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**The Mediating Effect of Stress Management Competency
on the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee
Attrition: Evidence in a Local Government Unit**

Basir E. Dalam & Dr. Alger P. Dura



The Mediating Effect of Stress Management Competency on the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Attrition: Evidence in a Local Government Unit



Basir E. Dalam^{1*} & Dr. Alger P. Dura²

¹Post Graduate Student, Master in Public Administration, University of Mindanao ²Doctor in Public Administration, University of Mindanao



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Abstract

Purpose: The workforce or manpower is one of the 4Ms of production and is considered the most critical factor of production. It is the employees who determine whether the organization succeeds or fails. The primary goal of this study was to determine the mediating effect of stress management competency on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition.

Materials and Methods: A nonexperimental quantitative research design was used, specifically the descriptive correlational and mediation approaches. A face-to-face survey was used to obtain data. The data were obtained from 322 City Environment and Natural Resources employees, including regular and contractual employees, job orders, and allied service personnel selected through stratified random sampling. The statistical tools used to analyze and interpret the data were descriptive statistics, Pearson's R, regression procedures, and Sobel's Z-test. The mediation effect on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was ascertained by path analysis (Structural Equation Modelling, or SEM) and the Medgraph Sobel's Z-test.

Findings: Results revealed a high descriptive level of job satisfaction and employee attrition and a very high descriptive level of stress management competency. It was found that job satisfaction and employee attrition, job

satisfaction and stress management competency, and stress management competency and employee attrition are significantly related. The results revealed that stress management competency partially mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Upskilling programs improve employees' skills and knowledge, making them valuable assets to the organization. Employees may invest in both hard skills and soft skills. Organizations may also continue to recognize the accomplishments and achievements of their employees no matter how small or big they are because being recognized at work will boost employees' morale, which will also lead to efficiency and productivity. The concept of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) should continue to be practiced for long-term solutions to discrimination issues. Organizations, through their HRM, may continue formulating holistic programs and schemes that promote employees' physical and mental health, foster a positive working environment, a harmonious relationship, competitive salary, and benefits packages, and strengthen retention programs.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Employee Attrition, Stress Management Competency, Mediating Effect*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The workforce is the country's most valuable driver of productivity and sustainable economic growth. The workforce or manpower is one of the 4Ms of production and is considered the most critical factor of production. It is the employees who determine whether the organization succeeds or fails (Kazimoto, 2021).

Essentially, an organization's overall productivity and success hinges on effective and efficient functioning (Green, 2020), and greater productivity depends on the employees' job satisfaction (Shmailan, 2019). Singh and Jain (2019) defined job satisfaction as the whole emotional response of employees towards their jobs, encompassing both positive and negative feelings, as well as the level of enjoyment associated with their jobs. According to Bourne (2020), it is also the combined satisfaction of employees in psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances. It is also sometimes called moral (Ertekin and Avunduk, 2021). Therefore, job satisfaction is one of the complex areas, consisting of various conditions in an environment that is increasingly competitive and complex day by day (Inayat, Khan, and Namaziandost, 2021). Also, it is commonly accepted that the happier employees are in their jobs, the more satisfied they are (Ong, Chong, Tan, Go, and Lim, 2020).

However, it is also being highlighted that stress can decrease employees' engagement and productivity and lead to increased absenteeism and turnover rates (Rostami, Dehghani and Akbar, 2022). In fact, according to the ComPsych StressPulse Report, 44% of worldwide employee stress remained at a record high; 41% said they experienced work-related stress, and about 42% said they experienced a decrease in productivity of 15-30 minutes per day because of stress. Therefore, it is essential to discuss the stress management competency of employees in an organization to reduce the negative impact on the employees' work engagement which can lead to their desire to take time off or leave the organization (Bhui, Dinos, Galant-Miecznikowska, 2018). In the context of this study, stress management competency describes an employee's various strategies and techniques to manage or reduce stress levels (Brough and Biggs, 2020). Hence, the study focuses on how stress management competency mediates job satisfaction and employee attrition of local government employees. Certainly, employees who effectively manage their stress levels are more likely to experience a sense of control, well-being, engagement, and fulfillment in their work (Jamadar, 2020).

The 2023 Global Workplace Report showed that only 23% of worldwide employees are fully engaged (these are employees who work with passion and feel a deep connection with their organization), 59% are not engaged (these are employees who put their time but are not energy or passion into their work), more than half of worldwide employees, and 18% are actively disengaged (these employees who are not only unhappy at work but also act out their unhappiness). Meanwhile, the Philippines recorded that only 26% of fully engaged employees, 68% are not engaged, and 6% are actively disengaged. This means that most employees are just coming to work instead of providing meaningful contributions to the organization. On the same note, 51% of currently employed workers globally said they are keeping an eye out for or actively looking for new employment. The report showed that job dissatisfaction caused the employee to begin thinking about quitting their job. In fact, 4.25 million employees globally left their jobs in January 2022.

Furthermore, the Philippines logged an attrition rate of 18%, the second highest next to Singapore, with 19.6%. Meanwhile, voluntary attrition rates are rising in various industries: 15.8% in shared services, 15.1% in non-financial services, and 13.2% in hightech. The report identified that the top reasons for employee attrition are low compensation, limited career growth, poor management, and work-life balance. Further, 67% of employers cited dissatisfaction with pay as the leading cause of attrition in 2021. Furthermore, the Philippine Statistics Authority recorded that the accession rate is marginally more significant than the separation rate, which is 7.81%, which results in a 1.10% turnover rate, meaning that 11 new employees for every 1,000 employed were added to the enterprise workforce. Out of every 1,000 individuals employed, 89 are recruited to fill the position of workers who have left, while 78 are recruited to replace those who have been laid off or voluntarily resigned.

Without a doubt, job satisfaction and employee attrition are essential for organizations to sustain a stable workforce, retain talents, and ensure continuity in operations (Zhang, 2021). However, keeping employees is challenging for every organization because it is expensive (Lu, Zhao, & While, 2019). Attrition causes too many headaches for all public and private managers since it lowers the cost and marketability and raises the costs of recruiting, employee training, and selection (Al Mamun and Hasan, 2019; Abun, 2021). Therefore, employee job satisfaction and engagement determine whether they are productive and stay with the organization—or quit and perhaps join the competitors (Hoang, Nguyen, Nguyen & Le Thi, 2019).

Problem Statement

Numerous studies have explored the concept of job satisfaction and employee attrition by different authors. However, stress management competency is another variable that caught the researcher's attention. Brough and Biggs (2020), emphasized that stress management competency describes an employee's various strategies and techniques to manage or reduce stress levels. Moreover, according to Shaikh, Akram, Rizwan, and Kousar (2018), employees overwhelmed by stress can result in burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and increased absenteeism, ultimately leading to employee attrition.

The researcher could not locate any research on these in the Philippine context, particularly on the mediation of stress management competency. Hence, the researcher is urged to conduct a study that examines the mediating effect of stress management competency on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition in the context of the local government unit of Davao City, particularly the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) employees which their goal is to ensure that Davao City has a clean, green, and healthy environment by collecting and disposing of garbage in the 112 barangays; maintaining 21 parks and playgrounds, roadsides, 7 monuments, and 8 nurseries within the City's jurisdiction; undertake watershed management activities; conduct clean up drive to the different areas of the barangays within the Davao City; and monitor activities that implement measures to prevent and control land, air, and water pollution, and more.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following objectives: first, to describe the level of job satisfaction of employees in terms of personal work experience; recruitment, development, and retention; organizational and performance culture; leadership; recognition and

rewards; pay and benefits; and working conditions. Second, to describe the attrition level of employees in terms of work-specific attrition, human resources policy of the organization, boss behavior with subordinates, prevailing economic force, fellow employee influence, and opportunities in society. The third is to describe the level of stress management competency of employees. Moreover, the fourth is to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition, job satisfaction and stress management competency, and stress management competency and employee attrition. Lastly, to determine if the mediating effect of stress management competency on job satisfaction and employee attrition is significant. This study assumes that there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition, job satisfaction and stress management competency, and stress management competency and employee attrition, and there is no mediating effect of stress management competency on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), which provides a valuable framework for organizations to understand and address the fundamental needs of their employees. For instance, when employees' basic needs are met, they are more likely to be focused, engaged, motivated, committed, and satisfied (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Thus, the organization should recognize and address its employees' needs because it can foster higher employee engagement and job satisfaction (Azeem & Akhtar, 2018).

In addition, the researcher also anchored this study on the Job Embeddedness Theory (2001) developed and introduced by Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinsky, and Erez, which focuses on the factors that bind employees to their jobs and organizations. This idea holds that employees' decisions to stay or quit their employment are influenced by their affiliation with their organization (Keeble-Ramsay and Armitage, 2020). For example, when the organization recognizes and addresses the basic needs of employees identified in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs such as proper compensation, supervisory support, growth opportunities, and development, employees can be deeply embedded in their jobs and organization which leads to a strong sense of commitment, job satisfaction, retention, and loyalty (Nashar, Parashakti, and Haryadi, 2020).

Furthermore, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) was also anchored to this study. According to Frederick Herzberg, this theory distinguishes between motivating factors (achievement, recognition, and responsibility) and hygiene factors (salary, job security, and working conditions). He stressed that satisfying hygiene factors is necessary to prevent dissatisfaction while motivating factors lead to higher job satisfaction. As presented, stress management competency requires understanding and addressing both the hygiene and motivational factors outlined in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to create a working environment that promotes employee satisfaction, motivation, and well-being while minimizing stress levels. Thus, the connection to stress management competency lies in recognizing that certain aspects of the work environment, such as those identified in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, can contribute to stress if they are not managed properly. For instance, when hygiene factors are lacking as described in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs such as inadequate working conditions, ineffective communication, and unfair compensation policies are absent, employees may experience stress due to dissatisfaction with their workplace environment (Lim, Wang, and Lee, 2019).

On the other hand, stress management competency also involves enhancing motivational factors in the workplace by offering opportunities for acknowledgment, development, and meaningful tasks that can enhance employee engagement and motivation, leading to decreased stress levels and improved overall well-being among employees (Silva, Oliveira, and Coelho, 2022). Hence, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and stress management competency are connected through their significance in comprehending employee motivation and well-being in the workplace (Purkait, 2019).

Conceptual Framework

The independent variable of this study is job satisfaction, which refers to the employee's level of commitment to their jobs with the indicators personal work experience, recruitment, development, retention, organization and performance culture, leadership, recognition and rewards, pay and benefits, and working conditions. As used in this study, job satisfaction refers to the employees' subjective evaluation of their jobs and the overall fulfillment and contentment they experience about their work (Conklin & Desselle, 2020). The dependent variable is employee attrition, which refers to the natural occurrence through which employees quit their jobs (Allen, Bryant, and Vardaman, 2018). This includes factors such as work-specific attrition, human resource policy of the organization, boss behavior with subordinates, prevailing economic forces, fellow employee influence, and opportunities in society. Further, stress management competency is the mediating variable that describes an employee's various strategies and techniques to manage or reduce stress levels (Brough and Biggs, 2020).

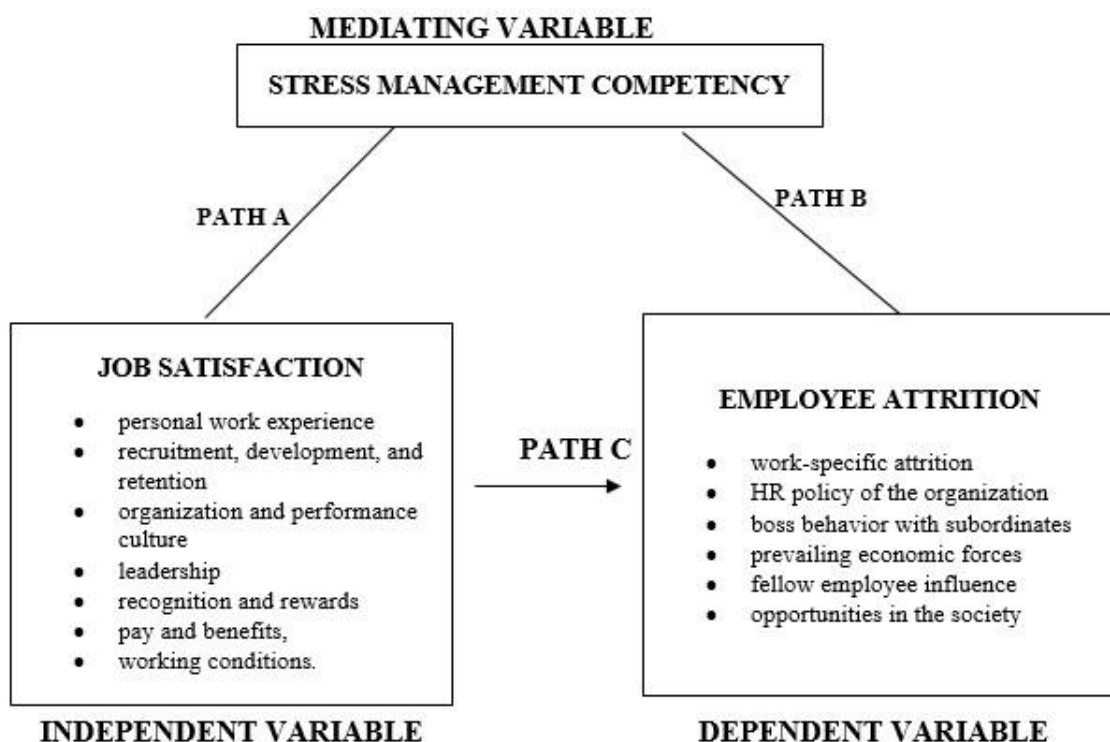


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework Presenting the Variables of the Study

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Respondents

The study's respondents were selected employees of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office in Davao City. To ascertain the distribution of respondents over the entire population, the researcher requested the administrative division to provide the total population count. Then, the researcher calculated the sample size through the Raosoft online sample size calculator. Based on the result, the recommended sample size is 322 respondents out of the total population of 1,964. The calculation is based on a margin of error of 5%, a confidence interval of 95%, and a response distribution of 50%.

This study employed a stratified sampling technique to determine the specific respondents who were the focus of the research. A stratified sampling technique is a probability sampling method that divides the entire population into distinct groups or strata wherein each stratum shares similar features, attributes, or characteristics. According to (Parsons, 2020) stratified sampling ensures that each subgroup is adequately represented. This helps to minimize sampling bias and ensures that the sample accurately reflects the diversity and heterogeneity of the population.

The research respondents consisted of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office employees, including regular, contractual, job orders, and agency-allied service personnel who had been employed by the institution for at least six months and above, regardless of their age, sex, marital status, and educational level. However, the research did not include employees with a tenure of less than six months in the institution. Moreover, participation in this study was voluntary. Participants were not obligated to complete the survey questionnaire and were treated with respect when they decided to withdraw from the study. They were allowed to discontinue their participation at any time without incurring any penalties or forfeiting any benefits to which they would otherwise be entitled provided that they will notify the researcher that they wish to withdraw but are not required to provide their reason. The researcher always observed all ethical standards the organization and this University set.

Furthermore, the study was conducted in Davao City. Davao City is located in the southeastern region of the island of Mindanao. Specifically, the study focused on the City of Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO). It is one of the Local Government of Davao agencies that was established by Executive Order No. 6, signed by Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte on February 12, 1993. The Office of the City Environment and Natural Resources is mandated to keep the city clean, green, and healthy.

Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire was adapted from the original study of Evergreen Solutions (2006) and Jayarani and Jayakumar (2012) and Radhakrishnan and Jins Joy (2012) which included questions on the demographic profile of the respondents. Some research questions were retained, and some were revised and contextualized by the researcher after thorough research and readings. Moreover, the questionnaire underwent pilot testing among forty respondents who were not included in the study. The following were the results of Cronbach's alpha test: the independent variable was 0.970, the dependent variable was 0.908, and the mediating variable was 0.965, or excellent. The results showed that the item questions of the study were revised and modified.

In addition, the research instrument consisted of four 4 sections. The first section consisted of questions that pertain to the profile of the respondents and are open-ended questions. The second section contains questions measuring the respondents' job satisfaction level. The third section consisted of questions that determine the factors influencing employee attrition. The fourth section comprised questions measuring the respondents' stress management competency level. Both sections B, C, and D consist of 5-point Likert-scale questions.

The research instrument used in gathering data on the independent variable job satisfaction was a questionnaire created originally by Evergreen Solutions (2006) and Jayarani and Jayakumar (2012), which was adapted and modified by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of seven indicators, and 5-point Likert-scale measurements were used in measuring the responses of the respondents in which the mean ranges from 4.20-5.00, exhibiting a very high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is always observed or manifested. The mean ranges from 3.40-4.19 have a high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is often observed or manifested. The range of means from 2.60-3.39 shows a moderate descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is sometimes observed or manifested. The mean ranges from 1.80-2.59 indicate a low descriptive level; this implies that the statement is seldom observed or manifested. Lastly, the ranges from 1.00-1.79 show a very low descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is never observed or manifested.

Meanwhile, the instrument used for data gathering of the dependent variable, which was employee attrition, was originally made by Radhakrishnan and Jins Joy (2012) and was adapted and modified by the researcher. The questionnaire had six indicators, and 5-point Likert-scale measurements were used. The mean ranges from 4.20-5.00 exhibit a very high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is always observed or manifested. The range of mean from 3.40-4.19 has a high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is oftentimes observed or manifested. The range of means from 2.60-3.39 shows a moderate descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is sometimes observed or manifested. The mean ranges from 1.80-2.59, indicating a low descriptive level, implying that the statement is seldom observed or manifested. Lastly, the mean ranges from 1.00-1.79 show a very low descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is never observed or manifested.

Further, in gathering the data on the stress management competency of the respondents, the instrument used was a questionnaire sourced from the internet which was originally from the website Executive Health and Safety (2009) and was adapted and modified by the researcher. The 5-point Likert-scale was also used. The mean ranges from 4.20-5.00 exhibit a very high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is always observed or manifested. The range of mean from 3.40-4.19 has a high descriptive level, indicating that the statement is oftentimes observed or manifested. The range of means from 2.60-3.39 shows a moderate descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is sometimes observed or manifested. The mean ranges from 1.80-2.59, indicating a low descriptive level, implying that the statement is seldom observed or manifested. Lastly, the mean ranges from 1.00-1.79 show a very low descriptive level, suggesting that the statement is never observed or manifested.

Finally, to make the questionnaire easy to comprehend for the respondents, it was made brief, straightforward, and translated into *Cebuano* language. The researcher ensured that

the questionnaire was validated by public administration, organization, and management experts.

Design and Procedure

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative research design specifically the descriptive-correlational and mediation approaches. A descriptive-correlational design aims to provide a static picture of situations and establish relationships between different variables (McBurney & White, 2020). Further, a descriptive quantitative design was used to determine the level of job satisfaction, attrition level, and level of stress management competency of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office employees. Specifically, mediation testing was employed to investigate the significant relationship between the research variables stress management competency, job satisfaction, and employee attrition.

Moreover, the study's primary objective was to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition, job satisfaction and stress management competency, the relationship between employee attrition and stress management competency, and the mediating effect of stress management competency on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition. Moreover, Cresswell (2020) stated that the mediating variable aims to determine the effect that variable Z has on the effect that X has on Y. The association between the two other variables is explained by a mediator variable, which also mediates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The relationships between the independent variable and mediator variables, as well as those between the dependent and mediator variables, are all investigated by the mediation model. Furthermore, the researcher submitted the contextualized, adapted research questionnaire to the expert validators, which was subject to review, correction, and finalization before the data gathering was conducted. Then, the researcher submitted all the pertinent documents to UMERG to secure approval and certification to proceed with the datagathering process. The UMERG certificate with protocol number UMERG-2023-370 was then issued.

The researcher acquired a letter of endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School. Then, the researcher wrote a letter to the Officer-In-Charge of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office to request permission to conduct a study among its employees. After the request was approved, the researcher personally administered the survey questionnaires to the City Environment and Natural Resources Office employees. The data-gathering procedure took place in August 2023.

Moreover, before the respondents answered the questionnaire, an Informed Consent Form (ICF) was provided for them to sign. The ICF clarified to the respondents that participating in the study is entirely voluntary. In addition, the ICF assured the participants that all the data gathered in the study was strictly confidential and would be solely used for this research. After signing the ICF, the participants can now proceed to the questionnaire. If the participants have an inquiry regarding the questionnaire, the researcher is willing to address and entertain their questions. Furthermore, all the distributed questionnaires were collected and tallied for statistical purposes. The researcher manually encoded all the respondents' responses using Microsoft Excel, and an electronic copy was sent to the statistician for statistical treatment.

This study utilized statistical procedures to provide a thorough interpretation and analysis of the data. First, the Mean and Percentage were used to determine the profile of the respondents, level of job satisfaction, level of employee attrition, and level of stress management competency of the respondents. Second, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient r was used to determine the significance of the relationship among job satisfaction (IV), employee attrition (DV), and stress management competency (MV). Last, the Path Analysis (Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Medgraph Sobel's z Test were used to determine the mediating effect of stress management competency (MV) on job satisfaction (IV) and employee attrition (DV). Further, it investigated the indirect and direct connections between variables within the model. Furthermore, to ensure the maintenance of ethical consideration, the study was subjected to the Institutional Ethics Review Committee for ethical review and concerns. This study was approved and issued a UMERC certification number UMERC-2023-370.

This study conformed to the following norms: first, voluntary participation in which the researcher asked permission from the Heads or Officer-In-Charge of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office to conduct the study. The survey questionnaire was filled out voluntarily by the respondents. Second, privacy and confidentiality, in which the researcher ensured the confidentiality of the respondents. Third, the informed consent process in which the researcher gave the respondents a chance to sign the informed consent form. Fourth is recruitment, in which the researcher requested assistance from the officer-in-charge to obtain the required number of respondents.

Fifth, risks in which the researcher ensured that the study did not involve any risk or harm to the respondents. Sixth, the benefits in which this study gave significant value to the employees of the public and private organizations in Davao City, especially to the CENRO officials and employees. Seventh, plagiarism, in which the researcher ensured that all authors were duly acknowledged. Furthermore, this study was submitted for further examination and assessment to the UM Ethics Review (UMERC). Eight, fabrication, in which the researcher upholds the veracity, pertinence, and integrity of this study.

Moreover, the ninth was falsification in which the researcher properly collected, analyzed, and presented the data gathered. Also, the researcher ensured that no forms of fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data were done. Tenth, conflict of interest in which the primary interest of this study was only to gather essential and relevant data to support the study's goals. At the eleventh, is deceit in which the researcher ensured to observe the ethical standards in conducting research. Further, twelve, permission from the organization/location where the researcher secured permission from the organization where the study took place. Lastly, authorship in which the researcher sincerely acknowledged all the people behind this study.

3.0 FINDINGS

The data gathered were organized, discussed, and interpreted in accordance with the objectives of the study. Presentation of topics are arranged according to the following subheadings: first, the Level of Job Satisfaction; second, the Level of Employee Attrition; third, the Level of Stress Management Competency of the employees; fourth, the association between Job Satisfaction and Employee Attrition, Job Satisfaction and Stress Management Competency, and Stress Management Competency and Employee Attrition.

Lastly, the significance of Stress Management Competency on the relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources employees.

Level of Job Satisfaction of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

In Table 1 is shown the level of job satisfaction among CENRO employees. The overall level of employees' job satisfaction was 4.14, with an overall standard deviation of 0.50, which indicates a high descriptive level. This implies that employees oftentimes observe job satisfaction. Moreover, personal work experience obtained the highest mean score of 4.41, which is regarded as very high, and a standard deviation of 0.54. Likewise, leadership also obtained the highest mean score of 4.34, which is regarded as very high, and a standard deviation of 0.61. This implies that the employees always observe these two indicators in the organization.

Meanwhile, working conditions obtained the lowest mean score of 3.85, regarded as high, and a standard deviation of 0.67. This implies that the employees in the organization oftentimes observe this indicator. Further, it can be gleaned from the gathered data that the respondents signified favorable feelings about job satisfaction through personal work experience and leadership. This implies that the CENRO employees highly recognized job satisfaction through personal work experience and organizational leadership.

Table 1: Level of Job Satisfaction of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

<u>Indicators</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Descriptive Level</u>
Personal Work Experience	0.54	4.41	Very High
Recruitment, Development, and Retention	0.60	4.17	High
Organizational and Performance Culture	0.59	4.19	High
Leadership	0.61	4.34	Very High
Recognition and Rewards	0.63	4.09	High
Pay and Benefits	0.72	3.96	High
Working Conditions	0.67	3.85	High
Overall	0.50	4.14	High

Further, these findings are congruent with Malkov (2020) and Kibukamusoke & Kibukamusoke (2021) who state that personal work experience is essential because it can significantly enhance employees' personal growth, confidence, and job satisfaction. Similarly, work experience can contribute to an employee's sense of purpose and pride in their work, and it can shape an employee's professional journey and lead to opportunities for success and development (Raji & Iadan, 2021). Meanwhile, influential leaders provide a sense of direction, establish priorities, and mobilize resources to achieve desired outcomes (Butler et.al, 2021; Drucker, 2019). These findings also support Maxwell's (2018) proposition that supportive and empowering leadership positively impacts job satisfaction.

Level of Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees In Table 2 is presented the level of attrition of CENRO employees. It shows that the overall

level of employee attrition is 3.80, which is labeled as high, and a standard deviation of 0.50. This explains that the respondents oftentimes observe the items in the questionnaire. Moreover, examining the individual result of the level of employee attrition, it was revealed that among the six indicators of employee attrition, the boss behavior with subordinates obtained the highest mean score of 4.19, which is labeled as high and a standard deviation of 0.61; in contrast, work specific attrition obtained the lowest mean score of 3.45, which is regarded as high and a standard deviation of 0.81. This suggests that employees are more inclined to resign due to their boss's behavior than work-related attrition factors. These findings concur with the stance of Gordon, Adler, Day, and Sydnor (2019) who stressed that managers should be sure to provide employees with practical advice, constructive criticism, and sound corrective actions for navigating the reality of the workplace because the employees would stay in an organization if they are being corrected with a non-offending corrective measure and not with blunt languages which lower their self-esteem.

Table 2: Level of Employee Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

<u>Indicators</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Descriptive Level</u>
Work Specific Attrition	0.81	3.45	High
Human Resources Policy of the Organization	0.66	4.00	High
Boss Behavior with Subordinates	0.61	4.19	High
Prevailing Economic Forces	0.90	3.49	High
Fellow Employee Influence	0.59	4.13	High
Opportunities in the Society	0.75	3.55	High
Overall	0.50	3.80	High

Hence, the standard of leadership and supervision within an organization has been found to impact employee attrition. Effective leadership that provides support, guidance, and recognition positively affects employee retention, while poor leadership and supervision can increase attrition rates (Hom, Mitchell, Lee at Griffeth, 2021). Further, employee attrition when it occurs at a high rate, can negatively impact the organization (Hussain, 2018). For instance, when experienced and knowledgeable employees leave, it can be challenging to find suitable replacements, leading to a loss of expertise.

Level of Stress Management Competency of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

In Table 3 is presented the descriptive level of stress management competency of the CENRO employees. It shows that the overall mean score was 4.20, labeled as very high, with a standard deviation of 0.47. This suggests that the stress management competency of the employees is always observed in the organization.

More specifically, all indicators exhibited a very high level of descriptive except the indicator Reasoning/Managing Difficult Situation which obtained the lowest average mean score of 4.04, but still high, and a standard deviation of 0.60. This suggests that City Environment and Natural Resources Office employees are highly competent in managing their stress through managing emotions and having integrity, managing and

communicating existing and future work, and managing the individual within the team in the organization.

Table 3: Level of Stress Management Competency of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Managing Emotions and Having Integrity	0.54	4.28	Very High
Managing and Communicating Existing and Future Work	0.53	4.24	Very High
Managing the Individual within the Team	0.49	4.25	Very high
Reasoning/Managing Difficult Situations	0.60	4.04	High
Overall	0.47	4.20	Very High

Indeed, stress management competency is pivotal for maintaining the physical and mental health of the employees. Moreover, Pahlevani, Ebrahimi, Radmehr, Amini and Bahraminasab (2020) concur with these findings that having good stress management competency can increase employees' productivity, foster a positive relationship in the workplace, and contribute to their overall quality of life in both personal and professional contexts. Furthermore, Purkait (2019) also agreed with the findings that fostering a healthy and supportive workplace is advantageous for organizational and employee wellbeing.

Significance of the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employee

In Table 4 is presented the significant relationship between job satisfaction and attrition of the CENRO employees as revealed in the overall r -value of .614 with a p -value of .000, which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition, and the null hypothesis is rejected. This explains that employees' job satisfaction is related to attrition. Further, it implies that employee job satisfaction affects employee attrition because happier employees are more likely to remain loyal to the organization.

Table 4: Significance of the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

Job Satisfaction	Employee Attrition						Overall
	Work Specific Attrition	Human Resources Policy of the Organization	Boss Behavior with Subordinates	Prevailing Economic Forces	Fellow Employee Influence	Opportunities in the Society	
Personal Work Experience	.134* .016	.355** .000	.329** .000	.153** .006	.248** .000	.096 .084	.298** .000
Recruitment, Development, and Retention	.219** .000	.516** .000	.401** .000	.260** .000	.329** .000	.212** .000	.446** .000
Organizational and Performance Culture	.244** .000	.558** .000	.550** .000	.235** .000	.376** .000	.303** .000	.517** .000
Leadership	.107 .055	.480** .000	.541** .000	.210** .000	.341** .000	.177** .001	.416** .000
Recognition and Rewards	.319** .000	.573** .000	.538** .000	.271** .000	.371** .000	.322** .000	.552** .000
Pay and Benefits	.292** .000	.636** .000	.386** .000	.198** .000	.396** .000	.357** .000	.519** .000

Working Conditions	.465** .000	.621** .000	.455** .000	.317** .000	.459** .000	.455** .000	.648** .000
Overall	.325** .000	.676** .000	.571** .000	.296** .000	.455** .000	.354** .000	.614** .000

*Significant at 0.05 significance level

This is substantiated by Conklin and Desselle (2020) study that when employees are engaged, they love what they do, care more about the organization, and are less likely to quit. Moreover, Igwe, Onwumere, and Egbo (2021) agreed with these findings as they stressed that when employees are satisfied with their jobs, it indicates a good job fit, and a strong job fit can reduce attrition of employees. Therefore, organizations should acknowledge that job satisfaction is a significant aspect of an employee's well-being, productivity, retention, and overall organizational success (Thompson, 2023). Further, organizations may strengthen their existing retention program or develop new retention initiatives tailored to their workplace. A well-executed employee retention program can lead to a more stable and prosperous organization.

Significance of the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Stress Management Competency of CENRO Employee

In Table 5 is presented the significant relationship between job satisfaction and stress management competency of the CENRO employees as revealed in the overall r-value of .631 with a p-value of .000, which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee stress management competency, and the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that there is a significant correlation between the mediating variable and the independent variable. Further, this explains that employees with better stress management competency are happier at work.

Table 5: Significance of the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Stress Management Competency of the CENRO Employees

Job Satisfaction	Stress Management Competency				
	Managing Emotions and Having Integrity	Managing and Communicating Existing and Future Work	Managing the Individual within the Team	Reasoning/ Managing Difficult Situations	Overall
Personal Work Experience Recruitment, Development, and Retention Organizational and Performance Culture	.378** .000	.424** .000	.453** .000	.374** .000	.471** .000
Leadership	.352** .000	.385** .000	.463** .000	.385** .000	.458** .000
Recognition and Rewards	.435** .000	.491** .000	.527** .000	.519** .000	.572** .000
Pay and Benefits	.434** .000	.407** .000	.487** .000	.446** .000	.514** .000
Working Conditions	.405** .000	.479** .000	.487** .000	.474** .000	.535** .000
	.340** .000	.406** .000	.464** .000	.446** .000	.480** .000
	.384** .000	.454** .000	.458** .000	.465** .000	.511** .000

Overall	.485** .000	.543** .000	.595** .000	.556** .000	.631** .000
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*Significant at 0.05 significance level

These findings are agreed by Pahlevani, Ebrahimi, Radmehr, Amini and Bahraminasab (2020) who stressed that employees who feel that their well-being is valued and supported contribute to a positive organizational culture such as employee morale, productivity, and satisfaction. Furthermore, Bowling, Eschleman, and Wang (2021) also support the findings as they stressed that employees who effectively manage their stress levels are more likely to experience a sense of control, well-being, and fulfillment in their work.

Significance of the Relationship between Stress Management Competency and Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

In Table 6 is presented the significant relationship between stress management competency and attrition of the CENRO employees as revealed in the overall r-value of .614 with a p-value of .000, which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between stress management competency and attrition of employees, and the null hypothesis is rejected. This explains that the stress management competency of employees is strongly associated with their attrition. It could further explain that attrition of employees is more likely dependent on how employees can competently manage their stress levels in the organization.

The result is in line with the proposition of Roslan (2018) that stress management competency among employees has the potential to create a healthier and more productive environment and reduce absenteeism and turnover. Further, the result also substantiates with Ganster and Rosen (2021) who stressed that employees with a high level of stress management competency are more likely to engage and be productive at their workplace, ultimately contributing to a lower attrition rate. It implies that all indicators of both variables were significantly correlated, and employees with higher stress management competency levels are more likely to remain with the organization.

Table 6: Significance of the Relationship between Stress Management Competency and Attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office Employees

		Attrition					Overall
Stress Management Competency		Work Specific Attrition	Human Resources Policy of the Organization	Boss Behavior with Subordinates	Prevailing Economic Forces	Fellow Employee Influence	
Managing Emotions and Having Integrity	.187** .001	.489** .000	.464** .000	.173** .002	.505** .000	.319** .000	.480** .000
Managing and Communicating Existing and Future Work	.288** .000	.549** .000	.460** .000	.249** .000	.479** .000	.349** .000	.544** .000
Managing the Individual within the Team	.198** .000	.520** .000	.532** .000	.235** .000	.462** .000	.302** .000	.509** .000
Reasoning/Managing Difficult Situations	.348** .000	.488** .000	.410** .000	.354** .000	.409** .000	.439** .000	.577** .000
Overall	.300** .000	.593** .000	.538** .000	.297** .000	.537** .000	.413** .000	.614** .000

*Significant at 0.05 significance level

Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables

In Table 7 presents the data for the different paths. This path analysis involved four steps. Step 1 was called Path A which is the regression analysis between job satisfaction and stress management competency of the CENRO employees. The result revealed that the employees' job satisfaction (IV) significantly directly affects stress management competency (MV). The Step 2 was called Path B which is the stress management competency regressed to employee attrition. This suggests that stress management competency significantly predicts the attrition of employees. Step 3 was called Path C which is the regression analysis between job satisfaction and employee attrition. This exhibits the significant direct effect of job satisfaction (IV) toward attrition of employees (DV). Lastly, step 4 analyzed the combined influence of stress management competency (MV) and job satisfaction (IV) on employee attrition (DV), denoted as (c'). A mediation analysis using Medgraph is necessary to determine the significance of the mediation effect because paths A, B, and C are found to be correlated.

The result of regression analysis showed that the regression coefficient was reduced in the last step. It stays significant, and only partial mediation is attained, which suggests that a portion of job satisfaction is mediated by stress management competency. At the same time, other components are directly influenced or indirectly affected by the factors not involved in the paradigm. As shown in step 4, the influence of job satisfaction on attrition was even reduced after being mediated by stress management competency. Hence, partial mediation occurred because the effect was significant at $p < 0.05$.

Table 7: Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Overall Job Satisfaction on Attrition as Mediated by Stress Management Competency

Step	Path	B	S.E.	β
1	a	.591	.041	.631***
2	b	.407	.057	.376***
3	c	.622	.045	.614***
4	c'	.381	.054	.377***

* $p < 0.05$

In Table 8 is presented the Sobel z -test, which produced a z -value of 6.387, $p < 0.05$. This suggests the partial mediating effect, such that the original direct effect of job satisfaction to attrition was reduced upon the addition of stress management competency. The positive value of Sobel z also suggests that the addition of stress management competency minimizes the effect of job satisfaction on the attrition of employees. Further, complete mediation will be attained if the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable fails to be statistically significant.

Table 8: Results of Statistical Analysis on Presence (or Absence) of Mediating Effect

<u>Combination of Variables</u>	<u>Sobel z</u>	<u>p-value</u>	<u>Mediation</u>
job satisfaction $\rightarrow$ stress management competency $\rightarrow$ attrition	6.387	119 < 0.001	Partial mediation

* $p < 0.05$

In Figure 2 is shown the computed effect size for the mediation test is shown among the three variables. The effect size determines the extent of the effect of job satisfaction on attrition, which can be associated with the indirect path. The total effect value of 0.622 is attributed to the beta of job satisfaction towards attrition. The direct effect value of 0.381 is the beta of job satisfaction towards attrition with stress management competency included in the regression.

The indirect effect value of 0.591 is the value obtained from the original beta between job satisfaction and attrition that now passes through stress management competency ($a \cdot b$, where “a” denotes the path Job Satisfaction JS $\rightarrow$ Stress Management Competency SMC and “b” pertains to the path between Stress Management Competency SMC $\rightarrow$ Attrition). Further, the indirect effect is divided by the overall effect to obtain the ratio index 0.591 by 0.622, which equals 0.9502. It appears that 95.02% of the total effect of job satisfaction on attrition goes through stress management competency.

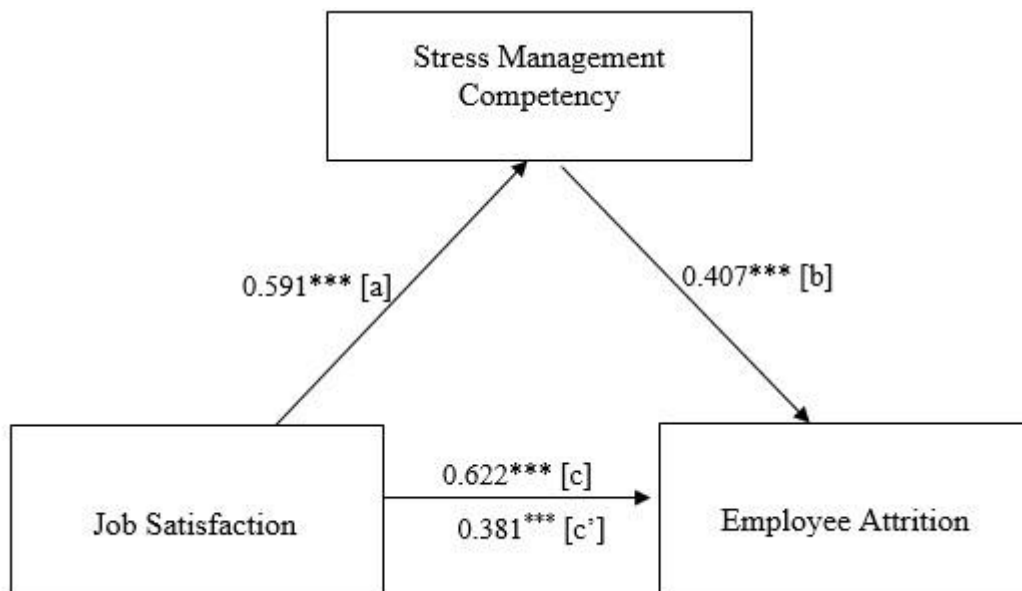


Figure 2: Medgraph Showing the Variables of the Study

Mediation Analysis

Sobel z	6.387119, $p < 0.01$ ***
Percentage of the total effect that is mediated	38.674647%
Ratio of the indirect to direct effect	0.630647

Effect Size Measures

Unstandardized Coefficients

Total:	.622
Direct:	.381
Indirect:	.591
Ratio Index:	0.9502

Stress management competency was explored and investigated as a mediator of job satisfaction and employee attrition, and the results revealed a partial mediation. This suggests that stress management competency partially mediates the relationship between employee job satisfaction and attrition of City Environment and Natural Resources Office employees. This result conforms with Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton (2019) findings that employee engagement and commitment potentially lead to high organizational productivity and overall effectiveness. Moreover, Durkin (2023) suggests that the organization should support the employee's wellness and psychological well-being. In that case, an employee tends to stay longer, contented, motivated, and productive.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION Conclusion

The conclusions in this section are derived from the study's findings. The results revealed a high descriptive level for job satisfaction and employee attrition. Meanwhile, a very high descriptive level of stress management competency was also shown. The study's result also proved a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee attrition.

Likewise, a significant relationship exists between job satisfaction and stress management competency. Similarly, a significant relationship exists between stress management competency and employee attrition.

Upon analyzing the correlations between the variables, it was revealed that the employees' stress management competency is strongly associated with the level of employee attrition, indicating that stress management competency impacts employee attrition. Moreover, the study's findings prove that stress management competency significantly and partially mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and attrition among employees of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office.

Upon thorough investigation and analysis, this study determined that job satisfaction is a contributing factor to employee attrition. Additionally, it found that having stress management competency enables organizations to retain their most valuable assets to remain productive, motivated, engaged, and healthy toward attaining organizational success. The findings of this study further corroborate the theories and propositions put forth, which generally assert that there is a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction, employee attrition, and stress management competencies.

Recommendations

Several recommendations are provided based on the findings and conclusion. First, employees may continuously invest in skills that can help them to be efficient and effective in their jobs. They may also invest in both hard skills (e.g., problem-solving, planning, budgeting, risk management, and time management) and soft skills (e.g., leadership, communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, adaptability, and empathy). Moreover, attending seminars, training, and workshops such as mental health and well-being awareness training, innovative skills training, employee empowerment and resiliency, workplace ethics, and safety training, employee leadership training, latest trends and technologies, and employee grooming programs helps employees in their career growth and personal development. Upskilling programs improve employees' skills and knowledge, making them valuable assets to the organization. This contributes to the theory of AMO (Ability, Motivation, Opportunity) which suggests that employees with the

requisite abilities are better prepared to carry out their job responsibilities efficiently; motivated employees are more likely to channel their energy and talents toward accomplishing organizational objectives; and opportunities that empower employees effectively utilize their skills and motivation to contribute to the success of the organization.

Second, there must be a conducive and harmonious workplace environment with equal treatment of superiors and subordinates. Thus, the organization may also continue to recognize the accomplishments and achievements of their employees no matter how small or big they are because being recognized at work will boost employees' morale, which will also lead to efficiency and productivity. This contributes to Elton Mayo's theory which paved the way for a more leadership and employee relations model that prioritizes humancentric values. Moreover, it is recommended that the concept of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) continue to be practiced for long-term solutions to discrimination issues. Furthermore, the officials and leaders of the organization must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Hence, they may continue attending training and seminars that are highly beneficial for both leaders and the organization they lead. Staying current with industry trends, best practices, and emerging technologies is essential for effective leadership. Leaders who attend seminars may impart their knowledge and insights to their teams which potentially can contribute to their employee's professional development and lead to a more skilled and capable workforce.

Third, organizations should build a strong employer brand highlighting culture, values, and social responsibility, such as open communication, mutual respect, strong work ethic, positive thinking, emphatic team members, fair policies, clear job expectations, and supportive leaders. Organizations may also continue adapting hybrid work options for employee flexibility, autonomy, and work-life balance. These not only keep the employees happy and engaged but also help the organization to develop a reputation. Moreover, organizations should provide growth opportunities and upskill for employee development and retention because when recognized and supported, employees become more loyal and contribute to the organization's success.

Furthermore, organizations, through their Human Resource Management, may continue formulating holistic programs and schemes that promote employees' physical and mental health, foster a positive working environment, a harmonious relationship between the boss and employees, competitive salary, and benefits packages, and strengthen retention programs. Finally, future researchers may expand this study by including other fields of interest that will affect the employees' workplace commitment, engagement, motivation, productivity, and well-being.

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