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Career Progression of Women: Does Work-life Balance Matter?

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Abstract

The study empirically examined the influence of work-life balance practices on the Career Progression of Women at the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP). Given the reliance on an explanatory research design, the study utilized a structured questionnaire for gathering the primary data quantitatively from 209 randomly selected participants. A second-order model was configured in SMART PLS for testing the directional hypotheses formulated. The results indicated that work-life balance practices have a moderately significant positive predictor on both career goal progress and promotion speed. However, it significantly predicts a weak positive variance in professional development ability of career progression. The practical implication is that the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection through its agency, must continually provide favorable work-life balance practices for its female staff to make female workers happy, satisfied, and progress in their various careers. The study offers a better theoretical understanding of how work-life balance, if handled well, may influence female workers' career progression, even in a situation where men predominate, as per role theory. Empirically, the study enriches the theoretical understanding of how work-life balance, if properly managed, would affect

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female workers in progression in their careers even in a masculine context, as established by the role theory in Sub-Saharan country-context.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance Practices, Career Progression, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), Ghana

1. Introduction

A career is the culmination of all of a person's paid and unpaid jobs, educational pursuits, and life activities (Patton & McMahon, 2001). Historically, the term "career" referred to a particular profession and was associated with paying jobs, but in today's business climate, it refers to a process of ongoing learning and development. Throughout an employee's working life, researchers studying career progression tended to concentrate on both objective and subjective measures of professional achievement (Ng & Feldman, 2010; Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden, & Bravo, 2011). More recently, Weng and McElroy (2012) shifted the focus to organizational career growth or the degree to which employees experience career growth within their current organization rather than the assessment of career outcomes across their total work career. This is a critical distinction because whereas career growth is more unexpected and unrelated to individual organizational performance for their whole working careers, career growth by the organization is more routine and closely associated with individual attitudes and behaviors (Weng & Xi, 2010).

Women have the same chances as men to climb the corporate ladder, according to research in the field of career development, especially if they start in the same fields and have goals and skills that are similar to those of males (Prithi & Vasumathi, 2018). Women are viewed as having successful careers because they emulate males by sharing parental responsibilities and household chores with their spouses (Burke, 2007). Historically, obstacles to women's career progression have given rise to a range of unique viewpoints that ought to be highlighted. First, it is widely known that females in managerial positions experience social discrimination, which is thought to lead to stress and demotivation. At the highest levels of management, stress affects both men and women equally, however, women assert that, due to their gender, they experience more stress-related issues (Faizan & Haque, 2019). In addition, even though discrimination at work violates all written laws, it is known as a career advancement conflict (Gatrell, et al., 2013). Through social establishment, national cultural norms, values, and beliefs are imposed on organizations, which may obstruct women's advancement (Fitzsimmons & Stamper, 2014; Hofstede et al., 2010). Understanding the culture of people from various geographical environments has the potential to develop remedies to contemporary business difficulties (Klimas, 2016).

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Role theory suggests that social systems, including societies, cultures, organizations, groups, and families, are organized and run through roles (Gupta et al., 2020). As a result, roles play a dynamic role in structuring participant interaction to preserve, defend, alter, innovate, or advance the goal of social systems. Roles become the fundamental link between the social system and the individual in this respect, and they are designed to express greater concern's expectations to the specific actor (Badura et al., 2018). Roles can thus be seen as necessary mechanisms that embody the social system's values. In terms of social roles, role expectations fluctuate among cultures and evolve with time, according to role theory. Therefore, in the Ghanaian context, where masculinity is predominant, expectations from women in the workplace are lower compared with their male counterparts.

Role theory again indicates that organizational structure and personal roles often conflict and that women in particular struggle to rise to the top of the corporate ladder. Furthermore, approximately 70% of all women in partnerships with two earners say they are more responsible for child care than their male counterparts (Craig & Churchill, 2021). A woman's daily life does not fit the paradigm of the perfect worker since she is unable to devote the full hours a day to work (Bilimoria & Liang, 2012). The perception that women are less work-oriented than men with children is a major source of stress for those who are highly motivated by their careers. Unlike the typical male model, which is primarily focused on linear career growth, a woman's career flows differently depending on the relationships she chooses. When women decide to have children, their direction is slightly different from men's since childbearing prohibits many of them from transitioning to a linear progression (Durodolu & Mamudu, 2020). Because she is more likely to dip in and out of the organizational function, it takes a woman more to get to the same organizational rank as her male coworkers.

About 91% of economically active females in Ghana are employed in the private sector (including formal and informal), compared to 4.4% in the public sector (Tsikata, 2009). Once more, the formal economy of Ghana shows that women often work in the lower and middle strata, accounting for more than two-thirds of employees in the lower stratum of the public sector and fewer than a tenth of employees in the top stratum (Sackey & Sanda, 2017), and they are not considered during decision-making stages (Tsikata, 2016). One of the reasons why working women are struggling to advance in their careers is the growing degree of work-life imbalance that they experience (Anwar, Hasnu & Janjua, 2013; Smith, 2017). When a person is required to fulfill several jobs that demand time, effort, and attention, a work-life imbalance occurs. Working women still face several hardships and restraints, according to Sherwani (1984). There are roughly five elements that affect a woman's career: career planning (expectations, socialization, and education);

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

opportunities in society; the role of marriage; pregnancy and child care; timing; and age. Although juggling all of these factors is incredibly challenging, women often shoulder the burden of both family and work (Shaikh, Shah, Katpar & Shah, 2019; Swathi, 2017). As a result, many women view successfully juggling these demands simultaneously rather than sequential demands as a noteworthy accomplishment (Akram, Haq & Victor, 2018; Stephens, 2017). Work-life imbalance results in several problems that motivate organizations to adopt work-life balance policies, including issues with work-family conflict, challenges experienced by dual-earner families, and the requirement to care for children, dependents, and the elderly (Cegarra-Leiva et al., 2012). These actions enable female employees to concentrate on moving up the corporate ladder.

Progressing up the corporate ladder is one of the most fundamental indicators of career success, according to Powell and Butterfield (2003). As previously said, women typically work at lower levels of administration and hold positions with less authority than men. From anecdotal talks, it appears that more men hold various key jobs at the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP) in Ghana, leaving their female counterparts to fill the lower ones. In addition, numerous studies have been conducted, although with little success, to try and find a way to reduce the gap between men and women in high-ranking positions in the economic world (European Commission, 2018; Hancock, Grappendorf, Wells & Burton, 2017; Gatrell, Cooper & Kossek, 2017). Workers who appear to balance their personal and professional lives are criticized as being unreliable, unfit for the job, or sluggish (O'Connell & McKinnon, 2021). To the detriment of those who continue to make an effort to balance the two throughout their career, employees who place less value on their personal affairs than their professional affairs frequently have the potential to advance (Sullivan, 2019). It is widely believed that work-life balance promotes professional growth and job happiness, even though it does not aim to achieve a perfect balance (Kavitha, 2017). However, some dispute this argument because it essentially hinders career progression (Amalba, Abantanga, Scherpbier & Van Mook, 2018).

Despite studies being conducted both locally and internationally, no research has been conducted on work-life balance and female career progression in terms of career goal progress, professional ability development, promotion speed, and pay growth, at MoGCSP. Agyekum, Kissi, Danku, Ampratwum, and Amegatsey (2020) examined characteristics in Ghana that influence the advancement of construction project managers' careers. Also in 2019, Akpebu and Van der Walt conducted a study on the advancement of female librarians working in Ghana's public university libraries. In their 2016 study, Toffoletti and Starr examined gendered work and care discourses about

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women's academics and work-life balance in the West. Role theory can only be applied to a limited extent in an environment where masculinity predominates and employment expectations for women are lower than those for their male colleagues. Using the advice from these researchers could be misleading due to differences in organizational structure, culture, family engagement, and working environments. In addition to providing gender activists and the general public with insights that can be used to secure the advancement of women in the workplace, the study aims to provide women with a better understanding of the efforts they make to balance their careers with their families and, as a result, advance their careers. The MoGCSP can design policies addressing how to successfully balance work and family life in Ghana's socio-economic development with the aid of insights from the study's findings. Our study, therefore, looks at how women's career progression in Ghana's Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP) is impacted by work-life balance.

The remaining sub-sections of the study are devoted to the literature review which focuses on the theoretical framework and hypotheses development and the methods section which details how the empirical study was carried out following scientific guidelines and ethics. Other sections include the results and discussion section, which provide information on the findings of the study as well as extensive discussion based on previous empirical postulations, and conclusions that focus on the current state of affairs regarding the empirical stance of the nature of association existing among the constructs in the context of the study, implications for policy, practice, and theory, limitations of the study and suggestions for further studies.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

Work-life balance and career progression

The phrase "work-life balance" is used by stakeholders in several ways and with various connotations. The subject of work-life balance has drawn a lot of interest over the past 20 years from businesses, employees, politicians, academia, and the media. For some reason, worries about finding a work-life balance have become more important (Oyewobi, Oke, Adeneye, Jimoh & Windapo, 2022; Andrade, Westover & Kupka, 2019). According to Appel and Kim-Appel (2007), more women are entering the workforce due to demographic and social changes, and working mothers becoming the norm rather than the exception. Technological advancements like cell phones, email, and fax machines have made it easier for business commitments to intrude into personal and family life. Jenkins, Bhanugopan, and Lockhart (2016) claim that the transition to global competition has increased the need for organizations and individuals to be more flexible and change-sensitive. It is now necessary

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

for businesses to implement work-life balance initiatives to enable them to recruit and retain talent, not just from conventional sources but also from untapped and diverse social classes (Beltrán-Martn, Roca-Puig, Escrig-Tena & Bou-Llusar, 2008). This is because there is a talent shortage and the possibility that the workforce will age.

The socioeconomic classes whose lifestyles necessitate greater attention to the balance between work and life include working women and various types of minorities (Ulshafer, Potgeisser & Lima, 2005). Because of this, we must investigate the female employees of MoGCSP. To ensure potential commercial viability, organizations should, according to Godbey, Crawford, and Shen (2010), ensure that a practical and effective work-life balance policy is not only legislated but also supports and meets the needs of both the company and its employees. Policies promoting work-life balance, which are occasionally referred to as "flexible working" in practice, cover a variety of employment options, including part-time work, job sharing, flexibility, term-time work, shift work, compressed hours, teleporting or e-working, homework, career vacations, research leave, zero hours, contracts, and voluntarily reduced worktime (Javed, Khan, Yasir, Aamir & Ahmed, 2014). According to Adame, Caplliure, and Miquel (2016), the main objective of such work-time rules is to achieve a balance between work and domestic responsibilities that is fair and beneficial to both employers and employees. These initiatives that were introduced via an employer-employee dialogue process are the most successful ones (Cabanac, & Hartley, 2013).

Career progression, on the other hand, is the process of moving up the ladder throughout your professional life (Parker, Hewitt, Witheriff & Cooper, 2018). There are some elements and factors that can result in better and more fruitful career progression (Kim, O'Brien & Kim, 2016). Initially, four categories were employed to measure organizational career progression: progression of career goals, development of professional skills, the pace of promotions, and growth in remuneration (Weng, McElroy, Morrow, & Liu, 2010). According to this multi-dimensional operationalization, employees' efforts and an organization's willingness and ability to recognize such efforts are both necessary for career advancement (Spagnoli & Weng, 2019). Due to the high association between promotion speed and pay increase, particularly for workers in management roles, these four aspects have been condensed into three by Weng and McElroy (2012).

Different strategies to advance in careers have been looked at in previous studies. Among these strategies are: being able to work to exceed the expectations of senior managers (Agyekum, Kissi, Danku, Ampratwum & Amegatsey, 2020), accepting complicated assignments (Beeson & Valerio, 2012), being able to work in cross-functional areas and having an influential mentor (Burke, 2002) and the existence of organization support systems

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

(Culpane & Wright, 2002; Mattis, 2002). Burke (2002) postulates that further education, training, and development can help to progress in careers. There have not been many studies showing the nexus between work-life balance and career progression. However, studies on work-life balance have been shown to predict positive variances in dependent variables and side with Akram, Haq, and Victor (2018), Stephens (2017), and Sánchez-Vidal, Cegarra-Leiva, and Cegarra-Navarro (2012), balancing work roles and life roles would allow female workers to concentrate on their career progression. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

H_1: Work-life balance will have a positive effect on the career goal progress of female employees.

H_2: work-life balance will have a positive effect on the professional ability development of female employees

H_3: Work-life balance will have a positive effect on promotion speed

3. Method

Population and Sample of the Study

All female employees of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP) were included in the population for this study. In this study, a random sampling technique was used to select the participants. Out of one hundred and forty-four (144) participants, one hundred and thirty-two (132) were randomly selected. The sample size determination was based on the categorical data formula provided by Bartlett, Kotrlik, and Higgins (2001). A minimum sample size of 132 was reached by using the Z-value of 1.96 for the 95 percent confidence level. Random sampling was used to give participants an equal chance of participating in the study.

Data Collection

The researchers personally collected the data and permission was received from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) authorities, after which the participants were given paper questionnaires by the researchers. To meet the sample size threshold, we administered 140 questionnaires. Three weeks were allocated for the data collection period and on average, it took 40-45 minutes for the questionnaires to be completed. Some of the respondents needed more time to complete the questionnaires. The respondents' cooperation was laudable and there were no conflicts of interest between the researchers and the respondents. Out of the 140 questionnaires administered, 132 were retrieved thereby achieving a 94.3% response rate.

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

Measures

Work-life balance was operationalized as the position of balance where the requirements of one's career and the requirements of one's personal life are equally prioritized by an individual (Shobha, 2015; Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). Work-life balance is the notion that you do need time for both work and other facets of life whether family-related or personal interests. Work-life balance was therefore measured in terms of flexible work schedules, telecommuting, childcare benefits or services, taking time off as needed to care for family members, organizational awareness of my family issues, organizational support in general, and the availability and use of work-life balance policies and programs. The scores for each item ranged from 1 (least agree) to 5 (strongly agree) on a 5-point scale. Respondents reported the degree to which their organizations gave them the aforementioned items. Career progression was also operationalized as employees climbed the organizational ladder during their working life (Parker, Hewitt, Witheriff & Cooper, 2018). It was measured using the three constructs developed by Weng and McElroy (2012). The first measure was career goal progress and included 4 items. All of the items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*least agreement*) to 5 (*strongest agreement*). Participants reported the extent to which their present job helps them in progressing on their career goals.

The second measured professional ability development using 4 items developed by Weng and McElroy (2012). Again, all of the items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*least agreement*) to 5 (*strongest agreement*). Respondents indicated the extent to which their present job help them to develop themselves professionally. The third measured promotion speed using 4 items. Likewise, all of the items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*least agreement*) to 5 (*strongest agreement*). Participants specified the extent to which they are promoted in their organization. The reliability and validity values shown in Table 1 indicate that the instrument used was reliable and valid.

Data Analysis

To recognize errors, all the answered questionnaires were inspected. Also, SmartPLS3 was used in the data analysis. SEM not only makes the outcomes of associations between constructs impartial by measuring error but also equal relations between perfect reliability variables. (Werner & Schermelleh-Engel, 2009). Again, using SEM would enable us to explore complicated relationship trends, like that of the focus of this research. In addition, SEM would enable us to concurrently use multiple constructs, which leads to more meaningful conclusions about the level of the construct (Werner & Schermelleh-Engel, 2009). In this study, the motive for employing SEM is

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

that it provides for simultaneous addressing of a wide range of analyses on work-life balance and career progression of female employees.

4. Results and discussion

Measurement model assessment

The analysis of the data was done to decide if the criteria for the specifications of the measurement model were met to ascertain appropriateness for further studies. Indicator loadings were analyzed at first as a measure of the model. Measured items that failed to fulfill the least permissible load of 0.50 were discarded (Ahmad, Zulkurnain & Khairushalimi, 2016). Meeting the least permissible loading requirement means that at least 50 percent of the variance of the indicators is explained by the construct, thereby providing acceptable item reliability. The final model of analysis for the study was collected. A pictorial view of latent variables used for the present study is given in Figure 1.

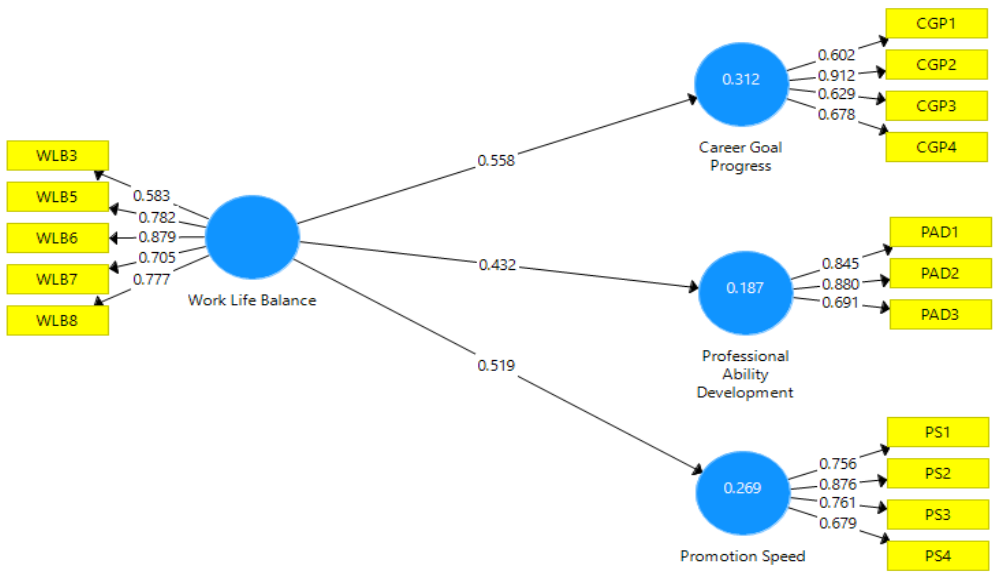

Figure 1. PLS Path Model Estimation

The Cronbach alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) statistics were the techniques used to assure internal consistent reliability. According to empirical evidence, a reputable and dependable instrument should have Cronbach's alpha coefficients and composite reliability over 0.7. (Ogawa, Kimoto, Nakashima, Furuse, Ono, Furokawa & Kawai, 2017). According to Table 1, the findings demonstrated that all items' Cronbach alpha coefficients

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

and composite reliability were higher than the recommended level of 0.70, demonstrating that the respondents' opinions were consistent. As a result, it can be claimed that each item has appropriate internal consistency (Ogawa, Kimoto, Nakashima, Furuse, Ono, Furokawa & Kawai, 2017). The Average Variance Explained (AVE) was used to test the constructs' convergence validity. Once more, convergent validity was employed to gauge how much the constructs converge (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). Table 1 reveals that all AVE values comply with the acceptance criterion of 0.5, confirming the convergent validity (Cheah, Sarstedt, Ringle, Ramayah & Ting, 2018).

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Analysis of the Measures

	Constructs/Measures	Loadings	t-values
	Work life balance (CA=.801; Þ=.812; CR=.864; AVE=.565)		
WLB3	Health and wellness programs	.583	3.972
WLB5	Taking leave as required to meet family needs	.782	17.105
WLB6	Organizational understanding of my family issues	.879	31.231
WLB7	Organizational general support of my family issues	.705	8.921
WLB8	Available and usage of WLB policies/programs	.777	16.354
	Career goal progress (CA=.701; Þ=.962; CR=.803; AVE= .512)		
CGP1	I'm getting closer to my career goals with my current employment.	.602	4.324
CGP2	My present job supports my professional development and career aspirations.	.912	38.367
CGP3	My present job lays the groundwork for achieving my career objectives.	.629	4.152
CGP4	I have excellent prospects at my current job to achieve my career goals.	.678	4.324
	Professional ability development (CA=.734; Þ=.761; CR=.849; AVE=.655)		
PAD1	My current position inspires me to constantly learn new skills relating to my line of work.	.845	33.732
PAD2	My current position inspires me to constantly learn new skills relating to my line of work.	.880	35.875
PAD3	My current position motivates me to gain more varied work experience.	.691	5.234
	Promotion speed (CA=.782; Þ=.842; CR=.853; AVE=.595)		
PS1	My rate of promotion within the current company is rapid.	.756	8.342
PS2	In my current company, the likelihood of promotion is high.	.876	34.231
PS3	My position in the current firm is great in comparison to prior ones and reachable jobs.	.761	7.421
PS4	In comparison to my coworkers, I am getting promoted more quickly.	.679	5.013

Notes: CA = Cronbach's Alpha; Þ= rho_A; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; all loadings were significance at 1%

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

Cross-loading, HeterotraitMonotrait Ratio, and Fornell and Larcker's criterion are the three factors used to assess the validity of discriminants (HTMT). The square root of the AVE for each construct should be higher than its maximum correlation with any other construct, according to the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loading approaches, according to Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015), do not consistently identify the lack of discriminant validity in research studies. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations, a different method based on the multitrait-multimethod matrix, was proposed by the authors (HTMT). The robustness test for discriminant validity in the study used HTMT. The HTMT examines correlations with correlations between the variables in latent variables. Using the HTMT approach, Hamid, Sami, and Sidek (2017) claim that the cutoff value must be less than 0.855 to achieve discriminant validity. All of the values in Table 2 are below the suggested cutoff of 0.855.

Table 2. Values for HTMT

Constructs	**HTMT Values**
Career Goal Progress -> Work-life Balance	.599
Professional Ability Development-> Work-life Balance	.552
Promotion Speed-> Work-life Balance	.609

Regarding Velilla (2018), the existence of a clear association of the variables reflecting a similar underlying concept/construct is referred to as collinearity. An attempt was made to ascertain whether there was an issue of collinearity or not. This was done with the help of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The presence of a collinearity problem is shown by values of VIF higher than 5 (Garson, 2016). Reading from Table 3 and meeting the required range, the highest outer VIF value was 2.376.

Table 3. Collinearity Statistics on Outer Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Values

Measures	VIF
WLB3	1.184
WLB5	2.108
WLB6	2.175
WLB7	1.583
WLB8	2.279
CGP1	1.226
CGP2	1.500
CGP3	1.433
CGP4	1.376
PAD1	1.651
PAD2	1.946
PAD3	1.315
PS1	1.548

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

PS2	1.872
PS3	2.376
PS4	2.071

Appropriate fit indices are indicated by the findings as shown in Table 4. The results mentioned are from the projected model, based on an overall impact scheme, and the structure of the model was taken into consideration. Since all the fit statistics were moderately good as can be seen, all items in each construct were well-fitted. For instance, the value of 0.064 Standard Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) means that the correlation observed is well-fitted and the correlation matrix implied by the model is also well-fitted. When it generates a value smaller than 0.10, SRMR indicates an acceptable fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). For the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value, the same assumptions could be made. Conventionally, it is said to fit well when the value is nearer to 1. NFI values fall between 0 and 1. From Table 4, the NFI value of 0.681 is an indication that in this analysis there is a good fit of the model, and also construct validity has been acquired as such. Hence, it is assumed that the validity of each item is assured.

Table 4. Goodness of Fit Indices for the Structural Model

Fit Indices	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.064
Chi-Square	584.555
NFI	0.681

The bootstrapping approach was used to determine the statistical significance of the path coefficients. In testing the proposed hypotheses, the relationships between the constructs helped.

Each of our null hypotheses was evaluated using the path coefficient and its matching t-value.

The findings are shown in Table 5 and Figure 2 for the structure model. The findings showed that the latent variables were statistically significant.

Table 5. Path coefficients

Relationship	**Path Coefficients**	**Sample Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**T Statistics (Bootstrap)**	**P-Value**	**Decision**
Work-Life Balance Career Goal Progress	.558	.575	.063	8.839	.000	**Accepted**
Work-Life Balance Professional Ability Development	.432	.450	.087	4.970	.000	**Accepted**
Work-Life Balance	.519	.531	.064	8.133	.000	**Accepted**

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

Promotion speed	

R-square = (0.312), (0.187), and (0.262)
*** p < 0.01.

Observation of the predictive capacity of the model (Table 5) shows that WLB account for 55.8% positive significant change in career goal progress when all other factors affecting employee career goal progress are controlled for. Thus, this positive change in career goal progression was not by chance but by the scientific interaction among the factors considered in the model. The other factors could explain the 44.2% change in female employees' career goal progress MoGCSP. Thus, work-life balance practices cause a moderate positive significant improvement in career goal progress at MoGCSP. When workers are permitted to take time off as needed to care for family obligations, there is a likely explanation for this finding as well as the organization's understanding and providing support, would help them realize, grow and move closer to their career goals (Kavitha, 2017). Once more, MoGCSP should see to it that a realistic and practical work-life balance strategy is required to assist and satisfy the demands of both the business and its employees (Godbey, Crawford & Shen 2010). The principles of work-life balance would be fair and beneficial to both businesses and employees (Adame, Caplliure, & Miquel, 2016).

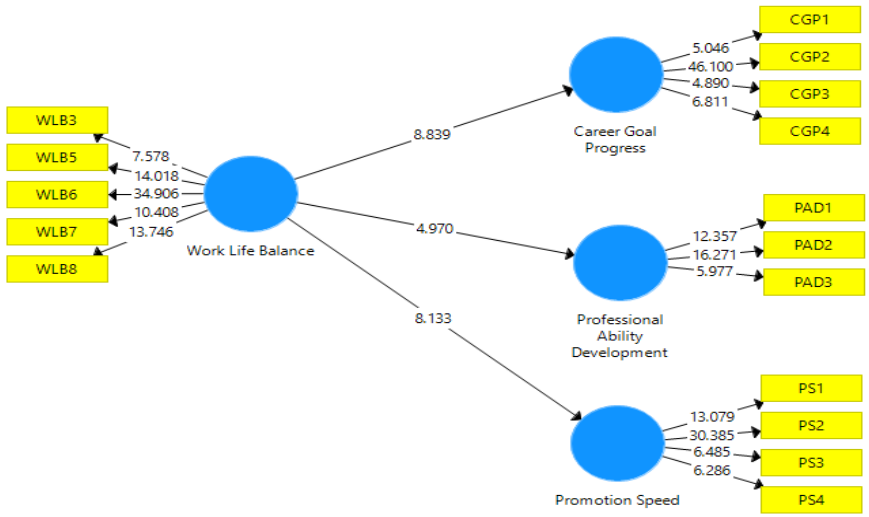

Figure 2. Structural Model of the Study

The latent variable work-life balance is a positive determining factor of professional ability development and this was statistically significant at 1%

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

($\beta = 0.432$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, the predictive capacity of the model (Table 5) shows that WLB accounts for 43.2% positive significant change in professional ability development when all other factors affecting employee professional ability development are controlled for. Thus, this positive change in professional ability development was not by chance but by the scientific interaction among the factors considered in the model. The Other factors could explain the 56.8% change in female employees' professional ability development at MoGCSP. Thus, work-life balance practices cause a weak positive significant improvement in professional ability development at MoGCSP. This finding substantiates the hypothesis that work-life balance has a positive effect on the professional ability development of female employees. The inference of the positive effect of work-life balance on professional ability development is that availability and usage of work-life balance programs would have a positive change in female workers' ability to develop professionally in the form of continuously gaining new job-related skills, knowledge, and experience (Neumann, Mau, Virani, Denzen, Boyle, Boyle & Majhail, 2018). According to Malik, Haider, and Hussain (2019), the results of the present study showed that as work-life balance among female workers at MGCSP increases, it, in turn, increases their professional development. Similar findings were reported by another study which highlighted higher satisfaction that balancing work and life roles is linked to the realization of professionals' needs and requirements (Haider, 2015).

Again, significant and positive relationship between work-life balance and promotion speed according to the result ($\beta = .519$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, the predictive capacity of the model (Table 5) shows that WLB account for 51.9% positive significant change in promotion speed when all other factors affecting employee promotion speed are controlled for. Thus, this positive change in promotion speed was not by chance but by the scientific interaction among the factors considered in the model. The Other factors could explain the 48.1% change in female employees' promotion speed at MoGCSP. The MoGCSP Protection experiences a weakly positive substantial improvement in promotion speed as a result of work-life balance initiatives. The findings show that appropriate work-life policies would increase the efficacy and efficiency of female employees, enabling them to advance more quickly in their careers. Because of this, many women would prefer simultaneous to a sequential balancing of these multiple duties (Akram, Haq & Victor, 2018; Stephens, 2017). Studies on work-life balance have been shown to predict positive variances and according to Akram, Haq, and Victor (2018), Stephens (2017), and Sánchez-Vidal, Cegarra-Leiva, and Cegarra-Navarro (2012), balancing work roles and life roles would allow female workers to concentrate on their career progression at large.

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Calculating the coefficient of determination (R^2) is an important step in assessing the model's structural strength. R^2 values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 are regarded as substantial, moderate, and small, respectively, as illustrated by Chin (2010). The R^2 of the endogenous latent variables in this study is rated as weak for both professional ability development and promotion speed and moderate for career goal progression. The latent variable may be able to explain 31.2%, 18.7%, and 26.9% of the variance of the endogenous constructs, career goal progress, professional ability development, and promotion speed, respectively, according to the R^2 values from Table 5 (0.312), (0.187), and (0.262), which are similarly displayed in Figure 1.

The study measured the R^2 value and the effect size as well (f^2). Changes in the R^2 variable are used by F^2 to assess the impact of a single exogenous latent variable on the latent endogenous variable (Chin, 1998). Cohen (1988) defined small, medium, and large impact sizes, respectively, as f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35. Table 6 displays the effect magnitude of each latent variable. For career goal progression and promotion speed, respectively, the work-life balance had a significant effect size in the model with f^2 values of 0.435 and 0.368, whereas professional ability development had a medium effect size with f2 values of 0.230.

Table 6. Effect Size on Exogenous Constructs

	Work-life Balance	
	f^2	Effect Size
Career Goal Progress	0.453	Large
Professional ability Development	0.230	Medium
Promotion speed	0.368	Large

Conclusion, Implications Limitations, and Suggestions for Future Research

The purpose of this research was to determine how work-life balance affects the career progression of female employees at MoGCSP, Ghana. Structural equation modeling was used to identify and describe the relationship between work-life balance and career progression determinants. Work-life balance significantly influences each of the three determinants of career progression in the studied area. The work-life balance had a significant on career goal progress, followed by promotion speed and lastly professional ability development at MoGCSP. Thus, it was found that the advancement of female employees' career goals is positively impacted by work-life balance, the development of their professional abilities, and the rate at which they are promoted at MoGCSP. This indicates that the female employees believe that elements like the availability of health and wellness programs, telecommuting, taking time off as needed to care for family members, organizational awareness and support of family issues, and use of WLB policies and

 ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857-7431

programs had an impact on their career advancement. The results have been further confirmed by Akram, Haq, and Victor (2018), Stephens (2017), and Sánchez-Vidal, Cegarra-Leiva, and Cegarra-Navarro (2012) that balancing work roles and life roles would allow female workers to concentrate on their career progression as it is the case for female workers at MoGCSP. In conclusion, work-life balance matters in the progression of women's careers at MoGCSP.

The study results have several implications for practice, theory, and future research. For practice, if the management of MoGCSP offers a good work-life balance, female employees will be satisfied and advance in their careers by ensuring that health programs are in place for the workers and allowing them to take time off as needed to care for their families. Once more, management's awareness of employees' family difficulties and support of them would assist employees balance work and personal obligations. These will enable female workers to progress in terms of their career goals, being promoted, and being able to develop their professional abilities.

Various theoretical ramifications of this work should be acknowledged. First, we used role theory to explain how work-life balance affects career advancement by looking at the social system that runs through and fluctuates among cultures. We claim, following role theory, that managers who are skilled at aligning individual roles with corporate goals and articulating role responsibilities may explain these roles to help female workers perform and advance in their careers. The current study would therefore enrich the theoretical understanding of how work-life balance if properly managed may affect female workers in progression in their careers even in a masculine context as established by the role theory.

Based on the results, the study made the following recommendations. First, the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection through its agency must continuously provide favorable work-life balance practices (i.e., health and wellness programs, e-working, taking time off as needed to care for family members, organizational understanding and support of family issues, and use of WLB policies/programs) for its female staff to promote their career progression.

Despite the study's significant importance, it has some methodological limitations. The study was limited by the cross-sectional survey and sample size used. Even though the current sample size appeared enough, the study was restricted to solely female MoGCSP personnel, which may limit the study's potential to generalize to other units. According to the study, future research should use a larger sample size and alternative data collection methods, like panel datasets. For a fuller understanding of the development and consistency of the relationship between work-life balance practices and

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the career progression of female employees over time, a longitudinal analysis is strongly suggested in this case.

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