Factors Influencing Labour Turnover within Public Institutions in Namibia

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Abstract: Elevated employee turnover is a significant determinant that impacts organisational productivity and must be managed for institutional success. This study examined the factors affecting employee turnover in public organisations in Namibia. The effective delivery of services is contingent upon the public sector organisations' ability to retain their experienced personnel. The study employed a quantitative research methodology. A sample of 384 respondents was utilised, employing the stratified sampling technique to choose participants from several strata. The PLS-SEM statistical findings indicated a necessity to enhance the leadership styles employed by the institutions to bolster staff retention. Correlation research reveals significant relationships among leadership style, work-life balance, employee turnover, and job satisfaction. The adoption of effective leadership styles, implementation of organisational policies that foster work-life balance, and facilitative policies that enhance job satisfaction are strategies that can be employed to retain personnel in the Namibian public sector. The report advocated for the implementation of comprehensive leadership development programs to cultivate successful leaders capable of enhancing staff development and fostering teamwork in the public sector. Leadership should be cultivated within supportive work environments to foster trust and effectively lead teams. Establishing work-life balance initiatives, flexible work hours, telecommuting alternatives, and wellness programs is essential for employees to effectively manage their personal and professional lives. These qualities are directly associated with increased work satisfaction and staff retention. In addition, staff engagement surveys should be administered regularly to assess job satisfaction and identify areas for enhancement. These surveys yield meaningful insights, enabling institutions to address employee problems promptly and react effectively to avert attrition.

Keywords: *Employees, Employee Retention, Labour Turnover, Voluntary Turnover, Involuntary Turnover.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Turnover of employees is defined as the proportion of employees who exit an organization over a given period of time [1]. According to Ref [2], high employee turnover rates reduce an organization's capacity to carry out its functions efficiently. Ref [3] state that organizational success relies on retaining quality and skilled employees. In Namibia, the employment market has faced rapid transformation with employees constantly shifting employers in search of improved working conditions and better remuneration [4]. Besides inherent factors causing labor turnover, this trend has caused high employee turnover, especially among government agencies.

Ref [3] support the notion that organizations interested in achieving their objectives should take steps to reduce employee turnover. Yet, there are organizations, particularly in the public sector with huge employee bases, which appear not to pay attention to this problem, thereby leading to ongoing adverse effects [5]. Ref [6] point out employee turnover affects both private and public sectors negatively. It can be seen that employee turnover has been a growing problem in today's business world.

In Namibia, public institutions struggle to retain their employees and continue to rely on new recruits to implement their mandate. This problem creates a situation where public institutions have to invest in recruitment processes as well as training development. Again, relying on new employees affects the public service delivery negatively. This research evaluated awareness of the factors influencing labour turnover within public institutions in Namibia.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Labour turnover is the rate at which workers exit an organisation and are replaced by others in a given amount of time [1]. Labour turnover is divided into several types, including retirements, layoffs, and voluntary terminations [7]. Ref [8] also conceptualize labour turnover as the quantity of workers replaced to the current labour force during a particular length of time, whereas Ref [1] maintains that it is the inflow and outflow of the workforce within an organization. Labour turnover portrays the well-being of an industry in terms of wages, working conditions, and workers' welfare [9]. Ref [7] observes that high turnover typically indicates instability in the workforce and causes notable difficulties for organisations, such as disruptions in the workforce and fiscal pressures linked with the recruitment and training of new replacements.

Employees leave organizations because of various reasons, both voluntary and involuntary. Stress, job dissatisfaction, and conflicts with other employees are some of the causes of voluntary turnover [2, 7]. Ref [5] recognizes that employees will go to greener pastures elsewhere if they are not contented in their current jobs. Economic factors, such as poor remuneration or lack of development opportunities and leadership styles are also causes of turnover [8, 10]. Ref [11] identifies that organisations that do not offer opportunities for professional and personal development are more susceptible to employee turnover. Poor retention programs, low job self-esteem, poor work-life balance, lack of engagement, and poor leadership all help exacerbate the issue [11]. Geographic factors, including long distances from home, also affect turnover rates as employees find employment closer to home [12]. Inadequate hiring practices, which result in a misalignment between candidates and positions, significantly contribute to employee turnover [1, 4, 10]. Ref [2] therefore underscore the necessity for organizations to enhance their recruitment procedures in order to attract and maintain qualified candidates.

High turnover of employees has a number of financial effects and organizational challenges. Loss of talented employees causes disruption in operational continuity, resulting in performance gaps and impacting overall performance [3, 8]. The cost of recruitment, both in monetary terms and time, rises as organizations persist in finding the right talent to pursue their objectives [13]. Ref [5] considers it imperative to have proper retention strategies to counter these expenses. Induction of new employees is a high cost, particularly in technically specialized areas such as the police service, which involves lengthy training [13]. Excessive turnover also results in customer dissatisfaction, decreased morale among employees, and organizational productivity loss [14]. Therefore, Ref [3] posits that turnover reduction improves organizational performance and decreases the adverse effects of job-specific knowledge.

In order to deal with labour turnover, organizations need to retain workers with key skills in order to save institutional knowledge and skills [15]. Workers are assets, and organizations need to provide job satisfaction in order to have a stable workforce [8]. Employees therefore need to be empowered because empowering employees enhances organizational commitment, while reducing turnover due to a sense of ownership and loyalty to the company [10, 14]. Ref [3,5] allude that those who engage employees through clear leadership, respect, appreciation, and opportunities enhance service productivity and employee retention. Recognizing and rewarding valued employees is therefore critical for retaining employees and reducing labour turnover.

Key employee retention strategies include developing relationships with key employees, recruiting the right people, providing competitive remuneration packages [16], promoting worthy employees, fostering inclusivity, giving effective leadership, empowering employees, and providing work-life balance [16, 17]. Organizational culture is another key element in reducing turnover [11]. High-performing cultures that attract, motivate, and retain quality employees continually produce strong results [8, 16]. Hiring the best candidates for the organization and its culture optimizes job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and reduces turnover. Thus, by addressing these elements, organizations are able to create a committed and stable workforce, and decrease the negative impact of labour turnover.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted on an infinite population, focusing on labor turnover in Namibian public institutions. A quantitative research method was adopted to confirm statistical rigor. The sample size was determined using stratified random sampling to safeguard representation across several strata within public institutions in Namibia. The sample size was calculated by way of the formula $n = Z^2 * p * (1-p) / E^2$, with a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and an estimated response proportion of 50%. This resulted in achieving a sample size of 384 respondents. Data were collected using closed-ended and structured questionnaires, which were distributed electronically through the Survey Monkey. The collected data were analyzed using PLS-SEM, enabling detailed statistical analysis and interpretation.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The descriptive statistics results provide helpful insights on the distribution and variation of data in the variables measured. Job Satisfaction (JSS) has a high mean (3.888) and median (5.000), indicating that employees would likely feel safe at work when they are satisfied with their jobs. However, its moderate standard deviation (1.484) depicts the existence of some level of variation in response. The negative skewness (-1.022) reveals that more participants marked job satisfaction on the higher end of the scale showing concerns with the level of job satisfaction, while the excess kurtosis (-0.577) presents a somewhat flatter distribution than a normal curve. Leadership Support (LSS) maintains the highest mean (4.224), revealing employees who perceive a high degree of guidance from supervisors would reduce turnover within the Namibian public institutions. Its low standard deviation (1.015) reveals minimal variability. Strong negative skewness

(-1.298) and positive excess kurtosis (0.552) suggest a clustering of high ratings with a slightly peaked distribution. For Work-Life Balance (WLBT), the mean (3.643) suggests an overall time balance that is positive, although the higher standard deviation (1.567) reveals more variation in perceptions. Negative skewness (-0.682) suggests a direction of higher ratings, and excess kurtosis (-1.222) suggests a flatter distribution. For Labor Turnover (LTO), the low mean (2.286) and median (2.000) indicate that workers leave in general, while positive skewness (0.950) and low kurtosis (-0.368) indicate variability skewed towards lower turnover intentions.
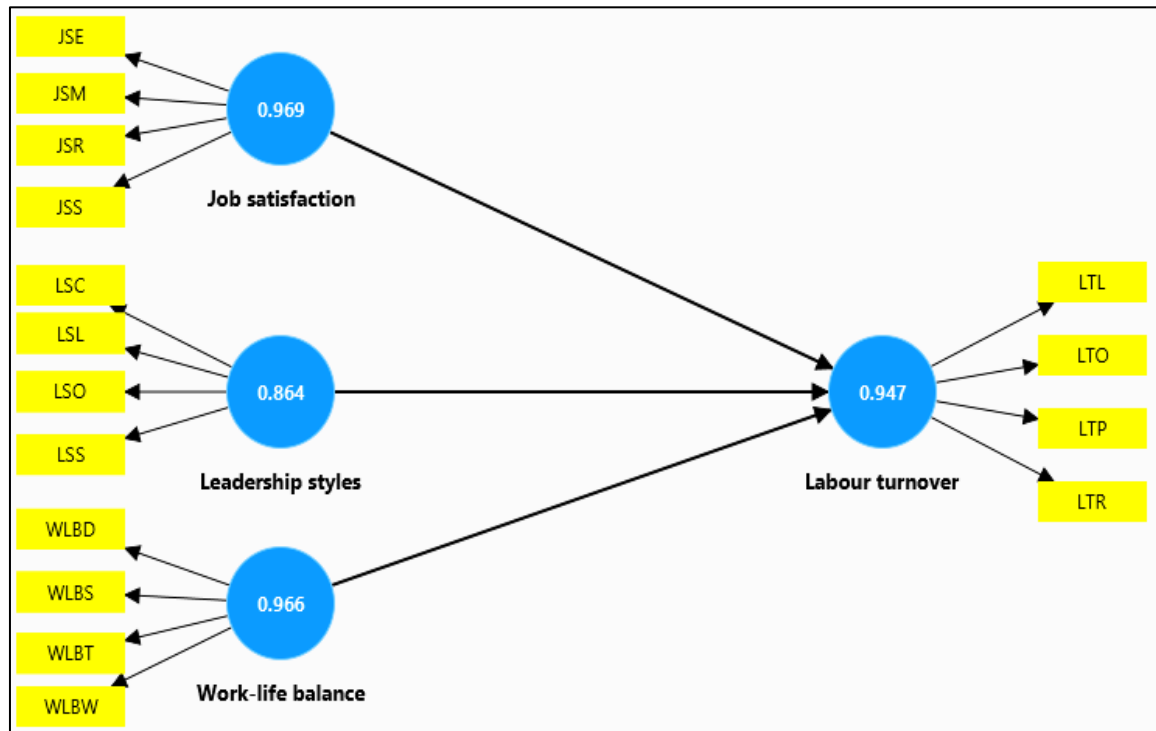

Fig 1: Cronbach's Alpha Results

Figure 1 above presents the Cronbach's alpha test outcomes from PLS-SEM. The Cronbach's alpha values suggest high internal consistency for the measurement constructs within the PLS-SEM analysis. A value of 0.947 for labor turnover (dependent variable) suggests exemplary reliability, which means that the items used to measure it are very consistent. A score of 0.969 for job satisfaction also suggests exemplary reliability and good consistency among its indicators. Leadership styles, with a score of 0.864, also indicates good reliability but a little less than the other variables. Work-life balance with a score of 0.966 also indicates excellent reliability. Overall, the high Cronbach's alpha scores indicate that measurements of each construct are reliable and can be used for subsequent analysis in the model.

Composite Reliability (rho_c) was also conducted, and its findings indicate high reliability in the constructs within the PLS-SEM analysis. A score of 0.962 for labor turnover (dependent variable) demonstrates that the construct is very consistent internally, hence its indicators precisely measure the concept. Job satisfaction, with a score of 0.978, has an even higher consistency, demonstrating very strong consistency in its items. Leadership styles, with 0.909, also meets the minimum for acceptable reliability but is lower than the others. Work-life balance, with 0.975, also has high reliability. The overall rho_c values indicate that all the constructs have good reliability, with job satisfaction and work-life balance being most consistent.

The values of Composite Reliability (rho_a) represent the reliability of constructs in the PLS-SEM model. A value of 0.949 for labor turnover (dependent variable) suggests high reliability, demonstrating that indicators measure the construct reliably. Job satisfaction, represented by a value of 0.972, suggests very good reliability, demonstrating high consistency in indicators. Leadership styles, represented by a value of 0.971, also suggests very high reliability, suggesting that the construct is measured reliably. Work-life balance with 0.966 also exhibits high reliability. All the rho_a values illustrate that all constructs are highly internally consistent, with job satisfaction and leadership styles being moderately more reliable than labor turnover and work-life balance, but all the variables are still within acceptable parameters for reliability measurement.
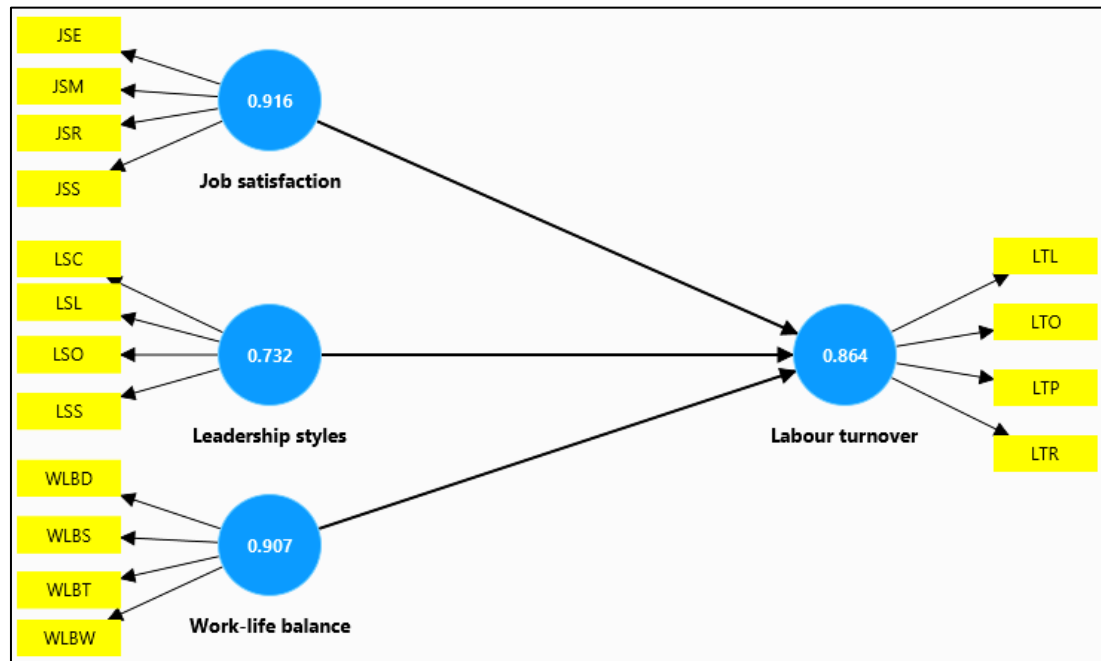
Fig 2: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) results

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in Figure 2 exhibit the degree of variance explained by each construct compared to the degree of variance explained by measurement error. The figure of 0.864 for the dependent variable: labour turnover suggests that a high degree of the variance is well explained, signifying that there is high construct validity. On the other hand, job satisfaction, which recorded 0.916, demonstrates very high explanatory power and high validity. Leadership styles, at AVE = 0.732, is far above the 0.50 threshold indicating that the variable leadership styles have a good construct validity. Work-life balance at 0.907 has excellent construct validity, measuring the variance effectively. Overall, the majority of the constructs have good to excellent AVE values.

Findings of the correlation analysis reveal noteworthy connections between leadership style, work-life balance, employee turnover, and job satisfaction. Individuals with a perception of safety in their existing job state (JSS) have a positive correlation with those leadership styles that create a supportive work culture (LSL, r = 0.882) and organizational policies that promote work-life balance (WLBS, r = 0.877). It shows that leadership style and facilitative policies have an equal role to play for enhancing job satisfaction. Besides, having enough time to attend to personal needs (WLBT) is strongly correlated with job satisfaction (r = 0.922) and there is a likelihood of employees staying in their current jobs for the next two years (LTR, r = 0.962), indicating the

significance of time-based work-life balance in employee retention. This shows that both job satisfaction, leadership styles and work-life balance have an influence on labour turnover within Namibian public institutions. On the other hand, there are a number of workers who think that there are more external promising career prospects. In this case (LTO) are moderately negatively correlated with job satisfaction (r = 0.647) and work-life balance related to time (WLBT, r = 0.716), reflecting that dissatisfaction with the current situation and insufficient personal time are factors contributing to turnover intentions within Namibian public institutions.

The experience of being overwhelmed by work demands (WLBD) has a moderate relationship with actual turnover (LTO, r = 0.738) and expressed turnover intentions (LTR, r = 0.855), demonstrating the detrimental effects of excessive work demands on employee retention. Leadership support in coping with challenges (LSS) has weaker correlations with other factors, including job satisfaction (r = 0.545) and turnover (LTO, r = 0.044), compared to leadership style (LSL). This illustrates that although support is helpful, the dominant style of leadership has a more profound effect on staff retention and satisfaction. These statistics demonstrate that an optimal working environment, work-life balance, and supportive leadership substantially diminish employee turnover, with time-related work-life balance being the most valuable factor.
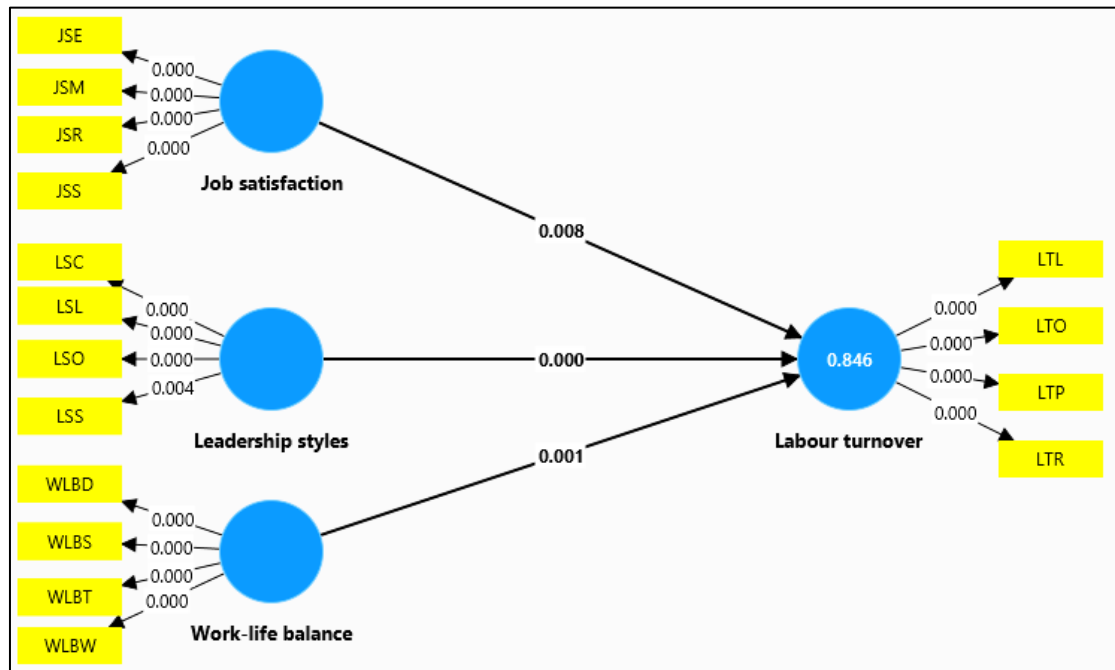
Fig 3: Structural Model with P-Values

The structural model on Figure 3 above illustrates the relationships between job satisfaction, leadership styles, work-life balance, and labour turnover. The p-values for all the paths are significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that each of the independent variables, job satisfaction ($p = 0.008$), leadership styles ($p = 0.000$), and work-life balance ($p = 0.001$) has a statistically significant influence on labor turnover. The model also shows that leadership styles and job satisfaction exert a stronger direct effect on labor turnover compared to work-life balance. The explained variance ($R^2 = 0.846$) suggests that 84.6% of the variation in labor turnover is accounted for by these three independent variables, revealing a well-fitted model.
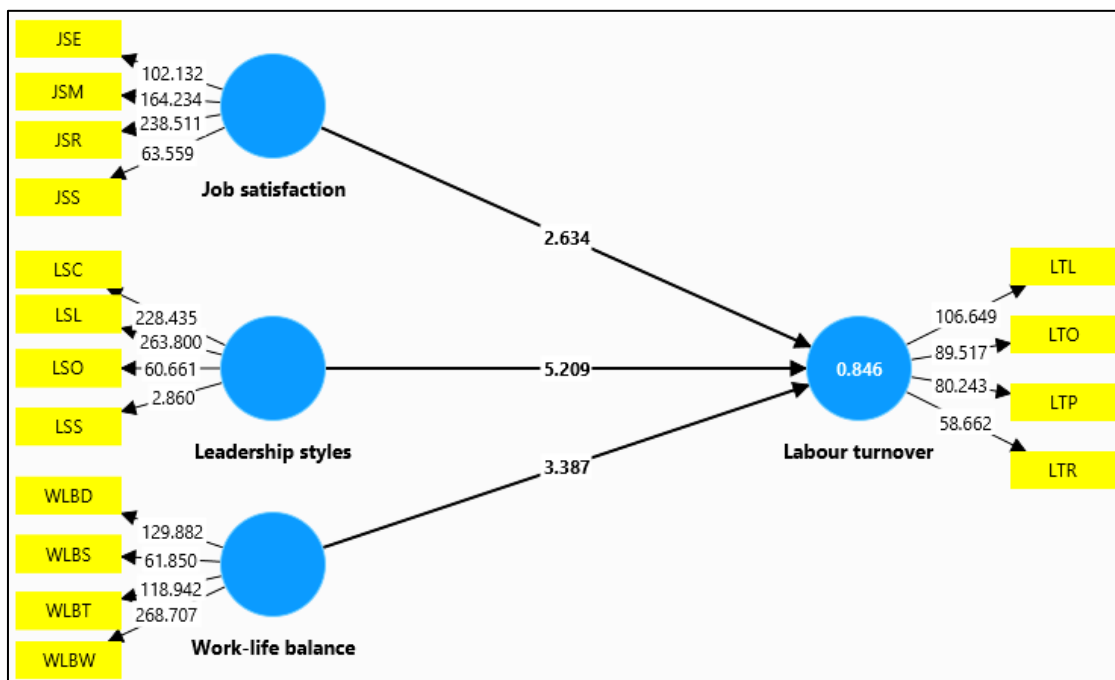

Fig 4: Structural Model with T-Values

The structural model on Figure 4 above illustrates the impact of job satisfaction, leadership styles, and work-life balance on labour turnover as indicated by t-values. Job satisfaction significantly affects labour turnover with a t-value of 2.634, showing its usefulness in retention practices. Leadership styles have the greatest impact with a large t-value of 5.209, showing that effective leadership has a major role in suppressing employee turnover. Work-life balance also has a large impact on labour turnover, with a t-value of 3.387, indicating its significance in staff retention. Of all the predictors, leadership styles have the largest effect, indicating that leadership interventions ought to be a priority to deal with labour turnover.
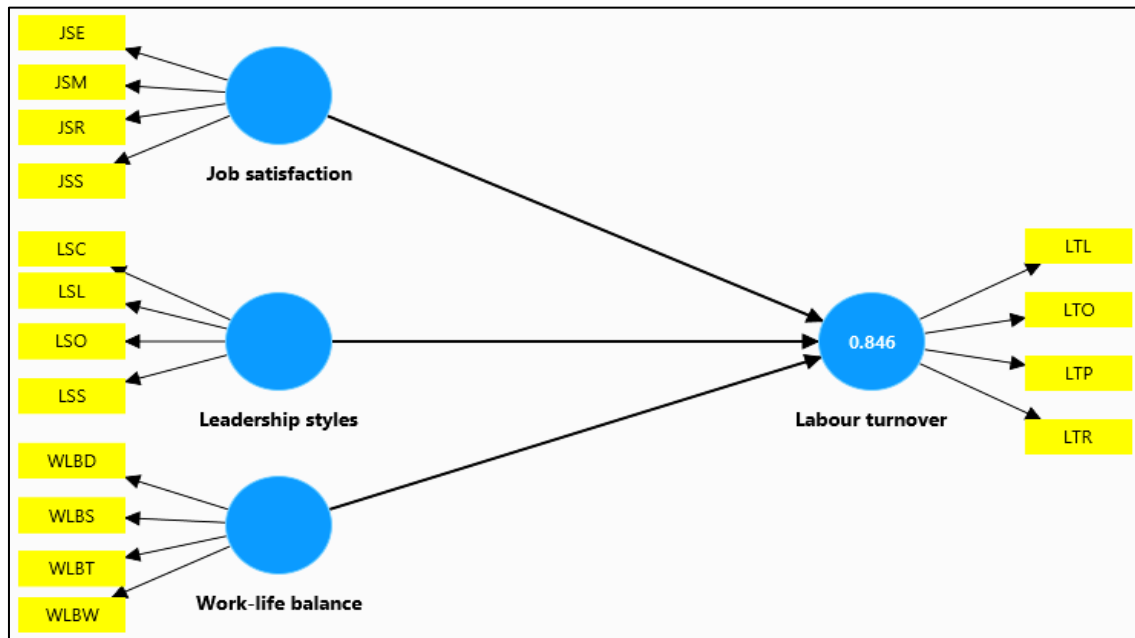
Fig 5: Regression Model

The regression model on Figure 5 above examines the impact of work-life balance, leadership styles, and job satisfaction on labour turnover with a combined predictive power evident in an R² value of 0.846, implying that the three factors together explain 84.6% of the variance in labour turnover. Leadership styles have the greatest impact, followed by work-life balance and job satisfaction, as shown by their respective path coefficients. Every construct is measured using observable measures (JSE, JSM for job satisfaction) to obtain strong construct validity. The large R² measure shows the goodness of the model to fit labour turnover and identifies leadership as well as work-life balance as high-priority areas to intervene.
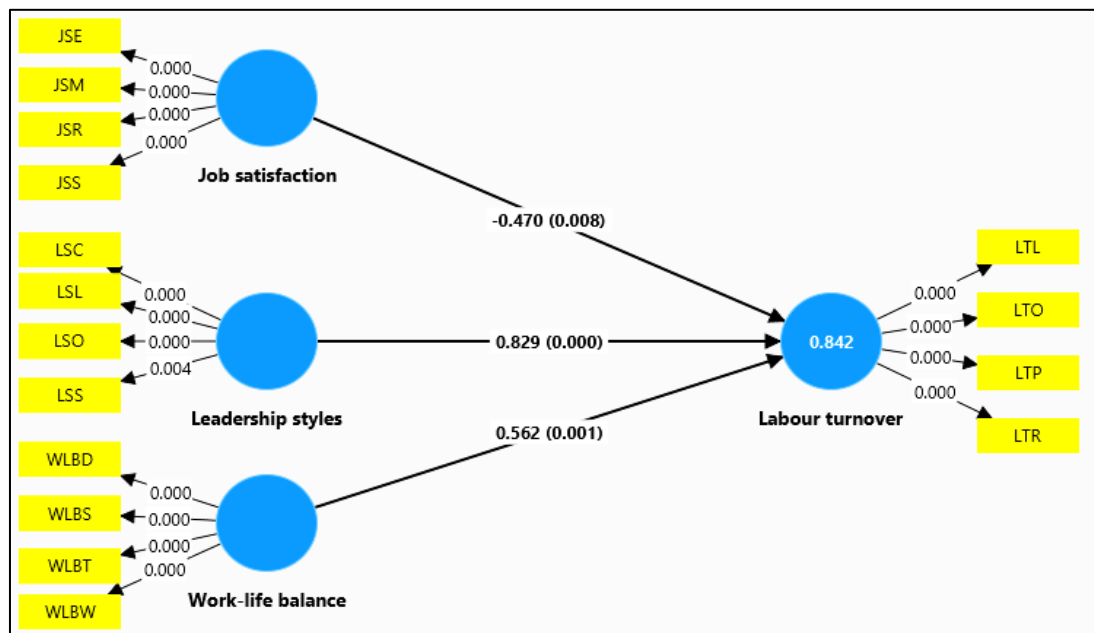

Fig 6: Path coefficients and p-values

Figure 6 babove reflects path coefficients and p-values. The path coefficient of -0.470 between labour turnover and job satisfaction shows that there is a negative relationship, thus, higher job satisfaction is associated with lower labour turnover. The p-value of 0.008 confirms that this is statistically significant. The path coefficient of 0.829 between leadership styles and labour turnover indicates a very strong positive relationship, like improved leadership styles are

associated with higher labour turnover, with a very significant p-value of 0.000. Similarly, the path coefficient of 0.562 from work-life balance to labour turnover is a moderate positive relationship with a significant p-value of 0.001. Overall, leadership styles and work-life balance significantly influence labour turnover, while job satisfaction has a negative impact on it.

V. CONCLUSION

This research finds strong relationships among job satisfaction, leadership, work-life balance, and employee turnover, highlighting the importance of leadership and positive work environments in decreasing turnover. The findings indicate that job satisfaction and effective leadership are highly related to lower turnover intentions. Work-life balance also emerges as an important factor in enhancing employee retention by providing flexibility and minimizing work stress. Despite some variability in responses, the constructs that were measured have high validity and reliability, and hence the findings are strong. The structural model indicates the importance of these factors in determining labour turnover, and leadership styles were found to be the most important. These findings are valuable for organisations aiming to enhance employee retention through strategic leadership, favourable policies, and a conducive work environment.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended robust leadership development to produce effective leaders that can influence employees within the Namibian public institutions to commit their skills to public service, thereby reducing turnover intentions. That is, training programs in leadership must focus on developing leadership with positive, support-oriented work settings, trust development, and building teamwork. It is also important to establish work-life balance programs, since flexible working time, telecommuting option, and wellness programs enable the employees to manage their personal and professional life, which is directly connected with enhanced job satisfaction and employee retention. Additionally, employee engagement surveys must be conducted periodically to measure job satisfaction and areas that require improvement. These surveys provide actionable information, allowing organizations to act on employee concerns early and intervene in a timely manner to prevent turnover. All these strategies are part of an overall strategy for employee retention by addressing leadership quality, work-life balance, and employee feedback, which ensures an engaged and committed workforce.

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