

The impacts of a high commitment work system on well-being: the mediating role of organization support and employee work-life balance

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to examine the effect of a high commitment work system (HCWS) on employee well-being and the mediating role of organizational support and work-life balance.

Design/methodology/approach – Using structural equation modeling (SEM) for analysis, a quantitative approach was adopted to collect data from the 235 employees from the public sector in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Findings – Results show that HCWSs have a significant influence on organizational support and employee work-life balance. Therefore, there is a significant positive effect on employee well-being. The consequence of HCWS on well-being is not mediated by organizational support. Organization and work-life balance do not support the idea of reducing the negative effects of high-commitment work systems on well-being. There is a significant influence of work-life balance on employee behaviors to have well-being.

Originality/value – Managers can devise a strategy to involve the employees to join participating in decision-making. The research advances knowledge of how HCWS improves employee well-being and emphasizes the significance of organizational support in the environment of public organizations. Organizations are expecting to develop new strategies that help employees engage with their environment and increase their confidence. In this perspective, the present study has identified a crucial key factor of HCWS affecting of organization support and employee work-life balance, which can help propelling employees well-being. The research expands the knowledge of the organizational and cultural elements that influence employee behavior and performance in this setting by evaluating the effects of HCWS on employee well-being in the UAE.

Keywords High-commitment work system, Organizational support, Work-life balance, Well-being, Employee commitment

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Each organization strives to elicit employee commitment by establishing effective human resources (HR) practices and using high commitment work systems (HCWS). HCWS is defined as the arrangement of HR procedures that reward employees and foster a community where workers are devoted to the business and operation. Ferdous *et al.* (2021) stated that HCWS builds an exemplary commitment between employees and organizations that expect high-performance outcomes. Beltrán-Martín *et al.* (2022) mentioned that the effect of HR practices on well-being is changeable. However, not all HR methods have the same influence on employees, and each employee's response varies (Schmidt *et al.*, 2018). Several studies have focused on how HCWS can drive performance and well-being by supporting employees and providing work-life balance (WLB) (Kim *et al.*, 2023). Professional HR practices and

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flexible schedules ensure satisfied employees who get time off work to spend time with their families (Fuller and Hirsh, 2019). Organizational support also plays an essential role in creating positive behaviors in employees. Moreover, employee well-being basically accounts for the role of organizational support, leading to a WLB (O'Neill and Follmer, 2020).

Organizations have started to focus on happiness to make employees happier. This is because committed employees have more happiness and satisfaction with their jobs. Employees are committed to an environment that suits their motivations, resulting in better job performance (Shin and Hur, 2021; Uribebebarria *et al.*, 2021). However, the importance of happiness at work can be critical for the job itself and the continuity of employment. Thus, organizations need to have satisfied employees who can contribute to performance and work to achieve organizational objectives (Felício *et al.*, 2021). Research indicates that employees with higher well-being work harder and are more committed to their work and organization. Consequently, this influences employees' social responsibility behavior and turnover intention, as well as organizational commitment.

Ahmed *et al.* (2021) showed that an organization's management should have the skills and motivation to offer support to employees, which, in turn, ensures their well-being and job happiness. HCWS entails HR practices that are highlighted by an organization with a focus on the tasks to be completed in such a way that their employees are motivated to do so. Hauff *et al.* (2022) use the HCWS concept to examine the relationship between employee well-being and an organization's performance. High-commitment management highlights the personal responsibilities and empowerment of the employee across all levels of the organization. As such, using HCWSs means using HR practices that target high commitment and performance. People with higher levels of well-being display more productivity than their peers with low well-being. Work and family responsibilities have become important issues because of changes in modern life. Thus, gaining an understanding of work and family responsibilities is essential for organizations in supporting employees to improve their well-being.

The well-being levels in the public sector reveal a series of positive findings. They show that most employees are satisfied with their current jobs, primarily citing nonfinancial factors such as a positive work environment and work that challenges them as individuals. On the other hand, a study shows that many public sector employees feel they cannot fulfil their individual potential, build relationships with colleagues and find purpose in their work (Al Hosani, 2023). Previous studies conducted in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) focused on the factors that affect happiness and found that they are mainly related to management support, organizational culture and human resource management (HRM) practices. This points to the existence of organizational, job-related and individual factors that influence an employee's WLB (Al Hosani, 2023). More specifically, job happiness among the UAE's public sector employees is relatively low, with nearly 58% of workers saying they are not satisfied with their organization's commitment work system.

This study explores the impact of HCWSs on well-being mediated by organizational support and WLB in UAE public organizations. Al Hosani *et al.* (2021) mentioned that workers in the public sector become committed during weekends, and their feeling of happiness is reduced on weekdays. An HCWS is often seen as a link between the employees and their organization that generates employee happiness and well-being. Organizational support raises employees' commitment to their work and the organization. When employees gain support from their organization, their sense of belonging is strengthened (Rasool *et al.*, 2021). This suggests that employee well-being forms the foundation of employee satisfaction and helps managers think about how employees should be managed. HCWSs present such an opportunity because they have been determined to have a positive influence on employees' participation and motivation, encouraging them to innovate and be involved in their environment when offered organizational support (Khan *et al.*, 2021).

According to Gordon and Parikh (2021), organizational and managerial support for employees leads to higher well-being, job happiness and lower turnover. Thébaud and Pedulla (2022)

mentioned that HCWSs may lead to shared benefits, but there is a need to test the impact the HCWSs in bringing about well-being to ensure that it is the nature of HCWSs and the related factors that influence this causal relationship (Wahab *et al.*, 2020). To identify the connection between organizational commitment and employee well-being as well as the mediating role of organizational support and employee WLB, there should be an understanding of well-being gains associated with HCWSs. This gap informs the following research questions for the present study:

RQ1. What is the relationship between HCWS and well-being in UAE public sector?

RQ2. How are organizational support and work-life balance associated with employee well-being?

The significance of this study is focused in three fields. First the study will identify different aspects of HCWS which boost employees well-being using professional practices to make them happier and satisfy, contributing to work performance. Second, the research can determine the relationship between organization support and employee well-being. The research will explore this relationship and provide strategies related to organization support which can alter employee work methods to improve their work experience. The research will also provide better understanding on how supporting employees can help them to collaborate and feel engaged with their colleagues which will effectively increase employee work performance. Finally, this research can provide insights into the mediating role of WLB in terms of motivating employee, which will help address the issue of low employee WLB and engagement as organizations can implement programs and enhance work environment based on HCWS to improve the employee engagement and help their employees enhance their work environment and experience.

This study delves into the examination of the social exchange theory (SET) in the context of employee well-being through the lens of a HCWS. Additionally, the study uses into the job demands-resources (JD-R) theory as an integral framework related to work engagement driven by organizational support, ultimately contributing to the equilibrium between work and personal life for employees. The relevance of the JD-R to this research is particularly noteworthy, as it centers on human motivation and its influence on behavior, aligning harmoniously with the role of WLB in motivating employees toward overall well-being. JD-R posits the existence of innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness, which drive human actions. These fundamental needs offer insight into how HCWS, organizational support and WLB collectively shape employee behavior in the context of workplace performance. A key element within HCWS is employee participation, highlighting that when employees feel a sense of connection to their organization and colleagues, they are more inclined to engage in positive behaviors, such as effective communication and unwavering commitment (Gagné and Deci, 2005). This theory intersects with WLB by emphasizing that a supportive organizational environment, influenced by HCWS and empowering leadership, not only fosters empathy but also encourages employees to actively participate and express their ideas and concerns related to their tasks and life matters.

The following section review of existing literature expounds on practical studies on the relationship between HCWS and well-being. This is followed by an investigation of the aspects of organizational support and employee WLB and how they facilitate the HCWS-well-being connection. The study's hypotheses are presented based on the relationships between the variables. The review is followed by the research methodology, data analysis and results of the study. A discussion of the findings is then presented before concluding with recommendations and limitations of the current research.

Literature review and hypotheses development

Social exchange theory

HCWS establish psychological ties between workers and organizations to foster performance, creating work settings where workers feel devoted to exerting greater effort to attain organizational performance (Chen, 2018; Boon and Kalshoven, 2014). The likelihood that workers will match that commitment increases with how much help they feel they are receiving (Chillakuri and Vanka, 2020; Detnakin and Rurkkhum, 2019). HCWS promotes job satisfaction by providing autonomy, involvement, empowerment, and participation and the effectiveness of the organization (Park and Park, 2020). Therefore, a social key component of the theory of the HCWS-performance is SET (De Menezes and Kelliher, 2017). SET is central in hypothesizing the HCWS achievement relationship (De Menezes *et al.*, 2019). De Menezes *et al.* (2019) defined social exchange as “the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two people.” The use of SET allows evaluation of how an organization’s support and its employees’ WLB mediate the relationship between HCWS and employee well-being. SET proposes that when employees do not receive the benefits they value, this affects their efforts negatively by causing pressure and decreasing their sense of well-being (De Menezes *et al.*, 2019). Pressure from involuntary effort can result in depression, burnout and work strain. Workers who believe they are being treated unfairly under HCWS may view their need to reciprocate as an increase in workload, a demand on their time or even a burden. According to SET, employees who do not receive valued rewards might reduce their effort, disconnect from their job responsibilities, behave unethically or inadvertently take steps to avoid repercussions. Pressure and exhaustion from this kind of behavior result in stress and a diminished sense of well-being (Chillakuri and Vanka, 2020). SET highlights the importance of trust in management support leading to positive outcomes. These outcomes are also the result of implementing HCWS in employee commitment and motivation, and participation, causing improvements in employee well-being and creating a favorable work environment. As such, SET explains that when employees feel supported and committed, they put more effort into their actions, which is balanced between their work and personal lives and, in turn, increases the organization’s performance. Khan *et al.* (2022) claimed that when employees do not gain benefits from the organization, it causes stress, which reduces their well-being. Even between the similar workgroup, people may improve different understandings about which HR performs are existing to them (Wang *et al.*, 2020). Using SET in exploring the relationship between HCWS and employees’ well-being is helping to strengthen organizational performance (Khan *et al.*, 2021).

Job demands-resources theory

The core assumption of JD-R theory stipulates that in every job lies certain risk factors contributing to job stress, which can be categorized into two types: job demands and job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Job demands essentially refer to aspects of work that require tremendous mental and physical effort, namely, work pressure, workload and unfavorable work environment (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Job resources may be understood as aspects of work that help in the achievement of work goals and driving personal development such as job control, performance feedback and work support. Cognitive or mental demands reflect the individual’s effort in terms of making engagement and participating in activities that connect to their job roles (Sarwar *et al.*, 2021). Job demands and resources strongly affect employee well-being through the support they get from managers and help them to be motivated and engaged with the work environment (Chowhan and Pike, 2022).

Principally, JD-R includes two fundamental psychological processes, which are a stress process and a motivational process. A stress process can be caused by high job demands and low job resources, leading to burnout which contributes to negative outcomes such as

absenteeism, disengagement and poor performance (Schaufeli, 2017). Essentially, employees experience stress when job demands, and job resources are not in balance (i.e. excessive job demands and insufficient job resources), resulting in mental exhaustion, which can lead to both negative individual impact (e.g. ill-health) and organizational impact (e.g. poor performance) (Schaufeli, 2017). A motivational process that the managers provide through their support, can be stimulated by abundant job resources, leading to work engagement which results in positive outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment and high work performance. In other words, job resources can enhance employee motivation, driving employee engagement, which, in turn, contributes to positive impacts such as improved well-being and work performance (Schaufeli, 2017). JD-R theory suggests that job demands and resources effect employee well-being, behaviors and performance but that employees may also enhance their own job demands and resources. This practice of employees determining their jobs has been referred to as job crafting which give them a chance to a have flexible work environment. Zhang *et al.* (2022) discussed that employees can be involved in several types of practical behavior, including innovation, task creation and negotiation of personalized schedules with their employer. They defined job crafting as employees' personal enterprise to change their job demands and job resources to better support the design of the job with their own abilities and preferences, and this practice lead to have a WLB (ibid). Huo and Jiang (2023) addressed concerns regarding the intricate relationship between work–life conflict and employee performance, with a particular focus on the pivotal elements of well-being and HCWS. Their work accentuates employee well-being as a critical mediator in the relationship between work–life conflict and employee performance. They concur that individual employee well-being and health have a significant impact on WLB and workplace outcomes. Drawing upon the JD-R theory, they argue that well-being is a byproduct of workplace flexibility, which, in turn, influences employee engagement and WLB. Their findings underscore that direct involvement in professional HR practices heightens employee commitment and well-being (Huo and Jiang, 2023). The synthesis of HCWS and an effective work system invariably leads to positive enhancements in employee well-being. This collection of literature underpins the subsequent hypotheses.

High commitment work system and well-being

HR practices are vital to creating a supportive organization. Cooper *et al.* (2019) propose that structured HR systems can help to further reduce burnout by providing a positive environment and bettering employees' well-being. HR practices are the tools used to shape workplace social relationships, which play a dynamic role in employees' well-being (Zhang *et al.*, 2022). Kim and Ployhart (2018) discussed that HR practices that help achieve HCWS are selected by each organization to ensure productivity and performance, such as hiring people based on their skills and knowledge. Work systems involving a positive environment and presenting two-sided assistance create spirits of commitment and employee well-being (Wang *et al.*, 2022).

Attaining job satisfaction is closely linked to favorable health outcomes for employees (Ferdous *et al.*, 2021). They underscore the pivotal role of well-being in not only enhancing employee health but also bolstering organizational performance. Well-being contributes to elevated self-esteem and heightened employee productivity. Furthermore, the organizational environment assumes a significant role in the cultivation of employee well-being (Schwepker *et al.*, 2021). Importantly, sound psychological health positively influences an employee's sense of belonging within the organization. Notably, there exists a progressive connection between a HCWS, the well-being and performance of employees. HCWS and an efficient work system affect employee well-being in positive ways. This body of literature informed the following hypothesis:

H1. HCWS are positively related to employee well-being.

The mediating roles of organizational support and employee work–life balance

Organizational encouragement and a stress-free workplace are factors that help to establish a good WLB (Côté *et al.*, 2021). Such a healthy environment creates positive attitudes that improve employees' well-being. This impact is related to SET within the domain of HCWS. The more workers feel sustained, the more confident their reactions develop. Cameron and Rahman (2022) suggested that when employees can decide when and how they work, they are better able to fulfill their responsibilities. Organizational support helps to strengthen the relationship between HCWS and well-being by offering employees the requirements they need (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018). Hobfoll *et al.* (2018) assumed that employee well-being predicts organizational commitment. Flexible practices and organizational care have also been shown to bring about positive outcomes. Other factors that motivate employees include good payment packages, training, performance assessments and hiring procedures (Wahab *et al.*, 2020).

Organizational support serves as a catalyst for transforming an HCWS into a flexible work environment, thereby fostering employee well-being, elevating work engagement and providing individuals with a degree of control over their WLB (Sureka *et al.*, 2020). The stress induced by a challenging workplace environment can have adverse repercussions on employee performance (Raub *et al.*, 2021). Nonetheless, mediating factors like organizational support have the potential to mitigate these detrimental effects. In the context of the relationship between a stressful work environment and organizational commitment, Raub *et al.* (2021) underscore the positive impact of structural care on employee productivity, amplifying their well-being and overall workplace performance. Additionally, it has been acknowledged that when employees receive practical organizational support within an HCWS framework, their perceptual and emotional evaluations of their organizations register significant enhancements. Leadership style and effective managerial communication play pivotal roles in shaping a conducive work atmosphere. An organization with a clear vision of professional practice establishes a sense of engagement among its employees, fostering a harmonious synergy between individuals and the system. HCWS, with its focus on nurturing long-term relationships between the organization and its employees, strives to forge a psychological connection between individual aspirations and the overarching organizational objectives, ultimately bolstering employee accountability and commitment (Robbins and Judge, 2021).

Further, employee productivity and work performance significantly impact overall organizational efficiency and profitability. Employee well-being may increase because of HCWSs because such systems make work more proficient (e.g. by having a hiring and appraisal system and well-training programs) and create a type of organizational commitment through engaging and getting support from managers in work (e.g. by trying to let employees participate in decision-making) (Bakker *et al.*, 2020). According to the findings of a study conducted by Djastuti (2019) and Bakker *et al.* (2020), work-life balance at work is inextricably linked to employee well-being. When employees enjoy doing their job and have a healthy life outside of work, their performance improves (Mehmood *et al.*, 2023). Great levels of organizational care thus allow employees to experience higher engagement levels. This statement relates to JD-R, which shapes the relation between organizational support through work engagement and WLB. When employees perceive their work environment as supportive and engaging, it enhances their job happiness and overall well-being. This heightened organizational support, in turn, translates into improved work performance (Scharp *et al.*, 2022). Engaged employees are more likely to invest discretionary effort, display higher levels of task mastery and exhibit behaviors that positively influence organizational outcomes (Bakker *et al.*, 2020). This relationship thus informs the second hypothesis:

H2. Organizational support mediates the effect of HCWSs on employee well-being.

WLB and well-being are strongly connected and have many commonalities that deserve research attention (Althammer *et al.*, 2021). For instance, flexible work schedules help to create well-being, adopt commitment and enable employees to balance their family and work lives (Soga *et al.*, 2022). This stance is echoed by Agarwal (2021), who assumes that employees' creative behavior is inspired when they reduce conflict between their personal and professional lives. It is important to show how low high commitment affects employee well-being as this will shed light on how related resources improve employee well-being by potentiating the effect of personal resources such as WLB. A well-designed HR management system may help to enhance employees' work well-being. Meijerink *et al.* (2021) insinuate that well-being is correlated to work performance and the quality of an employee's work life. They suggest that the greater the well-being in the workplace, the greater the commitment and efficiency of employees. Commitment has been recognized by several studies as an essential factor responsible for higher levels of innovative behavior (Karani and Mehta, 2021). Such HCWS comprise enrollment, training and development, reward system, career management, participation and performance management. Therefore, it can be used to increase employees' well-being (Schwepker *et al.*, 2021). HCWS creates a good environment for employees and provides a clear strategy to achieve their goals. This process is applied by supported leaders who encourage applying HCWS that lead to better performance. HCWS helps the organization to choose employees with knowledge and provide employees with the knowledge they need (Akgunduz *et al.*, 2023).

SET has been used to explain the connection between organizational support and employee well-being through the implementation of HCWS. It shapes the relationship between HR practices and organizational support by increasing trust and loyalty. A safe work environment and flexible working times also help to boost encouragement at work, essentially improving the quality of working life (Grote and Guest, 2017). One may conclude that the more employees feel supported, the more confident their reactions become, thus prompting the following hypotheses:

H2a. HCWS has a direct effect on organizational support.

H2b. Organizational support has a direct effect on well-being.

When employees receive financial and socioeconomic incomes from their organization, they feel grateful and inclined to react positively to the organization, thereby helping to promote employee commitment. Therefore, employees respond effectively and are more engaged when they feel that their organization is worried about them (Rasool *et al.*, 2021). As such, organizational support can generate a better workplace environment and mediate between a stressful environment and employee well-being. If employees are more committed to their organization, it may suggest they have better levels of well-being (e.g. Cameron and Rahman, 2022). Happier and healthier employees with a higher level of productivity at work, lower levels of absenteeism and higher levels of job commitment are witnessed in such an organization (Ferdous *et al.*, 2021).

The expression "work-life balance" was first used in the late seventies to describe the balance between personal life and work life of workers who had a family and needed to attend to them while not sacrificing their work. Improvements in living conditions and the importance of work and family life affect the workplace (Haar and Brougham, 2022). Today, WLB is considered an important issue for both organizations and their employees and, thus, worthy of attention. Many workplace challenges are understood in the context of an unbalanced work-life (Karani and Mehta, 2021). Recent organizational strategies address the development of WLB practices to help employees manage work-life difficulties, which reduces conflicts in the workplace and ensures better performance. Creating stronger connections between WLB and well-being in the workplace is likely to work to improve the long-term effectiveness of employees and the health environment in their organizations (Clausen *et al.*, 2022).

Organizations must include WLB initiatives to develop a set of HCWS practices that support a positive and high-quality work environment while accounting for the need to spend time outside of work (Meng *et al.*, 2019). Overall, organizations should foster workplace cultures that support a variety of values among individuals, furthering work and personal lives and helping employees gain control over their WLB and needs. This stance leads to the following hypothesis:

H3. Employee work–life mediates the effect of HCWS on well-being.

WLB is a condition in which an employee can manage his time correctly or in a balance between the world of work, the joy of personal needs and family life (Côté *et al.*, 2021). WLB can provide employees with control over their time spent working as they manage their family and other responsibilities while coping with the demands of their job. Therefore, WLB has positive effects on employees' well-being. Well-being is important not only to individual employees in maintaining their good health but also to organizations at large, as poor well-being in the workplace can have negative effects on performance and overall efficiency (Wikhamn *et al.*, 2021). WLB decreases employees' psychological stress, leading to high employee commitment (Emre and De Spiegeleare, 2021). A high-commitment work system has a positive effect on WLB in creating employee well-being. There is a positive and significant relationship between HR practices and employee flexibility and commitment to their work. A WLB has a positive and important effect on organizational commitment and employee well-being and performance. Thus, employees who have a good balance between work and personal life are more productive, high-performing, happy and creative (Yang and Islam, 2021).

Organizational commitment is influenced by WLB and job happiness. Having a proper HCWS in the organization helps employees have well-being by having enough knowledge and becoming more joyful in a particular work environment. WLB can be created through good working hour management systems and time spent based on priority. A significant positive relationship exists between WLB and organizational commitment (Yang and Islam, 2021). Individuals who balance personal and work life find their job to be more fun and report more ideal experiences such as work engagement – an affective-motivational, work-related state of well-being defined by energy, devotion and absorption. WLB generates positive emotions such as joy, excitement and enthusiasm. These positive emotions directly impact well-being as employees who experience a positive work environment are more likely to be engaged in their work (Petelcycz *et al.*, 2018).

HCWS is also an effective way of keeping employees satisfied and having WLB; as a result, they can be engaged with the work environment and enhance their work performance through having a professional work system and work schedules (Bakker *et al.*, 2020). Tsauro *et al.* (2019) investigated the relationship between HCWS and WLB using a similar concept to organizational support. HCWS can bring about concepts and regulations of a flexible workplace, which can have a significant impact on employee well-being (Yang, 2020). Therefore, HCWS and a supportive environment can promote employee engagement and commitment, reduce stress and enhance job happiness, consequently enhancing well-being (Liu *et al.*, 2023). According to studies performed by Scharp *et al.* (2022), Scharp *et al.* (2023) and Bakker *et al.* (2020), HCWS allows employees to communicate with their managers because they can adjust their needs and work methods they prefer. This helps them to hone their skills and become more interested in their job, keeping them more focused on their work tasks and helping them perform well (Bakker *et al.*, 2020). Consequently, it can be assumed that HCWS positively influences WLB by promoting psychological empowerment, facilitating flow and concentration, encouraging social interaction and collaboration and nurturing positive emotions and well-being. This stance leads to the following hypothesis:

H3a. HCWS has a direct effect on work–life balance.

H3b. Work-life balance has a direct effect on well-being.

Figure 1 shows the hypothesized link in the study's conceptual framework. The various selection of resources that came under the domain of HCWS and organizational activities were identified, including the need for compensation, training, appraisals, recruitment and employee relations. The research, based on the SET principles, found a number of elements that were actively used. To examine how social situations, play an important role in performance, and efficiency, and how this relationship can facilitate the principal keys of SET by adopting organization support, and WLB.

Research methodology

Sample and data collection process

This study was conducted in two phases. The first pilot phase took place over a period of two weeks in the month of February 2022 in public organizations. A total of ten employees participated in the pilot phase with the aim of developing instruments measuring key variables, and to gain an in-depth understanding of factors influencing employees' well-being. Focus group techniques were used in this stage to gain a more in-depth understanding of employees' perceptions and experiences with HCWS. Interviews took place among department heads and employees. These interviews yielded important background and contextual information regarding on-going initiatives and major policy decisions of HCWS implementation.

After the survey was finalized, the second phase of data collection took place in March–June 2022. The survey was sent out to 350 employees within UAE public sector organizations. The respondents to the survey constituted members from various educational backgrounds and age groups who worked in middle and junior levels with work experiences from 1 to 10 years in various departments. After the initial invitation, a total of 235 individuals completed the online survey (see Table 1). The target participants of this research are middle and junior levels, and the reason for choosing these levels is because there is a relation between the job categories and well-being (Ismail *et al.*, 2019). The middle and lower work levels have personal standards suited to some jobs in terms of job happiness and WLB. They have practical and loaded works, which make them more stressed than others. The selection of this assortment of experience years was based on the

Figure 1 Conceptual framework of this study

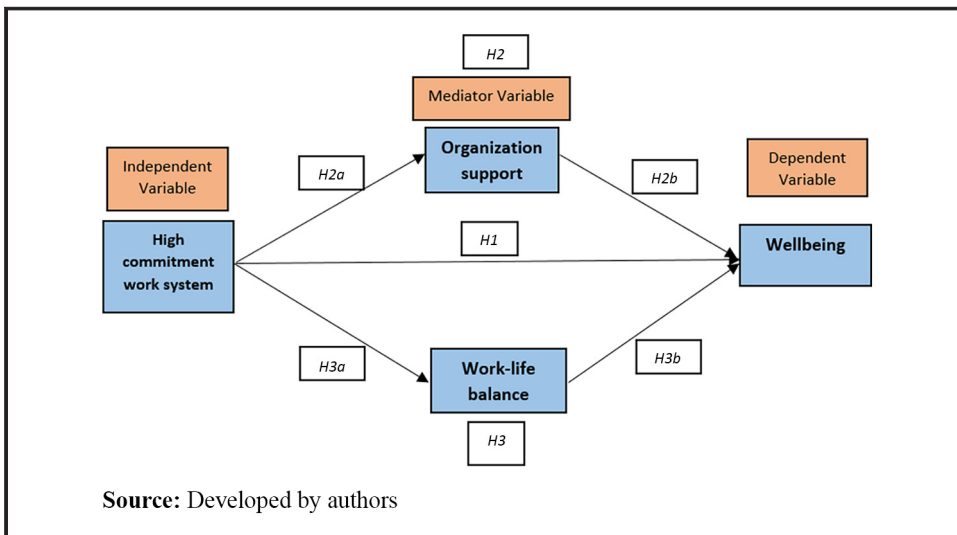


Table 1 Sample characteristics

<i>Demographic</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>(%)</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	113	48.29
Female	122	52.14
Total	235	100.0
<i>Education</i>		
High school	40	17.02
Bachelor's degree	118	50.21
Postgraduate degree	77	32.77
Total	235	100.0
<i>Position</i>		
Middle level	113	48.29
Junior level	122	52.14
Total	235	100.0
<i>Experience years</i>		
1–4 years	186	79.14
5–10 years	49	20.85
Total	235	100.0
<i>Age group (years)</i>		
18–24	8	3.40
25–34	64	27.23
35–44	114	48.51
45–54	37	15.74
55–64	12	5.11
Total	235	100.0

Source: Developed by authors

fact that the more experience years the employees have, the more control between work and life they have (Aruldoss *et al.*, 2021).

Measure and construct development

The procedures adopted for the development of the constructs were based on studying the literature on HCWS. It has to be noted that HCWS constructs can differ greatly from other HR constructs, such as compensation, training and development. Variables have been measured by using five-point Likert scales. The measurement of the study's constructs, along with the exact wording of the questions and their sources, are reproduced and presented (see Table 2).

HCWS: The public and private employee experiences of HCWS measured by using the scale developed by Sing and Williams (2004). These items focus on commitment-based HR practices. Employees rated the use of five HR practices – competence-based recruitment and selection, development-based training, performance-based compensation, mutual-based performance appraisals and empowerment-based employee relations practices in their performance.

Well-being: The measurement for well-being was modified from the General Health Questionnaire's (Bun Cheung, 2002) original items. This measurement assesses respondents' positive feelings related to work and life activities. It measures the presence of positive emotions, the absence of negative emotions and happiness with life.

Organization support: This construct was measured using items modified from Hayman (2009). These items assess the availability of organization support as perceived by workers. It evaluates an employee's perception that the organization values, his or her work contributions and cares about the employee's well-being.

Table 2 Constructs measurement

Constructs	Items	Source(s)
HCWS	<p><i>Compensation</i></p> <p>a) The compensation and benefits for all employees are directly linked to his or her performance b) Job performance is an important factor in determining the incentive compensation of employees c) In our organization, salary and other benefits are comparable to the market</p> <p><i>Training and development</i></p> <p>a) Training and development need to be identified are realistic, useful and based on the business strategy of the business b) My organization encourages further training and education for all employees c) Employees in each job will normally go through training and development programs every year</p> <p><i>Performance appraisals</i></p> <p>a) Employees in my organization are provided with performance-based feedback and counseling in my organization b) During the past 12 months, I had a formal performance appraisal provided with feedback and guidance c) My supervisor has discussed with me how to improve my work performance</p> <p><i>Recruitment and selection</i></p> <p>a) The selection systems followed in my organization are highly scientific and rigorous b) Valid and standardized tests are used when required in the recruitment and selection process c) The recruitment and selection system in my firm selects those having the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes</p> <p><i>Employee relations</i></p> <p>a) Employees are able to suggest improvement in the way things are done b) Employees in my organization are provided an opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done c) Employees in my organization are encouraged to speak out frankly when they are critical of well-established ideas.</p>	
Well-being	<p>a) Able to concentrate on whatever you are doing? b) Able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? c) Positive about yourself? d) Reasonably happy?</p>	<p>Bun Cheung (2002) drawn originally from General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12)</p>
Organization support	<p>a) My company has an elaborate/comprehensive flexible benefits scheme b) In general, I feel free to use the flexible work programs provided by this organization c) Using the organization's flexible work programs will in no way jeopardize my future with the company d) My organization allows workers to work from home.</p>	<p>Hayman (2009)</p>
Work-life balance	<p><i>Work interference with personal life (WIPL)</i></p> <p>a) My personal life suffers because of work b) My job makes my personal life difficult c) I neglect personal needs because of work d) I put my personal life on hold for work e) I miss personal activities because of work f) I struggle to juggle work and nonwork g) I am unhappy with the amount of time for nonwork activities</p> <p><i>Personal life with work interference (PLIW)</i></p> <p>a) My personal life drains me of energy for work b) I am too tired to be effective at work c) My work suffers because of my personal life d) It is hard to work because of personal matters</p> <p><i>Work personal life enhancement (WPLE)</i></p> <p>My personal life gives me energy for my job a) My job gives me energy to pursue personal activities b) I have a better mood at work because of personal life c) I have a better mood because of my job</p>	<p>Hayman (2005)</p>
<p>Source: Developed by authors</p>		

Work-life balance: A short description of the three constructs of WLB as presented by Hayman (2009), is exhibited below: work interference with personal life (WIPL). This construct includes work-related factors that impact an individual's personal life. It measures the impact of work on personal life. This construct has been explained as the impact of personal life on work. It measures the impact of personal life on each one's work. Also, it includes work-related factors that impact an individual's personal life.

Data analysis

This study used a structural equation modeling (SEM-AMOS) to test the main statistical relationships between HCWS and well-being, and the mediating effects of organization support and WLB. SEM uses a two-step approach involving scale validation of the measurement model and structural path analysis. In the scale validity assessment, the goodness-of-fit statistics, convergent validity (e.g. average variance extracted [AVE] and composite reliability [CR]) and discriminant validity were performed to determine the psychometric properties for the measurement model of the constructs under study. In the structural path analyses, the direct effect of HCWS on well-being was tested using the goodness-of-fit statistics. A bootstrapping procedure using (AMOS) was run to test the mediating effects of the study.

The scale validation of the measurement model

During the scale validation stage, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed, where all four constructs under study were covaried and ran immediately to check their goodness-of-fit. Table 3 presents the results of convergent validity. CR and AVE, which measure the convergent validity of the constructs, also exhibit satisfactory results, as most studies used the threshold values of 0.5 and 0.7 for CR and AVE, respectively. CR is used to measure internal consistency of items for HCWS, organizational support, WLB and well-being. Although, if the value is greater than 0.60, it is also acceptable based on the study (Hair et al., 2017). Thus, existing research findings show the instruments have achieved great degree of internal consistency reliability. The CR and AVE for all variables have been calculated. Based on the results provided in Table 3, all values of CRs are higher than 0.7 and AVEs are higher than 0.5. Therefore, the model demonstrates internal consistency and reliability.

The discriminant validity of each construct was tested. Table 4 shows the results of discriminant validity analysis variables are highly related to each other. It is common practice that the range of AVE is 0.5–0.9, confirming the validity of the constructs. Before testing hypotheses, the study conducted a series of CFAs using AMOS 22.0 to examine the distinctiveness of the study variables. Following the guidelines of Hu and Bentler (1999), model fitness was assessed with following fit indices: comparative fit index, root mean square error of approximation and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). This research used a parceling technique (Little et al., 2002) to ensure item to sample size ratio. According to Williams and O'Boyle (2008), the item-parceling approach is widely used in HRM research, which allows estimation of fewer model parameters and subsequently leads to the optimal variable to sample size ratio and

Constructs	AVE	CR
1. HCWS	0.69	0.87
2. Well-being	0.63	0.87
3. Organization support	0.65	0.88
4. WLB	0.67	0.95

Notes: AVE = average variance extracted; CR = composite reliability
Source: Developed by authors

Table 4 Discriminant validity

Constructs	1	2	3	4
1. HCWS	0.829			
2. Well-being	0.617**	0.795		
3. Organization support	0.714**	0.679**	0.804	
4. WLB	0.223**	0.166*	0.244**	0.821

Notes: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). Values on the diagonal (bolded) are the square root of the AVE, while off-diagonals are correlations
Source: Developed by authors

stable parameter estimates. Based on preliminary CFAs, the study combined the highest item loading with the lowest item loading to create parcels that were equally balanced in terms of their difficulty and discrimination. Item-parceling was done only for the construct of eudaimonic well-being as it entailed a large number of items (i.e. 21 items). Accordingly, the study made five parcels for the eudaimonic well-being construct (Waterman *et al.*, 2010).

Results

Table 5 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations of each variable. HCWS shows significant correlations with organization support, employee well-being and WLB, suggesting the criticality of HCWS to employee performance. It can be observed that the standard deviation is less in each variable. Moreover, the variables are highly correlated (at a 0.01 level of significance) with each other. However, well-being and WLB are correlated to a 0.05 level of significance. These results indicate how well the four constructs theoretically related to each other. In other words, HCWS is related strongly to employee well-being, and employee WLB scores high in relation to well-being. Thus, these two tests should have high discriminant validity.

This study shows that the majority of employees from public organizations in the UAE focus on behavioral management, demonstrating the importance of the relationship between recognition and performance. Employees confirmed the relation between recognition and commitment, which fosters job happiness and facilitates building a healthy work environment. The results show that compensation and benefits are directly linked to employee performance. This relates to work by Wang *et al.* (2022), who discuss that HR

Table 5 Descriptive statistics and correlations

	Descriptive statistics			Correlation			
	n	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. HCWS	230	3.7223	0.67867	1	0.617**	0.714**	0.223**
				230	0.000	0.000	0.001
					230	230	230
2. Well-being	230	3.6033	0.72815	0.617**	1	0.679**	0.166*
				0.000	230	0.000	0.011
					230	230	230
3. Organization support	230	3.569	0.8116	0.714**	0.679**	1	0.244**
				0.000	0.000	230	0.000
					230	230	230
4. Work-life balance	230	3.2670	0.76323	0.223**	0.166*	0.244**	1
				0.001	0.011	0.000	230
					230	230	230

Notes: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed); SD = standard deviation
Source: Developed by authors

practices that help achieve HCWS are selected by each organization to ensure productivity and performance, such as hiring people based on their skills and knowledge.

In the relationship between appraisal performance and well-being, the results demonstrate that reasonable appraisal provided by the managers, based on feedback and counseling helps employees to be satisfied and familiar with their performance. Results show that the evaluation of employees' performance has a central impact on organizations. It provides dynamic information regarding the productivity of an employee, which helps the decision-makers to allocate the benefits regarding the requirements and efficiency. The results are consistent with previous research, which found a positive relationship between appraisals and well-being (Ismail *et al.*, 2019). Open discussions about the performance between managers and employees show positive results in building effective commitment and may help to increase job performance. The results here confirm SET concerning the link between work engagement and job performance. According to Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019), employee engagement leads to improved job performance because it motivates employees to perform job tasks and accept responsibilities. The results of this study regarding the relationship between employee engagement and well-being point to the understanding that employees need to be engaged in well-being activities. They also need to receive feedback from their managers to be involved in the decisions and help them be aware of what is going on. The results here confirm JD-R concerning the link between organizational support and how engagement affects employee well-being. According to Ryan *et al.* (2022), employee engagement leads to improved job performance because it motivates employees to perform job tasks and accept responsibilities.

The analysis of this study shows that when organizations do not hire employees based on qualifications that meet the job requirements, they cannot have sufficient control over their working conditions. Employees understand the importance of the recruitment process and how it affects employee happiness. The results confirm that the highly scientific selection systems are highly linked with their well-being. Scoring in the standardized tests used in the recruitment and selection process are impacted directly by employee knowledge, skills and attitudes. This view seems to be in line with Cooper *et al.* (2019), who assumed that adequate reward packages, effective training and development, performance evaluations and recruitment processes that measure employee-organization fit, offer significant inspiration for public employees. These findings suggest a straight, progressive relationship between HCWS and employee well-being. Overall, the results show the importance of the recognized practices of HCWS recognized practices in fostering employee well-being.

This study addresses recent calls for research to understand better how employees' psychological well-being influences their performance at work. The results show that organizational support is associated with employee well-being in terms of providing flexible work programs and flexible time. It adds to the rising body of work that confirms the importance of organizational support in employee well-being. This research is developing the statement of a deeper understanding of employee emotions through interactions with their managers. For example, employees perform better when they are supported by their managers through having meetings and discussions about their needs and well-being. Flexible work time is one of the various concepts that allow employees to schedule their work time within their own time guidelines. The results show that flexible time allows the employee to plan their workday to align with their personal lives, which makes them happy and satisfied, leading to reduced absenteeism. These results support the research done by Zhang *et al.* (2022), who found that the more flexible work time employees have, the happier they are with their work and responsibilities.

Hypotheses testing using SEM

The hypotheses were tested using structural path analysis performed in AMOS. Table 6 shows the results of the study's direct relationships. It displays the regression analysis of the

Table 6 Result of path coefficients of direct relationships

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	SE	CR	Sig
H1	HCWS → Well-being	0.575	0.049	11.845	0.000
H2	HCWS → Organization support	0.597	0.039	15.398	0.000
H3	HCWS → WLB	0.198	0.057	3.454	0.001

Source: Developed by authors

HCWS variable as a dependent with other independent variables like well-being, organization support and WLB. It can be observed that each independent variable is highly and positively correlated with HCWS, confirming *H1*, *H2* and *H3*. Moreover, the standard error is also quite low. There is a positive relation between HCWS and well-being ($b\frac{1}{4}$ –0.57, $p < 0.01$), confirming *H1*. There is a significant positive relationship between HCWS and organization support ($b\frac{1}{4}$ –0.59, $p < 0.01$), supporting *H2*. However, HCWS has a positive effect on employee WLB ($b\frac{1}{4}$ –0.198, $p < 0.01$), which confirms *H3*. It can be observed that each independent variable is highly and positively correlated with HCWS, confirming *H1*, *H2* and *H3*. It can also be stated that organizational support will definitely have a substantial effect on employee well-being. WLB as a psychological domain lead to well-being too. There is a positive and significant relationship between HR practices and employee flexibility and life commitment. The relationship highlighted the importance of having flexible work hours in maintaining a healthy balance between work and life.

Testing mediation hypotheses using a bootstrapping procedure

A bootstrapping procedure was performed to test the proposed mediation effects. [Table 7](#) shows that there are mediation effects of organization support and employee WLB on the HCWS-employee well-being relationship (*H2a* and *H3a*). HCWS has a direct relationship with employee well-being. However, organization support was found to be supported. The effect of HCWS on employee well-being is that it fully mediates the effect of HCWS on employee well-being (*H3a*). Including organizational support as a mediator, the impact of HCWS on employee well-being is not supported (*H2*). Thus, organizational support does not play a central role in shifting the effects of HCWS on employee well-being. In contrast, employee WLB was found not to have any mediation effect on both HCWS-employee well-being (*H3a*, *H3b*).

Discussion and conclusion

This study's results shed light on the importance of implementing effective HCWS and how such systems relate to employee well-being. The success of this relationship depends on a number of variables, including management support and WLB. These highlight the ideal strategy for companies to improve organizational performance. The results show that trust

Table 7 Results of mediating relationships

Hypothesis	Relationship	Direct effect without mediator ($x > y$)	Direct effect with mediator ($x > m > y$)	Indirect effect	Result
H2	HCWS → Organization support → Well-being	0.2287**	0.4576**	0.3465*	Not supported (no mediation)
H2a	HCWS → Organization support	0.5864**		0.0301*	Supported (has direct effect)
H2b	Organizational support → Well-being	0.7322**		0.0250*	Supported (has direct effect)
H3	HCWS → WLB → Well-being	0.5561**	0.1100**	0.0192**	Not supported (no mediation)
H3a	HCWS → WLB	0.1100**		0.0889*	Supported (has direct effect)
H3b	WLB → Well-being	0.0488		0.1257**	Not supported (has no direct effect)

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Source: Developed by authors

and good communication between management and employees build a healthy workplace. Public employees in this study believed a component of strengthening this relationship lies in the manner in which an organization implements HCWS. The study shows a positive linkage between HCWS and employee well-being. This result is consistent with the research of [Gemedu and Lee \(2020\)](#) and [Sharma and Kumra \(2020\)](#), which suggest that HCWS is highly associated with both organizational support and employee well-being. Thus, organizational support is linked to higher levels of employee well-being. Engaged employees are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of productivity, commitment and quality in their work. They have a greater willingness to go above and beyond their job requirements and are more motivated to achieve work tasks contributing to organizational goals, which aligns with JD-R.

The results also highlighted that training is an important factor because the process helps in facilitating the development of their individual abilities. On the other hand, it should be realistic and practical because training and development can guide the design of individualized programs that meet employee requirements and facilitate a vision of their future career path. Employees believe that training builds some good skills in employees and that increases a sense of responsibility toward their organization. It is also necessary to identify what employees need and what makes them satisfied based on their personal requirements and their social life. It is important at this point, while the organization implements effective HCWS, to gain an understanding of what makes employees happy and raises their well-being. If employees involved do not have a WLB, they may affect the organization's performance. It is necessary that a feeling of individuality be promoted among employees ([Sureka et al., 2020](#)). From data analysis, the idea of a WLB is promoted when employees have some level of flexibility in their work hours.

This study examines well-being and how it is related to happiness through understanding the importance of implementing HCWS among employees in the public sector. The researcher found a positive and significant relationship between HCWS and employee well-being. HCWS is considered a set of HR practices that help to encourage employee commitment to an organization ([Al Hosani et al., 2021](#)). The more HR measures are in organizations, the more controlled the work environment might feel. However, the study shows that the effects of HCWS on well-being are not mediated by organizational support (*H2b*). Therefore, organizational support is focused on how work and benefits are organized and balanced between work and personal lives. Such support plays a vital role in linking HCWS to well-being and improving work outcomes ([Schmidt et al., 2018](#)). In the long-term, promoting workplace well-being benefits public sector organizations beyond simply keeping employees happy.

Numerous studies have shown that organizations are more likely to develop when leaders focus on promoting happiness and well-being at work ([Schmidt et al., 2018](#)). Happy employees are more productive, more engaged and have higher morale. They are also more loyal to the organization, keeping turnover rates lower. A stable and happy workforce is more likely to feel they have a stake in seeing their company succeed, leading to stronger business results. Good reward packages, effective training and development, performance evaluations, recruitment processes that measure person/organization fit and voice instruments provide sufficient inspiration for public employees. Contrary to [Agarwal \(2021\)](#), these findings suggest a straight, progressive relationship between HCWS and employee well-being. WLB fails to mediate the effect of HCWS on well-being (*H3b*). However, support for *H3b* suggests that employee WLB plays an important role in firming the effect of HCWS on well-being. Among public sector employees, HCWS develops a sense of trust, job control and essential motivation, making employees feel happy.

According to the findings of [Wahab et al. \(2020\)](#), employees who derive excitement from their work and embody the core values of their profession are more likely to experience an enhanced sense of well-being. The public sector of the UAE has placed significant

emphasis on the adoption of HCWS and the development of human resource practices. This commitment is notably exemplified by the establishment of the Supreme Audit Authority within the public sector, with the primary objective of fostering excellence and elevating corporate governance standards within the UAE. The study's outcomes underscore the importance, especially in the UAE context, of investing greater efforts in HCWS implementation and the advancement of human resource practices. In a broader sense, the research reveals a positive and substantial correlation between human resource practices and employee flexibility and commitment, highlighting the pivotal role of flexible work arrangements in sustaining a harmonious WLB.

The results affirm that highly engaged employees, deeply immersed and dedicated to their tasks, exhibit superior work performance. Their heightened levels of concentration, energy and commitment empower them to execute their responsibilities with heightened diligence and effectiveness. Organizational support, particularly when it involves engaging and motivating employees through internal incentives and fostering happiness, stands as a critical factor influencing individual work performance. Flexible work arrangements enable employees to achieve higher levels of productivity, initiative and resilience (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Drawing from JD-R theory, organizational support amplifies employee motivation, thereby fueling work engagement, which subsequently yields positive outcomes such as improved well-being and enhanced work performance (Schaufeli, 2017).

Work engagement, a phenomenon propelled by organizational support, represents a pivotal facet determining individuals' overall happiness at work. Employees who are intrinsically self-motivated tend to exhibit higher levels of creativity, initiative and persistence in their tasks (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). According to JD-R theory, employee well-being is intrinsically tied to their motivation and subsequent engagement, a nexus that, in turn, fosters positive outcomes, including improved well-being and heightened work performance (Schaufeli, 2017). In conclusion, employee satisfaction, driven by factors such as an enjoyable work environment, competitive compensation and benefits, recognition and inspirational leadership, culminates in a sense of fulfillment and well-being. The results of this study underscore the direct correlation between well-being and both the emotional and physiological aspects of employee experience. Employees who harbor a profound sense of belonging and commitment to their organization, receive substantial support from their managers, maintain a balanced work–life equilibrium and work within an organization that prioritizes their well-being through HCWS, are more likely to experience enhanced overall well-being.

Theoretical implications

This study aimed to gain an understanding of the implementation of HCWS in the UAE's public organizations through the lens of SET, which is closely related to employee well-being. The objective of this study was to understand the well-being gains associated with HCWS. Although much work has already been done, the majority of extant work has not advanced theoretical understanding to illustrate how organizations can use suitable HR practices to meet their organizational objectives, and few studies have evaluated these elements in the context of the UAE. SET was used to identify and classify the various resources within the domain of HCWS and organizational operations. This study expands the current body of knowledge by specifically addressing personal responsibility, independence and empowerment of employees across all levels, providing novelty in the context of HCWS research in the UAE context. The results of the current study have profoundly contributed to the literature that addresses HCWS, organizational support and WLB, as it integrates employee well-being with the SET framework. Furthermore, this study addresses factors related to well-being, as the data was collected from employees' perspectives; thus, the findings support the cross-cultural applicability of SET. This study also provides useful insights for researchers because it focused on new mechanisms for

evaluating HCWS from a holistic perspective. Employed, adapted and built upon previous research to evaluate and select the most important aspects to include in the survey questionnaire.

The present research has not only focused on adapting previous measurements and indicators but has also included the element of WLB, which has a direct impact on HCWS in organizations considering the current understanding of the UAE's public organizations. The findings show that implementing HCWS is determined by organizational support and WLB, which, in turn, impacts well-being and boosts employee productivity in the public sector. Moreover, it has been empirically demonstrated that, through the implementation of HCWS, organizations can enhance their well-being via the mediation of organizational support and WLB. Furthermore, the study found a significant influence of WLB on employee well-being. This study contributes to the extant knowledge of how organizations can foster employee well-being by ensuring effective HCWS and providing a healthy work environment, focusing on the role of manager support in building commitment between management and employees through the lens of JD-R theory, which is related to organization support that leads to employee motivation. This approach not only fosters heightened employee commitment and engagement but also serves as a catalyst for bolstering WLB, motivation and overall performance. The study emphasizes on how leadership and organizational culture can play a part in cultivating a healthy work environment. Organizations may promote a positive, forward-thinking culture that centers on innovation, experimentation and fun at work. By promoting HCWS practices, offering resources for flexible activities and organization support through motivation and work engagement, leaders can set the tone for employee well-being and healthy work environment. Finally, these results are in line with the work done by [Emre and De Spiegeleare \(2021\)](#), who highlighted the important role of organizational commitment to employees in encouraging psychological well-being.

Practical implications

Based on a review of the available literature and the study's findings, organizations ought to evaluate their HCWS every year to ensure awareness of emerging technologies and their adoption in HR practices. The study provides firms in the UAE insightful recommendations on how to build a work environment that encourages productivity, motivation and engagement. Organizations can increase overall productivity and foster a happy work environment by integrating HCWS concepts into practice, encouraging organization support and WLB and placing a high priority on employee well-being. The results show the importance of leadership style in how manager support affects employee happiness, guiding the attention paid on factors that contribute to employee well-being, including transformational leadership, vertical and horizontal communication, workflow building and employee happiness. As a practical tool in the evolving field of employee well-being, HCWS plays an important role in enabling employees to achieve job happiness. The current conceptual model provides a practical framework for examining how strategic HCWS impacts employee well-being through macro (organizational support) and micro (individual WLB) levels. The findings illustrate the important role that frontline managers have in directing HCWS practices. Consequently, this empirical study provides meaningful insight into HCWS, suggesting that managers should take adequate steps to develop a communication strategy so as to facilitate HCWS. HCWS may be seen as a HR strategy that is based on building a good relation between managers and their employees, solving problems and being transparent in meeting pressures and stresses faced at work. This strategy creates a healthy work environment and increases social support, which leads to enhanced employee well-being. Managers should ensure that employees are aware of how their efforts support the organization's overarching goals. By giving them a sense of direction and significance in their work, this can improve employee engagement and motivation. Thus, the present findings provide several important practical implications for

management regarding WLB. The first recommendation for reducing work–life conflict is that public organizations should offer official work–life guidelines to their employees, such as flexible work programs. Work-life initiatives, encouraging a healthy work environment and promoting both personal and professional growth should be implemented to enhance the well-being of employees. Higher levels of employee happiness and engagement can lead to better work output and productivity. Organizations are encouraged to contemplate the integration of flexible elements within the workplace, such as fostering an environment conducive to creativity, offering flexible work hours and implementing group projects. This approach not only fosters heightened employee commitment and engagement but also serves as a catalyst for bolstering motivation and overall performance. The study underscores the critical importance of nurturing and supporting employee motivation and work engagement. Key components in amplifying organizational support through motivation and active participation encompass autonomy, mastery and purpose, areas that managers should prioritize in their efforts to cultivate a thriving workplace. Organizational support and the maintenance of a healthy WLB can be further enhanced through the promotion of employee involvement, the provision of opportunities for skill development and the recognition and reward of achievements. Managers are encouraged to actively engage in dialogues with employees, encouraging them to voice their needs for an improved work environment. These conversations should aim to underscore that organizational success is inherently linked to positive employee-manager relationships, ultimately contributing to heightened employee satisfaction. For example, management should extend suitable support to help employees manage their family responsibilities effectively.

Second, public organizations should provide adequate support for their employees. For example, management should provide suitable support to address employees' family responsibilities. Moreover, organization management should conduct training programs in relation to WLB through which organizations can develop of WLB of their staff. For example, organizations can provide time management and individual effectiveness programs that can be based on individual and organizational needs, including the idea and perception of WLB. Although employees may put in more hours to increase their pay, flexible reward programs should let individuals select the advantages that best suit their individual circumstances. To increase employees' commitment to one another and the HCWS spirit, managers must give employees who work over time jobs some autonomy, flexibility and empowerment. This will also help to lessen the effects of burnout, improve employee well-being and improve performance. These training programs can evaluate the employees work–life balance and develop strategies to improve employee quality life and knowing the reasons of imbalance. Also, the programs may help employees identify the challenges they face and help them to make much-needed lifestyle changes. Furthermore, organizational leadership should consider implementing training programs centered on WLB, equipping organizations to enhance the work–life equilibrium of their workforce. These programs can encompass aspects like time management and individual effectiveness, customized to meet both individual and organizational needs while addressing perceptions of WLB. These training initiatives have the potential to evaluate employee WLB, identify the root causes of imbalance and develop strategies to enhance the quality of employees' lives. Additionally, such programs can help employees identify and overcome the challenges they face, facilitating the necessary lifestyle adjustments for improved well-being.

Limitations and future research

Although this study provides valuable insight into the effects of HCWS on employee well-being, it is not without its limitations and boundaries. The study used single-respondent, cross-sectional, public-sector data, which may not be representative of typical workplaces as in the private sector. In addition, since the study took a quantitative approach, future research efforts may cover the qualitative method. Further studies should also examine

HCWS in diverse contexts and include a range of HR measures besides those mentioned in this study. HCWS are likely to include a variety of practices that may seem similar but differ in their application and results to each organization. The study identified the main constructs of HCWS and took into account the factor of organizational support and WLB and their role as a mediator between HCWS and employee well-being. In doing so, an instrumental aspect was highlighted. However, the study did not focus on the role of employee behaviors organizations and may be worth exploring in future research. Thus, future research should also consider the behavioral aspects and their role in determining the nature of HCWS adoption in organizations. Further, the small sample size might limit the usability and generalization of the findings to all public employees. Further studies might incorporate larger sample sizes. Finally, this study used survey respondents that worked in organizations situated in the UAE only. However, other organizations operate and work in different environments and may operate under different conditions and working environments. This brings about the need to explore other contexts outside UAE to account for the various differences.

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