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Yes, but Do they Differ? Gender Effect, Emotional Well-being and Engagement on Life Satisfaction

Fazeelat Masood [*] Naveed R. Khan [†]

Abstract: *Do emotional well-being and employee engagement positively predict life satisfaction in the presence of gender differences? We conducted a cross-sectional study in the top five cities of Pakistan by inviting organizational employees from service sectors (n = 198; 65% females, age = 26years-30years). The key predictors were emotional well-being and engagement with life satisfaction as the outcome variable and gender as the key moderator. Emotional well-being and engagement are positive predictors of life satisfaction. Results, moreover, showed that the effect of engagement on life satisfaction is stronger for male employees than females; however, such moderation effect could not be confirmed in the relationship between emotional well-being and life satisfaction.*

Keywords: Emotional well-being; employee engagement; life satisfaction; gender differences.

Introduction

With the emerging streams of literature on life satisfaction, academic interests into the how and why of varying levels of life satisfaction seem to surge up in the recent times (Al-Attiyah & Nasser, 2016; Batz-Barbarich, Tay, Kuykendall, & Cheung, 2018). The concept of life satisfaction, a cognitive assessment of one's relative quality of life, has long been investigated in the western and non-western contexts; however, to its true origins, it dates back to the eighteenth century of enlightenment era that led to the debates on the existence and purpose of life. Among its varied conceptualizations, the global life satisfaction construct is defined as the dispositional tendency of individuals' self-beliefs, values, and norms. A positive life satisfaction is argued to depend on the extent to which individuals believe various life domains to be good and the degree to which individuals evaluate global issues to be positively personal and specific (Al-Attiyah & Nasser, 2016).

Earlier studies have reported numerous personal and work-related factors such as self-esteem, trait self-control (Hofmann, Luhmann, Fisher, Vohs, & Baumeister, 2014) and daily travel (Friman, Gärling, Ettema, & Olsson, 2017) as predictors of life satisfaction. On

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conceptually distinct components of subjective well-being i.e. affective well-being (AWB) and cognitive well-being (CWB) (Luhmann, Hawkley, Eid, & Cacioppo, 2012), researchers argue that individuals who have more positive emotional experiences, less negative emotional experiences and higher satisfaction with life are likely to exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction. On a correlational basis, Gärling and Gamble (2017) state a modest association between emotional well-being and life satisfaction in routine life. These studies, however, provide limited evidence on the causal relationship between emotional well-being and life satisfaction. Besides emotional well-being, engagement is another potential predictor that has received limited attention in the life satisfaction literature. In a seven-year prospective study, Hakanen and Schaufeli (2012) found a positive effect of engagement on life satisfaction. Williamson and Geldenhuys (2014) investigated engagement as a positive predictor of life satisfaction among South African employees. In another study, Upadyaya, Vartiainen, and Salmela-Aro (2016) reported a positive relationship between engagement and life satisfaction.

A plethora of literature is available on gender differences (Al-Attiyah & Nasser, 2016) and age differences in life satisfaction. However, studies related to the interaction effect of gender on the relationship between work-related predictors and life satisfaction are scant. Also, earlier findings on the gender differences in life satisfaction remain inconclusive. To fill the identified research gap, this study aims to provide empirical evidence on the impact of emotional well-being and engagement on life satisfaction moderated through gender differences. This study is unique because it is grounded in a collectivist Pakistani society where gender role expectations of men and women are largely traditional. Given the unequivocal differences in gender role expectations, this study hypothesizes a stronger relationship between emotional well-being and life satisfaction among males than their counterparts. While earlier studies on the gender differences remain inconclusive, this study contends that engagement and life satisfaction is stronger among male employees because they seem more accepting of their life's circumstances and they have a better sense of control.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Emotional Well-being and Life Satisfaction

Affective or emotional well-being is about the balance between positive and negative affect as experienced by individuals (Diener et al., 2002). It refers to the extent to which individuals feel good and not feel bad. It captures momentary affect among individuals (Hofmann et al., 2014). The concept of emotional well-being is also defined as a balance of intensity and duration (frequency) of negative and positive affects as experienced by individuals (Gärling & Gamble, 2017). Emotional well-being is usually measured using Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988)'s Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) scale. Life satisfaction is viewed as a form of happiness measured as an individual's appraisal of his/her life's relative quality. Unlike emotional well-being, life satisfaction is more inclined towards the cognitive side of the human brain. In the litera-

ture, it is often identified as a cognitive well-being of individuals (Luhmann et al., 2012). Life satisfaction is usually measured using Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985)'s Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS).

The concept of emotional well-being measures individuals' current experiences of positive and negative affect while life satisfaction is a cognitive evaluation of individuals' experienced emotions in the past and present (Hofmann et al., 2014). The relationship between emotional well-being and life satisfaction has been debated in earlier studies (Berlin & Connolly, 2019). A common assumption underlying these debates is that when individuals are asked to evaluate their lives, they use their affective/emotional experiences as a source of information (Hofmann et al., 2014). Diener et al. (1985) stated that the two constructs are moderately related to each other. On the nature of relationship between the two constructs, a review of earlier studies implies a direct path from emotional well-being to life satisfaction (Kesebir & Diener, 2009). In a recent experience sampling survey, Berlin and Connolly (2019) found a stronger correlation between emotional well-being and life satisfaction.

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) Affective Events Theory (AET) postulates that employees emotionally react to events happening at the workplace. Their affective experiences, in turn, influence their work-related attitudes and behaviors such as job satisfaction and performance. Keeping this into consideration together with the earlier research, this study postulates that emotional well-being has a direct impact on employees' cognitive evaluation of their life. Thus, emotional well-being is hypothesized to have positive association with employees' life satisfaction.

H_1: Emotional well-being has a positive effect on the life satisfaction of employees.

Employee Engagement and Life Satisfaction

Engagement at work is often recognized as one of the most prolific concepts in the field of positive organizational psychology (POP) (Polo-Vargas et al., 2018). Employee engagement is described as a positive and fulfilling state of mind; it is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). It is an individual's psychological state of engagement at work, and it represents individuals' ability to enjoy their work and be passionate about it. Employee engagement is usually measured through Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES).

Following the Life-Span Theory of Control, Körner, Reitzle, and Silbereisen (2012) found a positive link between engagement and life satisfaction. As perceived demands increase, the positive effect of engagement lowers thereby indicating that over-engagement may lead to counter-productive outcomes. Earlier studies also identified engagement as a predictor of work-family enrichment (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012). A review of the literature showed that engaged employees are likely to exhibit proactive behavior and less likely to experience burnout (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008).

The Job-Demand Resource (JD-R) Theory postulates that job resources act as a buffer against excessive job demands and pressures that may lead employees towards burnout i.e. cynicism and exhaustion (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). According to this

theory, job resources such as autonomy, social support, and feedback enable employees to experience low levels of burnout resulting from work demands such as overload, physical demands and emotional demands. Following JD-R theory, this study posited that employee engagement positively affects the cognitive evaluation of employees' life.

H_2: Employee engagement is a positive cause-agent of life satisfaction among employees.

Gender Differences as Moderation Effect

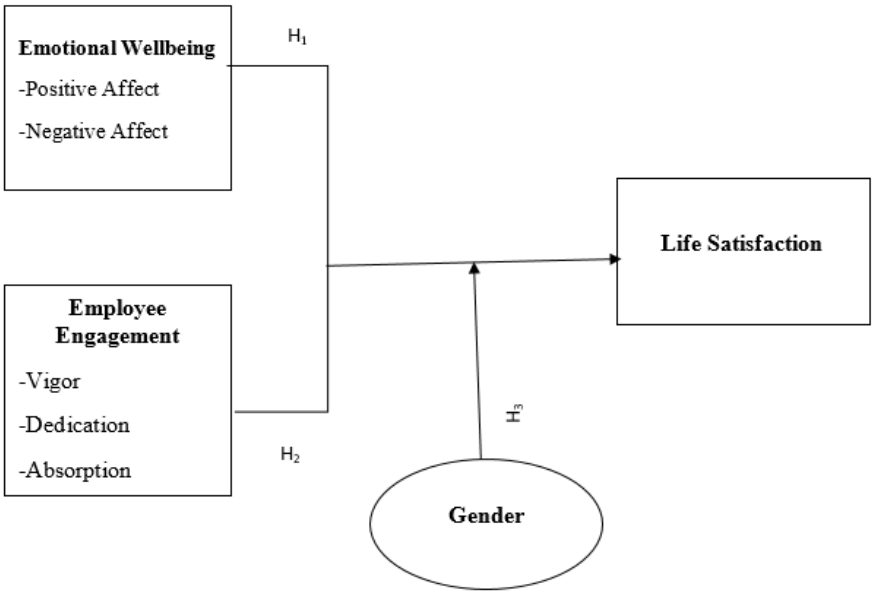
In a review of gender differences in well-being, Batz-Barbarich et al. (2018) argued that gender differences are a priority issue that needs serious academic attention. Literature findings on gender differences in positive and negative affect experiences remain inconclusive mainly due to emphasis on reporting significant results only. In the workplace, gender tends to affect the way people enjoy their work, find meaningfulness in it, and engage. It is argued that individual differences may impact the way people engage at work; thus affecting their experience of engagement and appraisal of life as a whole. In their study, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) stated a weak relationship between gender and engagement while no gender differences were reported in French and Canadian samples (Anton, 2013). On gender differences, Śliwiński et al. (2014) found lower levels of burnout among men as their levels of satisfaction with life increased. In another study, (Williamson & Geldenhuys, 2014) reported a significant interaction effect for gender on the engagement and life satisfaction relationship. Their results exhibited higher levels of life satisfaction among men when engagement was high while for women, the more they engaged in their works, the more they reported lower life satisfaction.

Referring to Emanuel, Molino, Presti, Spagnoli, and Ghislieri (2018) enlisted three possible aspects of differences between males and females. These differences can be found in the: (i) way men and women react to events happening with their counterparts. (ii) gender-role expectations and demands. (iii) degree of involvement in family matters. Correspondingly, this study views gender as a possible moderator of the relationship between emotional well-being, engagement and life satisfaction.

H_{3a}: Positive relationship between emotional well-being and life satisfaction is stronger for male than female employees.

H_{3b}: Positive relationship between employee engagement and life satisfaction is stronger for male than female employees.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



Methodology

Participants and Procedure

The scope of this study was limited to men and women affiliated with service sector organizations as employees at various occupational levels. The reason to select this research population was their degree of exhibiting affective experiences and the importance of their engaged behavior for organizational performance. This study used primary data collected from a purposive sample of individuals working in the services sectors of Pakistan. In August-October 2019, contacts were made in the service sector organizations via e-mail, telephone and in-person visits to request permission for data collection from their employees as part of this survey research. A limited affirmative response was received due to which data collection was confined to five big cities of Pakistan. Following Gefen, Rigdon, and Straub (2011), a-priori F-test was performed using G*Power v.3.1.9.2 to determine the minimum sample size required for empirically validating the proposed model. The linear multiple regression power analysis was run with effect size = 0.15, α = 0.05, power = 0.8 and 05 predictors. The minimum sample size required to test the proposed model was 92.

The web based questionnaire was sent to 400 employees of service sector organizations in November 2019. Out of 400 employees, 210 entered the survey and 200 completed the survey responses. Following Hair, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2019), this data set was tested for outliers using case-wise diagnostics ($\pm$2.5 cut-off point) in SPSS v.23. This resulted in

a final sample of 198 employees holding different occupational positions in the services sector. Of 198 participants, 129 were females and 69 were males. The age group of 41.9% of the participants ranged between 26years to 30years i.e. most of the respondents were young adults. 62.6% of the respondents were single while 15.2% were married with one child. The majority of these sample subjects i.e. 57% were holding a master's degree and 32% completed their bachelor's program. Lastly, in a total sample of 198, 160 participants i.e. 80.8% were affiliated with private organizations compared to 12.6% who were associated with government organizations and 6.6% who were working with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Scales and Measures

Dependent Variable

Life Satisfaction was defined as an individual's evaluation of the life. This reflective construct was measured using Diener et al. (1985) Satisfaction with Life Scale. Participants were asked to rate the five items on a five-point scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". All items are reliable (α=.872).

Independent Variables

Emotional Well-being was defined as a formative second-order construct determined by positive and negative emotions. To measure emotional well-being, Watson et al. (1988) Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) scale was used. Ten items were measuring positive affect (α=.891) and ten items were measuring negative affect (α=.818). Survey respondents were asked to rate the twenty items on a five-point scale, ranging from "Very Slightly" to "Extremely". All items are reliable (α=.886).

Employee Engagement was defined as a reflective second order construct comprising of three dimensions that include vigor, dedication and absorption. For this higher order construct, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) 17-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) in the English version was used. *Vigor* was measured through six items (α=.811), dedication was measured through five items (α=.825) and absorption was measured using six items (α=.823). The respondents were asked to rate the seventeen statements on a five-point scale, ranging from "never" to "always". All items are reliable (α=.931).

Statistical Analysis Approach

For empirical analysis, this study used two statistical tools including SPSS v.23 and SmartPLS v.3.2.8. The former tool was used for data screening, preparation, and outlier handling while the latter tool was used following Ringle et al. (2015) for partial least square (PLS) modelling to assess the measurement and structural models. The choice of SmartPLS was rationalized with the distributional assumptions that usually survey data is not normally distributed (Vinzi, Trinchera, & Amato, 2010).

Data Analysis and Results

In this study, data were collected using a single source, so the first step of data analysis was to test common method variance (CMV). Following suggestions by Kock (2015), the CMV issue was tested using a full collinearity approach. Under this approach, all variables were regressed against a common variable and results were interpreted with a cutoff value of VIF <5. The data analysis yielded all VIF values less than the threshold (see Table 1); therefore, single-source bias was not an issue with the data set used in this study.

Table 1
Full Collinearity Testing

VI	DE	AB	Positive	Negative	LifeSatisf
3.365	4.781	4.679	1.665	1.439	1.553

Note: VI = Vigor, DE = Dedication, AB = Absorption, LifeSatisf = Life Satisfaction

Measurement Model

Following guidelines given by Hair et al. (2019); Sarstedt, Hair Jr, Cheah, Becker, and Ringle (2019), the measurement model was run to test model validity and reliability at two levels i.e. lower order construct (LOC) and higher order construct (HOC). Then, the structural model was run to test the developed hypotheses.

For lower order constructs, item loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) were used to test convergent validity of constructs. The threshold values for item loadings were ≥ 0.5, for CR were ≥ 0.7 and for AVE were ≥ 0.5. As can be seen in Table 2, all item loadings were acceptable and above the threshold of 0.5. All CR values were within the range of 0.7-0.9 indicating good composite reliability and all AVE values were higher than 0.5 as suggested by Hair et al. (2019).

Besides LOCs, the proposed model has comprised of two higher order constructs namely emotional well-being and employee engagement. The validity and reliability of these two second order constructs were also assessed using guidelines given by Sarstedt et al. (2019). As shown in Table 3, both second order constructs were valid and reliable.

After convergent validity, discriminant validity of lower and higher order constructs was established through the HTMT criterion following suggestion by Zaiţ and Bertea (2011). According to the stricter criterion, the HTMT values should be ≤ 0.85. As shown in Table 4, HTMT values for all lower order constructs were lower than the stricter threshold of 0.85 indicating that the survey participants viewed these constructs distinctively. Besides LOCs, HTMT criterion for higher order constructs was also established by following guidelines given by Sarstedt et al. (2019). The HTMT values for emotional well-being were 0.608 and for employee engagement were 0.766; for both HOCs, HTMT values were within the conservative threshold. Taken together, convergent and discriminant validity results suggested that the measurement items were reliable and valid.

Table 2
Measurement Model - First Order Constructs

First Order Constructs	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE
	AWB1	0.672		
	AWB3	0.710		
	AWB5	0.764		
	AWB9	0.788		
	AWB10	0.595		
Positive Affect	AWB12	0.530	0.911	0.509
	AWB14	0.787		
	AWB16	0.737		
	AWB17	0.755		
	AWB19	0.750		
	AWB2	0.624		
	AWB4	0.742		
Negative Affect	AWB7	0.820	0.866	0.523
	AWB8	0.558		
	AWB13	0.712		
	AWB20	0.841		
	WE1	0.550		
	WE4	0.662		
Vigor	WE8	0.730	0.865	0.520
	WE12	0.803		
	WE15	0.822		
	WE17	0.726		
	WE2	0.761		
	WE5	0.836		
Dedication	WE7	0.797	0.878	0.592
	WE10	0.799		
	WE13	0.639		
	WE3	0.700		
	WE6	0.696		
Absorption	WE9	0.792	0.876	0.588
	WE11	0.842		
	WE14	0.792		
	SWL1	0.835		
	SWL2	0.869		
Life Satisfaction	SWL3	0.907	0.907	0.662
	SWL4	0.742		
	SWL5	0.697		

Note: AWB6, AWB11, AWB15, AWB18 & WE16 were removed due to low item loadings.

Table 3
Measurement Model - Second Order Constructs

Second Order Constructs	Indicators	Loadings	CR	AVE
Emotional Wellbeing	Positive Affect	0.763	0.959	0.921
	Negative Affect	0.375		
Employee Engagement	Vigor	0.924	0.958	0.884
	Dedication	0.940		
	Absorption	0.948		

The next step in the measurement model was to validate the formative higher order emotional well-being construct. For this purpose, a three-step procedure was followed as outlined by Hair et al. (2019) and empirically tested and validated by Sarstedt et al. (2019). Firstly, HOC's convergent validity was established by running a redundancy analysis

(Vinzi et al., 2010).

Table 4
Discriminant Validity - Lower Order Constructs

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Positive								
2.Negative	-							
3.Emotional Wwellbeing	-	-						
4.VI	0.507	0.194	0.443					
5.DE	0.570	0.287	0.527	-				
6.AB	0.511	0.211	0.453	-	-			
7.Engagement	0.532	0.231	0.476	-	-	-		
8.Life Satisfaction	0.371	0.344	0.409	0.553	0.623	0.526	0.570	

Note: As mentioned by Sarstedt, Ringle, and Hair (2017), discriminant validity is not expected to be observed between higher order constructs and their respective lower order constructs.

In redundancy analysis, HOC was related to an alternative single-item (global) measure of emotional well-being. The analysis produced a point estimate of .753 between the HOC and the global single-item measure of emotional well-being. On this model, bootstrapping was run with 5000 sub-samples (no sign change); the outcome was a lower boundary of 0.647 and an upper boundary of 0.820 at a 95% confidence interval. These results supported the convergent validity of formative HOC as the path coefficient did not significantly differ from the threshold of 0.7. Secondly, potential issues of collinearity among the lower order components of emotional well-being were tested. The VIF analysis produced values of 1.258 for positive affect and 1.258 for negative affect, which were lower than the conservative threshold of 3 (Hair et al., 2019). Thirdly, bootstrapping was run with 5000 sub-samples and no sign changes to test the relevance and significance of the association between the HOC and its lower-order components. Results showed that Positive Affect's weight was 0.829 and Negative Affect's weight was 0.296 and both lower-order components of emotional well-being were significant ($p < 0.05$). These results provided clear support for the validity of reflective formative HOC of emotional well-being.

Structural Model

Following Cain, Zhang, and Yuan (2017), multivariate skewness and kurtosis was tested using Mardia's coefficient. Results showed that the data collected for this study was not multivariate normal as Mardia's multivariate skewness was β = 9.639, p <0.01 and Mardia's multivariate kurtosis was β = 97.144, p <0.01. Since data was not following normality assumptions, bootstrapping procedure with 5000 sub-samples (no sign changes) was run to report standard beta, standard error, t-values and p-values for the structural model as suggested by Hair et al. (2019).

First, the effect of the two predictors on the outcome variable i.e. life satisfaction was tested. The R^2 value of 0.317 (Q^2 = 0.221) showed that the two predictors explained a 31.7% variance in the life satisfaction variable. Emotional well-being (β = .181, p< 0.01) and employee engagement (β = .425, p<0.01) were positively associated with employee satisfaction. Therefore, hypotheses H1 and H2 were supported as shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value	BCI LL	BCI UL	f2	VIF	Decision
H1	EmotionalWB ->LifeSatisf	0.181	0.097	1.864	0.031	0.018	0.335	0.040	1.268	Supported
H2	Engage ->LifeSatisf	0.425	0.081	5.233	0.000	0.294	0.559	0.219	1.287	Supported

Then moderation effect of gender on the IV-DV relationship was tested following guidelines given by Henseler and Fassott (2010). In the first step, the main effect model and the R^2 value before the interaction was observed. Results showed the R^2 value of .313 indicating that 31.3% variance in the life satisfaction was explained by emotional well-being, employee engagement and the moderator i.e. gender. In the second step, the two interaction effects including Gender*EmotionalWB and Gender*Engagement were created.

In this interaction effect model, the R^2 value was 0.357. The R^2 change was observed to be 0.044 indicating that the addition of two interaction terms brought about a 4.4% change in the R^2 value i.e. additional variance. In the third step, effect size (f^2) was calculated using the following formula:

$$f^2 = \frac{R_j^2 - R_m^2}{1 - R_j^2}$$

$$f^2 = \frac{0.357 - 0.313}{1 - 0.357}$$

$$f^2 = 0.07$$

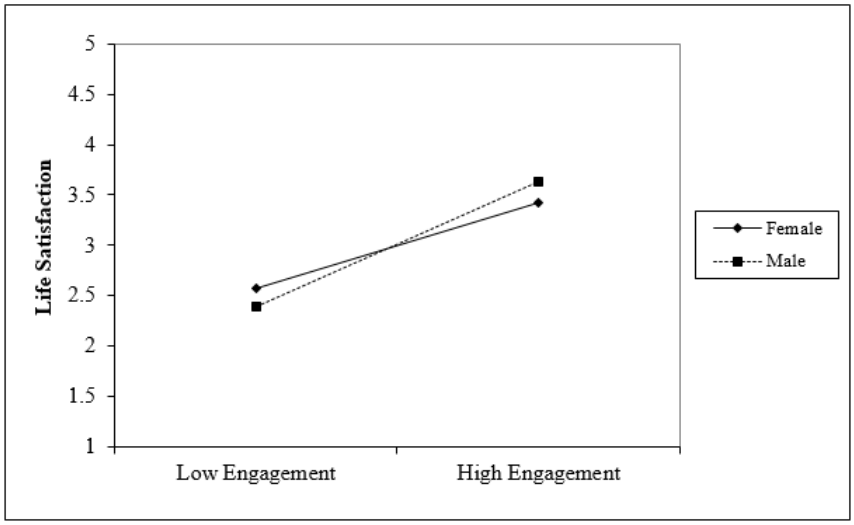
Following guidelines given by Cohen et al. (1988), the effect size was small. The next step in the analysis was to test the interaction effects. For this purpose, bootstrapping with 5000 sub-samples (no sign changes) was run. The cut-off value for one-tail moderator significance is t-value > 1.645 (α=0.05). As shown in Table 6,Gender*Engage (t > 1.645) was significant at 0.05 level; whereas Gender*EmotionalWB (t < 1.645) was not significant at 0.05 level.

Table 6
Moderation Analysis - Output

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value	BCI LL	BCI UL	f2	VIF	Decision
H3a	Gender*EmotionalWB -> LifeSatisf	-0.219	0.231	0.948	0.172	-0.394	0.24	0.052	1.111	Not Supported
H3b	Gender*Engage -> LifeSatisf	0.191	0.107	1.796	0.036	-0.197	0.309	0.045	1.092	Supported

As can be seen in Figure 1, the line labelled 'male' has a steeper gradient as compared to 'female'; this indicates that the positive relationship between life satisfaction and employee engagement is indeed higher for male employees. This interpretation supports the hypothesis (H3b) developed earlier while results reported in Table 6 indicate that H3a could not be confirmed.

Figure 2
Employee Engagement Interaction Plot



Last step in the analysis was to run PLS-Predict following the procedure suggested by Shmueli et al. (2019). Since the sample size was <200, PLS-Predict with the 5-fold procedure was run for testing the predictive relevance of the proposed model. As can be seen in Table 7, all item differences (PLS-LM) were lower i.e. all errors of the PLS model were lower than the LM model thus indicating strong predictive power.

Table 7
PLS Predict

Items	PLS RMSE	LM RMSE	PLS-LM	Q^2_predict
SWL1	1.06	1.264	-0.204	0.177
SWL4	1.067	1.466	-0.399	0.114
SWL2	1.026	1.288	-0.262	0.194
SWL3	1.025	1.217	-0.192	0.233
SWL5	1.226	1.578	-0.352	0.061

Discussion

This study was designed to empirically validate the effect of emotional well-being and engagement on life satisfaction moderated by gender. Consistent with hypothesis 1, results indicate that emotional well-being has a positive effect on life satisfaction of employees in the top cities of Pakistan. These findings are in line with findings reported by earlier studies (Berlin & Connolly, 2019; Kesebir & Diener, 2009) and it also answers the research question 1. This relationship, however, is not moderated by gender. In simple words, results of this study do confirm direct positive relationship between second order construct i.e. emotional well-being and lower order construct of life satisfaction but do not confirm

hypothesis 3a i.e. the strength of emotional well-being-life satisfaction relationship in the presence of gender differences.

In the subsequent analysis, this study found a positive direct impact of employee engagement on life satisfaction. Findings of this study confirming hypothesis 2 are consistent with the direct path relationship as suggested by (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008; Körner et al., 2012). The positive relationship between engagement and life satisfaction is found to be stronger for male employees than female employees. In line with results reported by Śliwiński et al. (2014), this study found strong engagement-life satisfaction relationships among male employees; thus confirming hypothesis 3b. These findings answer the research questions 2 and 4 stated earlier in the introduction section.

Conclusion

This study aimed to extend the understanding of the causal relationship between emotional well-being, engagement and life satisfaction of service sector employees. The AET and JD-R theories were adopted as the underlying theories for hypothesizing the causal effects of predictors on the criterion variable i.e. life satisfaction together with the moderation effect of gender. Findings of this study exhibited positive impact of emotional well-being and engagement on life satisfaction as reported in earlier studies. However, the moderated effect of gender on the independent variable and the outcome variable was only found to be significant for engagement and life satisfaction. The data analysis clearly showed that male employees are positively engaged at work and they tend to experience higher life satisfaction than their female counterparts. These gender differences may prevail due to the three reasons as identified by Emanuel et al. (2018) in their study.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the emerging literature on life satisfaction in several ways. Firstly, this study extends the works of Berlin and Connolly (2019), who only investigated and reported strength of association between emotional well-being and life satisfaction by including emotional well-being as one of the cause agents of life satisfaction among Pakistani employees. In their study, Berlin and Connolly (2019) reported that the correlation between emotional well-being and life satisfaction is ranged between 0.78-0.91. The findings of this study that emotional well-being (β= .181, p$<$ 0.01) is a statistically significant predictor of life satisfaction emphasize the importance of affective experiences in studying work-related behaviors of employees. In doing so, this study provides empirical support to Affective Events Theory (AET) by testing and validating the role of emotions in employees' work-related behaviors. Thus, findings of this study support the relevance of including these emotional experiences when analyzing cognitive evaluation of employees' life.

Secondly, this study contributes to the literature on life satisfaction by empirically validating the cause-effect relationship between engagement and life satisfaction theoretically grounded in JD-R theory. This study reports engagement (β = .425, p$<$0.01) as a

statistically significant cause agent of life satisfaction among Pakistani employees in top cities. Findings of this study that highly engaged employees tend to exhibit higher levels of satisfaction with life highlight the role of positive psychological state of mind and employees' ability to enjoy work in determining their positive cognitive evaluation of the relative quality of life.

Thirdly, this study extends the empirical literature on life satisfaction by reporting emotional well-being and engagement as statistically significant determinants of life satisfaction such that 31.7% variance in Pakistani employees' life satisfaction is explained by these two predictors. To better understand the consistency of these relationships, this study reported the moderation effects of gender differences. Empirical findings support the prevalence of gender differences in the positive relationship between employee engagement and life satisfaction (β = .191, $p<0.01$). While the moderation effect of gender on the emotional well-being-life satisfaction association could not be confirmed in this study.

Practical Implications

Findings of this study that emotional well-being and engagement directly impact life satisfaction highlights the importance of positive affective experiences and positive fulfilling mindset in the workplace (Kesebir & Diener, 2009). This finding is important for human resource decision-makers as it indicates that employees' affective experiences and their positive psychological state at work are important factors in determining their cognitive assessment of the relative quality of life. When considering affective experiences, both positive and negative emotional experiences play an important role in determining employees' emotional well-being as depicted in Table 3. In addition, employees reporting a high degree of vigor, dedication and absorption are likely to report a positive fulfilling state of mind; thereby engaging positively at work and feeling passionate about it (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Findings of this study also suggest that engagement and life satisfaction relationship is stronger for male employees than their counterparts. The underlying reasons for such moderated relationship could be identified as the differences in their coping mechanisms i.e. the way males and females react to events happening at the workplace and differences in their gender role expectations (Emanuel et al., 2018). Since females have societal role expectations to fulfill their domestic roles; when these responsibilities are combined with their work roles, they may experience a work-life conflict that may reduce their degree of positive engagement at work and thereby lowering their life satisfaction. These findings call for gender customized HR practices to promote a conducive and supportive work environment for male and female employees to enhance their engagement at work and thereby, increase their overall satisfaction with life.

Limitation(s) and Scope for Further Research

Firstly, this study's use of cross-sectional data based on purposive sampling does not allow its findings to be generalizable to all organizational contexts in Pakistan. Secondly,

prevalence of workplace cultural differences and HR practices between working populations across service sector of Pakistan may restrict the external validity of empirical findings reported here. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to investigate the emotional well-being effects in a longitudinal setting. Also, future research is recommended to consider the role of different HR practices and workplace cultural dimensions in determining moderating effects of gender differences on the engagement-life satisfaction association. Further, this study could not distinctively identify the effect of the three dimensions of engagement i.e. vigor, dedication and absorption distinctively on life satisfaction. This is an open avenue for future researchers to provide clarity on the engagement construct to be empirically validated as a reflective or formative higher order construct.

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