programs. The study also contributes to institutional sustainability by addressing the retention of skilled personnel and the preservation of organizational knowledge. High turnover can result in the loss of trained personnel and require continuous recruitment and retraining, whereas improved retention can strengthen workforce continuity, organizational commitment, and service delivery. Finally, the study has relevance to the sustainability of public infrastructure and community services because government engineers are directly involved in projects that support economic growth and social welfare. Understanding how work-life balance and job

satisfaction influence their decision to remain in public service can therefore support both employee-centered human resource management and the long-term effectiveness of government institutions.

The primary objective of the study is to determine the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention among government engineers. Specifically, it determines the levels of work-life balance, employee retention, and job satisfaction; examines the relationships among these variables; and determines whether job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention. The study tests the null assumptions that work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee retention are not significantly related and that job satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention. Through these analyses, the study seeks to generate evidence that may inform human resource practices and policies designed to promote work-life balance, job satisfaction, decent work, and employee retention in government engineering organizations.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study used a quantitative, non-experimental descriptive-correlational design. This design was appropriate for determining the levels of work-life balance, employee retention, and job satisfaction, examining the direction and magnitude of relationships among these variables, and assessing the mediating effect of job satisfaction. Survey questionnaires were used to obtain quantitative data from the respondents.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Davao del Norte. The locale was selected because it employs permanent and Job Order engineers engaged in government engineering functions and constituted the population relevant to the variables investigated in the study.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were engineers employed by DPWH Davao del Norte. The manuscript states that respondents were required to have worked for DPWH for at least one year. It also specifies that newly hired engineers with less than six months of service, engineers not employed by DPWH Davao del Norte, and permanent or Job Order engineers who had already resigned were excluded. Participation was voluntary and required informed consent. Respondents could withdraw at any time or when circumstances such as changes in employment or health made continued participation impossible.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to the Human Resource Management Office of DPWH Davao del Norte, the population consisted of 329 engineers before recorded resignations, resulting in a remaining population of 287 engineers. A Raosoft online calculator was used to determine a sample size of 160 respondents. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure representation of the different employment groups. The final sample consisted of 58 permanent engineers and 102 Job Order engineers.

2.5 Research Instrument

Three adapted questionnaires were used to measure the study variables. Work-life balance was assessed using the Work-Life Balance Questionnaire adapted from “Work Life Balance and Employee Performance in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning Kitui County Government, Kenya,” created by Mulwa Gladys Kasau (2017). It contained 20 items covering leave policies, flexible working practices, family support, and work demands. The reported reliability coefficients were 0.807 for Leave Policies, 0.844 for Flexible Working Practices, 0.823 for Family Support, and 0.909 for Work Demands. Employee retention was measured using the Employee Retention questionnaire from the study of Betty C. Sang (2021), adapted from “Employee Retention Strategies and Employee Performance in Tea Industry: A case study of James Finlay Kenya Limited, Kenya.” The instrument contained 15 items distributed across organizational commitment, retention intention, and career stability. Job satisfaction was measured using the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire from “An Employee Satisfaction Survey for the City of Columbia, Missouri,” conducted by Evergreen Solution, LLC (2006). The instrument covered work environment, leadership and supervision, recognition and reward, compensation and benefits, and personal development, with five items for each dimension. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Scores from 1.00–1.79 were interpreted as Very Low, 1.80–2.59 as Low, 2.60–3.39 as Moderate, 3.40–4.19 as High, and 4.20–5.00 as Very High. The adapted instruments were validated by four members of the Professional Schools panel and one external expert and obtained an Excellent validation rating. Pilot testing was conducted with 40 respondents who were excluded from the final study. Cronbach's Alpha results showed coefficients of .925 for work-life balance, .965 for employee retention, and .961 for job satisfaction, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The adapted questionnaires were initially reviewed by the research adviser and revised based on the feedback received. They were subsequently validated by four members of the University of Mindanao's Professional Schools and one external expert. After validation, the required documents were submitted to the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee. Pilot testing proceeded after receipt of the UMERC compliance certificate. Permission to conduct the study was then sought from the DPWH engineering office in Davao del Norte through formal communication acknowledged by the Research Adviser and the Dean of the Professional Schools. Data were collected through an on-site, face-to-face administration of self-administered questionnaires together with the relevant study information and Informed Consent Form (ICF). Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the academic purpose and confidentiality of the study. Completed responses were collected, consolidated, and encoded in an Excel spreadsheet. The data were securely stored on a password-protected computer and were not disclosed to unauthorized individuals. The encoded dataset was subsequently forwarded to a statistician for statistical processing.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics, particularly frequency, mean, and standard deviation, were used to determine the levels of work-life balance, employee retention, and job satisfaction. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to determine the direction and significance of relationships among the variables. Multiple Regression Analysis was used to identify which work-life balance indicators influenced employee retention. Correlation and mediation analyses were also conducted to determine whether job satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study obtained approval from the University of Mindanao Ethics and Review Committee (UMERC) and complied with the University's ethical standards and applicable DPWH policies. In accordance with the guidelines provided by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Center under the UMERC-2022-106 protocol, participation was voluntary, informed consent was secured, and respondents' privacy and confidentiality were protected. Participants were informed about relevant aspects of the research and were permitted to withdraw when necessary. Research data were handled securely, and measures were observed to prevent unethical practices such as falsification, fraud, and plagiarism.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Levels of the Study Variables

3.1.1 Work-Life Balance

The government engineers reported a high overall level of work-life balance, with a mean of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.50. Flexible work practices obtained the highest mean of 4.21 (SD = 0.60), followed by leave policies at 4.20 (SD = 0.71), both interpreted as very high. Family support was rated high at 4.15 (SD = 0.68), while work demands obtained the lowest mean of 3.18 (SD = 0.66), interpreted as moderate. The findings indicate that government engineers generally experience working conditions that allow them to manage their professional and personal responsibilities, particularly through flexible work arrangements, leave provisions, and family support. However, the moderate rating for work demands suggests that workload remains the comparatively weaker aspect of work-life balance. Work-life balance reflects working conditions that enable employees to integrate personal commitments with work responsibilities (Kasau, 2014). Grzywacz and Carlson (2012) also characterize work-life balance as "the accomplishment of expectations related to certain roles performed by an individual and those people with whom he/she collaborates with in the family and professional spheres".

3.1.2 Employee Retention

Employee retention among government engineers was high, with an overall mean of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.67. Organizational commitment received the highest mean of 4.13 (SD = 0.67), followed by career stability at 4.03 (SD = 0.71). Retention intention obtained the lowest mean of 3.92 (SD = 0.84), although it remained within the high category. These results indicate that the respondents generally demonstrate strong attachment to the organization and perceive a relatively stable career within government service. Organizational commitment appears to be the strongest dimension of retention, whereas the comparatively lower retention intention suggests that willingness to remain with the organization may be less pronounced than their current level of commitment and perceived career stability.

3.1.3 Job Satisfaction

The respondents reported a high overall level of job satisfaction, with a mean of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.55. Leadership and supervision obtained the highest mean of 4.39 (SD = 0.54), followed closely by work environment at 4.38 (SD = 0.49), both rated very high. Professional development obtained a mean of 4.09 (SD = 0.68), while recognition and rewards recorded 4.00 (SD = 0.69). Compensation and benefits received the lowest mean of 3.86 (SD = 0.87). The results show that job satisfaction is particularly evident in respondents' perceptions

of leadership, supervision, and the work environment. Professional development and recognition also contribute positively to overall satisfaction. In contrast, compensation and benefits emerged as the comparatively weakest dimension, indicating that satisfaction with financial and employment-related provisions was lower than satisfaction with other aspects of the job.

3.2 Relationships Among Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Retention

3.2.1 Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Employee Retention

Work-life balance and employee retention showed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship, with an r -value of 0.710** and $p < 0.001$. Since the relationship was significant at the 0.05 level, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between work-life balance and employee retention was rejected. The result indicates that higher work-life balance is associated with higher employee retention among government engineers. Thus, employees who are better able to manage their professional and personal responsibilities are also more likely to demonstrate organizational commitment, retention intention, and career stability.

3.2.2 Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Work-life balance and job satisfaction were also strongly and positively correlated, with an r -value of 0.796** and a p -value of < 0.001 . The relationship was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding indicates that favorable work-life conditions are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. Government engineers who experience better leave arrangements, flexible work practices, family support, and manageable work demands tend to report greater satisfaction with their work environment, leadership, recognition, compensation, and professional development.

3.2.3 Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention

Job satisfaction demonstrated a strong positive relationship with employee retention, with a correlation coefficient of 0.800* and a computed significance of 0.001 at the 0.05 significance level. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship was therefore rejected. The result indicates that higher job satisfaction is associated with stronger employee retention. Government engineers who are more satisfied with their working conditions and employment experiences are correspondingly more likely to demonstrate commitment to the organization, intention to remain, and career stability.

3.3 Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction

The mediation analysis examined whether job satisfaction explains part of the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention. The analysis used linear regression and the medgraph procedure. The mediation concept was introduced by Baron and Kenny in 2001 and requires the relevant relationships among the independent variable, mediator, and dependent variable to be established before the mediation effect is assessed. The total effect of work-life balance on employee retention was significant, with $B = 0.952$, $S.E. = 0.075$, and $\beta = 0.710$. Work-life balance also significantly influenced job satisfaction, with $B = 0.872$, $S.E. = 0.052$, and $\beta = 0.796$. The effect of job satisfaction on employee retention was likewise significant, with $B = 0.785$, $S.E. = 0.094$, and $\beta = 0.641$. When job satisfaction was included as the mediator, the direct effect of work-life balance on employee retention decreased from $B = 0.952$ to $B = 0.268$ and from $\beta = 0.710$ to $\beta = 0.200$, while remaining statistically significant ($S.E. = 0.103$, $p < 0.05$). The reduction in the direct effect while it remained significant indicates partial mediation. This means that work-life balance continues to have a direct relationship with employee retention, but part of its effect operates through job satisfaction. Accordingly, improvements in work-life balance are associated with increased job satisfaction, which in turn contributes to employees' likelihood of remaining with the organization. The Sobel test produced a z -value of 7.475 and a p -value of less than 0.001. The reported final classification was partial mediation, supporting the regression analysis showing that the effect of work-life balance on employee retention decreased but remained significant after job satisfaction was considered. Thus, job satisfaction serves as an important mediating mechanism linking work-life balance and employee retention among government engineers.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The findings demonstrate that government engineers in Davao del Norte generally experience high levels of work-life balance, employee retention, and job satisfaction. The favorable assessment of flexible work practices, leave policies, and family support indicates that the organization provides conditions that help employees manage their professional and personal responsibilities, although work demands remain an area that requires greater attention. Employee retention was likewise high, particularly in terms of organizational commitment and career stability, suggesting that respondents generally maintain a positive attachment to the organization and perceive continuity in their government careers. Job satisfaction was also high, with leadership and supervision and the work environment receiving the strongest assessments, while compensation and benefits emerged as the comparatively weaker aspect. More importantly, the significant relationships among work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee retention show that these dimensions are closely interconnected. The mediation analysis further established that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between work-life balance and employee

retention. This means that work-life balance contributes directly to employees' willingness to remain in the organization while also strengthening retention indirectly by increasing their satisfaction with their work. The findings support Blau's Social Exchange Theory (1964), wherein employees who perceive organizational support may reciprocate through stronger commitment and continued membership in the organization. They are also consistent with Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), which explains that appropriate working conditions and other hygiene factors can reduce dissatisfaction, while recognition, achievement, and development opportunities can strengthen satisfaction and contribute to employee retention.

Based on the findings, the organization should continue strengthening its work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee retention practices, with particular attention to the areas that received comparatively lower assessments. Work demands should be addressed by ensuring equitable distribution of responsibilities, maintaining adequate staffing, setting realistic deadlines, and providing employees with appropriate organizational support. Flexible work arrangements, leave policies, wellness initiatives, and stress-management and mental-health programs should likewise be maintained and regularly reviewed to support the well-being of government engineers. Since compensation and benefits received the lowest assessment among the dimensions of job satisfaction, management should review compensation practices to ensure fairness, competitiveness, and responsiveness to employees' needs, together with appropriate health and wellness benefits, performance-based incentives, and non-monetary recognition. Employee retention may also be strengthened through opportunities for advancement, mentoring, professional development, recognition of employee contributions, and favorable working conditions. Regular assessments of job satisfaction and retention should be undertaken to identify emerging concerns and determine whether existing programs remain responsive to employees' needs. Furthermore, chief engineers, in collaboration with Human Resources and Development leaders, should conduct seminars on work-life balance, employee retention, and workplace satisfaction, beginning with office heads and supervisors and extending these activities to government engineers so that supportive practices can be consistently promoted throughout the organization.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The study received approval from the University of Mindanao Ethics and Review Committee (UMERC) and complied with applicable ethical standards and DPWH policies. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and respondents could withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and privacy were protected through secure and anonymous handling of research data.

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