

**IMPLICATIONS OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT ON WORK LIFE BALANCE:
A STUDY IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES, BAMENDA MUNICIPLATY,
CAMEROON**

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ABSTRACT

Employment and family are the two most vital domains within the lifetime of an individual. Healthcare facilities in the Bamenda Municipality have limited doctors and other health workers, the healthcare facilities are marked by atypical work schedules: long shifts, 7days a week, night shifts, unprecedented shifts during odd hours like at midnight, where doctors could be called from home for emergencies, compressed work weeks, and highly variable and unpredictable schedules. The reality on ground reinforces interest in the subject of managing spheres of life. When health workers are unable to maintain a healthy balance between their work and personal life, they may experience stress, burnout and decreased job satisfaction which can ultimately hinder their professional growth and advancement. Even when healthcare workers develop their careers, adequate recovery time is required to prevent further burnout which is absent due to the increasing need for the skills acquired. Based on this premise, this study investigates the implications of Career Development on Work Life Balance. A cross-sectional research design was used for this study. 456 questionnaires were administered to healthcare workers in the Bamenda municipality, using multistage and random purposive sampling. The study employed the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) technique for data analysis. The results indicate that the coefficient of overall career development index is positive (0.711) statistically significant at the 1%, which implies that career development promotes employees work life balance. It is therefore recommended that healthcare workers seek to improve on their careers and gain valuable skills in areas where they are lacking which will increase their functionality and reduce frustrations which may lead to negative psychological states.

KEYWORDS: - Career Development, Healthcare facilities, Work Life Balance, Bamenda.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Career development has evolved from an isolated tool for individual growth to a key strategic asset for many far-sighted organizations (Fugate&Kinicki, 2014). This cannot be left entirely to the individual employee's own initiative. Organizations have adopted a more active responsibility in their employees' careers by means of Career Development Programs. Today's employees are more career conscious than ever. Hence, they are claiming more in terms of individual growth and development (Mayer *et al.*, 2015). They further disclose that firms that fail to allow workers to meet their personal needs will be losing valued employees. Apparently, employees seek growth at their workplaces, which is facilitated by their employers, while trying to meet their personal needs. Conventionally, it has been understood that every worker wants or should want similar objectives in a career, typically a direct path up the organizational ladder. However, Werther and Davis (2015) assert that career development is not about "getting ahead", but rather about getting to be the best an individual can be and finding a place in an organization where they can express excellence and contribute to the goals of the organization.

Career development (CD) is a vital element that satisfies employees and enhances their performance especially at the point when they plan to leave the organization (Shujaat *et al.*, 2013). Employers need to perceive workers as an organization's most vital resource. Employees need to be well trained on projects that enhance the individual's career development (Ashar, 2013). In this day and age, employees are additionally career conscious than ever before. Employees are asking for more in terms of individual development and improvement. Career development is vital for both employees and for the organization in light of the fact that it is unrealistic to get ready for the profession without recognizing the needs of the organisation and skills of the worker (Ivancevich, 2014). Workers get to be more fulfilled by their employment and would never need to leave the organization. Furthermore, Walia and Bajaj (2012) assert that organizations need to hold on to their brilliant employees in order to accomplish their organizational targets and long-term corporate objectives. Walia and Bajaj (2012) argue that organizations ought to invest resources in progressing worker vocations, improvement projects, to make employees more effective in their work. In today's competitive environment, it is imperative that all organizations create a work environment that fosters growth and development (Umer and Akram, 2011). It is obvious this can be achieved by executing a Career Development Program in the workplace. This will improve organizational trustworthiness among human resources; lower employee turnover, fewer employee complaints, and result in higher levels of job satisfaction (Werther and Davis, 2015). Organizations require empowered employees possessing higher competencies and multitasking skills in order to ensure sustained growth at minimum operational costs.

Employees working in organizations of the modern era most often encounter eternal challenges of performing well and are forced to devote most of their time at work in this enhanced competitive work setting (Downes and Koekemoer, 2011). However, Edralin (2014) found that commitment towards self-development, allegiance to family and social life in order to fulfill the demands and duties along with organizational obligations are imperative for any individual employee. Therefore, it would appear that for employees to be successful in their career progression, whether vertically or horizontally, they must strike a balance between their work and personal lives, or work in synchrony with both. Despite the overwhelming importance of Work Life Balance (WLB) as an employee ascends his or her career ladder or gaining new skills to acquire new jobs, it is not easy to navigate through easily. Longer working hours, demanded by companies especially, often results in less time for other responsibilities in life.

On a global scale, across the world, the life of a healthcare worker is very different compared to any other professional. This distinction not only arises from the perspective of an enormous level of personal and professional accomplishment but also from the huge amount of psychological stress and anxiety involved in it. As such, they are vulnerable to mental health issues like burnout. In addition, the participation of both men and women in the workforce has resulted in less time for other responsibilities in life. Traditionally, men focused on their jobs as ‘breadwinners’, while women took care of the house as the ‘homemakers’ (Assiedu- Appiah and Zoogah, 2019; Powellet *et al.*, 2019; Wood and Eagly, 2012). However, globalisation, liberalisation and feminism have enabled women to enter the workforce and raise the family incomes, to levels comparable to their male counterparts, necessitating both genders to balance work and life roles. Despite this progress, women with professional and family duties still bear an unequal burden, making it challenging to manage both responsibilities and the imbalance of work and life (Lekchiri and Eversole, 2020). With dual earners and the blending of gender roles, brought on by equality as propagated by feminism, the family structure has changed (Powell *et al.*, 2019), leaving less time for managing personal and family responsibilities. From the authors’ perspectives, it would appear that work and family have become two antagonistic concepts that are of utmost importance to employees given a paradigm shift in gender roles as seen in the rise of dual earner couples.

In Cameroon as a whole and Bamenda, the case in point, as most medical students pursue their studies, the tendency is to switch to public health where they think they will be able to strike a balance between their work and personal life. In a society filled with conflicting responsibilities and commitments, WLB has become a pre-dominant issue in the workplace as the healthcare workers sale along their career path, with increasing interest in personal lives/family values. As the challenge of WLB is unlikely to disappear in our culture, the concept is continuously receiving a lot of attention in the academic and business world, and new research is being

undertaken all the time (Lockwood, 2003). There is limited empirical literature on Career development and Work Life balance in the health sector of Cameroon as a whole and Bamenda in particular in the healthcare sector. This implies this area has not been widely explored. This study therefore seeks to fill this gap. As such, the main research question of this study is ‘What is the Effect of Career Development on Work Life Balance in healthcare facilities in Bamenda municipality, Cameroon?’ The study answers the following specific questions:

- How does Training and Development affect Work Life Balance?
- Do Job Opportunities have an effect on Work Life Balance?
- To what extent does Promotion and Career Movements affect Work Life Balance?
- How does Supervision and Career Counselling affect Work Life Balance?
- Do Organisational Rewards affect Work Life Balance?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The conceptual literature on Career Development and Work Life Balance reveals the nexus between these variables under study. It explores the concepts in detail and a framework that gives deep insights into the dynamics and causal link between the variables under study.

2.1 Conceptual Review

Career Development

Career Development is a procedure that an individual undertakes to advance their occupational level. It can also be referred to as the process of deciding on a career, honing one’s skills, and advancing along a career path (Mckay, 2020). This study will dwell on this definition by McKay, 2020. Career pathways available for healthcare professionals; include clinical roles, administrative positions, and academic pursuits. This study is centered on the five aspects of career development as revealed by Schein (2004) namely: training and development, job opportunities, promotion and career movements, supervision and career counseling, as well as organisational rewards. As far as training and development is concerned, Schein emphasizes the importance of ongoing learning and skill development within organizations. Training programs help employees acquire new knowledge and skills, adapt to changes in their roles or the industry, and enhance their performance and effectiveness (Schein, 2004). Job opportunities considered in this study are both internal and external which enhance the employee’s skills. Promotions and career advancements are significant milestones in employees' career development. Organizations that offer clear advancement pathways and recognize employees' contributions are more likely to attract and retain talented individuals who are motivated to grow and advance within the organization (Schein, 2004). For supervision and career counselling, effective supervision and mentoring are crucial for supporting employees' career development. Supervisors provide guidance, feedback, and support to help employees navigate their career paths, address challenges, and capitalize on opportunities for growth and development. Mentoring relationships

can also provide valuable insights, advice, and networking opportunities. Recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions and achievements is essential for motivating performance and fostering career development. Rewards can take various forms, including monetary incentives, awards, and public recognition. Organizations that have effective reward systems in place are more likely to attract, retain, and engage top talent (Schein, 2004).

Work Life Balance

Work Life Balance is generally associated with the equilibrium between the amount of time and effort somebody devotes to work and personal activities, in order to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012). To understand work life balance, it is important to be aware of the different demands upon us and our personal resources- our time and our energy that we can deploy to address them. With this awareness, we are able to review and value the choices we have in terms of how we allocate our precious resources. Such conscious decision-making provides a sense of control over our working arrangements in order to better accommodate other aspects of our lives, while still benefiting the organizations. According to Ansari et al., (2015), Work Life Balance could be considered as a state of equilibrium where the demand of a person's work equals that of his personal life. In a broader sense, it consists of employers working constructively with their employees to put in place work structures that take into account the needs of the business as well as the non-work aspects of employees' lives. We can therefore say that Work Life Balance is a state in which the employment contract requirements and the family demands due do not impede each other but rather acts as a compliment to each other's smooth functioning through compromise.

Studies by Cieri et al, (2002), and Cieri & Bardoel (2009), indicate that, work life balance practices can be generally regrouped into four main categories namely flexible working arrangement (home working, compressed hours); flexible leave system (annual leave, parental leave); dependent care assistance (child care arrangements and crèche) and general services (employment assistant programs), including recreational services. These shall be the focus of this study. Some of the key variables associated with Work Life Balance for this study include: flexible work option, family leave system, recreational services, childcare services, employee assistant programmes. According to Armstrong (2014), flexible working options are those practices that diverge from the usual arrangements. This involves reassessing outdated employment forms and use of arrangements like flexible working hours, job sharing and working from home. These practices provide flexibility aimed at increasing productivity and reduction in employment costs associated with recruitment among others (Armstrong, 2014). They include; telecommuting, compressed work week, staggered working hours. Family Leave System are leave arrangements put in place to enable employees care for others who are either formally or informally family members (Mungania, 2017).

Workplace recreation programs are activities that promote the physical and mental health of employees in organizations. These programs may include annual family days, sports days, travel, gym membership and sports facilities (Mokaya and Gitari, 2012). Child care services for example day care are services provided by organizations for children in families who need supplementary care outside their home while engaged in other work. The care is provided by trained people who nurture the children and respond to their physiological, educational, social and physical needs while the parents are engaged in other works (Anderson and Geldenhuys, 2011). An on-site Employer Sponsored Child Care (ESCC) or baby crèches are also regarded as a type of family-friendly practices. An on-site ESCC center is a child-care facility on the premises of the employer which meets the educational, social, physical and emotional needs of the employees' children. This is used by employers as a strategy to curb absenteeism and henceforth employee turnover. Employee assistance program are work-based intervention programs designed to identify and assist employees in resolving personal concerns (marital, financial or emotional problems; family issues; substance/alcohol abuse) that may be adversely affecting the employee's performance. Employee assistance program plans are usually sponsored by the employers. It may equally include services, such basic legal assistance and referrals, adoption assistance or assistance finding elder care services (Mwangi et al., 2017).

2.2 Hypothesis Development

Some authors have explored the relationship between Career Development and Work Life Balance. Based on their reviews, the hypotheses of this study will be developed.

Training and development on Work Life Balance

Alyzoud et al. (2022) carried out a study on training and development, career development, and organizational commitment as predictors of work performance. The study revealed that structured career development initiatives significantly reduce work-related stress and enhance employees' capacity to manage competing life roles. Based on a literature review by Kulkarni, 2013 on Training and Development and Quality of Work Life, training moulds the employee's attitude and helps them to achieve better cooperation within the organisation. Training and Development therefore improve the quality of work-life by creating an employee supportive workplace. Thus, the hypothesis *H01: Training and Development has no significant effect on Work Life Balance.*

Job opportunities and Work Life Balance

Organisations which provide employees with diverse job opportunities allow them to explore different roles, responsibilities, and career paths within the organization. This fosters career development by enabling individuals to broaden their skills, gain valuable experience, and pursue roles that align with their interests and aspirations (Schein, 2004). For this study, job opportunities within the organisation are considered internal while opportunities out of the

organisation which permit the worker to acquire skills and return to that organisation are considered external job opportunities. Kim and Lee (2023) find that healthcare institutions that prioritize career advancement create psychologically supportive environments that reduce role conflict and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, Zhang et al. (2023) argue that job mobility and internal career pathways reduce occupational stagnation and enhance employee flexibility, which are critical components of work-life integration. Hence, we develop the hypothesis: *H02 Job Opportunities do not significantly affect Work Life Balance.*

Promotion and Career Movements on Work Life Balance

Organizations that offer clear advancement pathways and recognize employees' contributions are more likely to attract and retain talented individuals who are motivated to grow and advance within the organization (Schein, 2004). Ojo and Adebayo (2022), found that career advancement opportunities enhance psychological empowerment and reduce work-family conflict, thereby improving overall employee well-being. Building on this we have *H03 Promotion and Career Movements have no significant effect on Work Life Balance.*

Supervision and Career Counselling on Work Life Balance

Career counselling services within organizations can help employees clarify their career goals, identify their strengths and development areas, and create actionable plans for achieving their objectives. Career counsellors offer support, guidance, and resources to help individuals make informed decisions about their career paths and overcome obstacles they may encounter along the way (Schein, 2004). Wang et al. (2021), emphasize that supervisory support is a critical determinant of employee well-being, particularly in high-stress environments such as healthcare. *H04 supervision and Career counselling do not significantly affect Work life Balance.*

Organisational rewards and Work Life Balance

Hassan et al. (2021) argue that career development acts as a critical organizational resource that enhances psychological resilience, thereby improving employees' ability to maintain equilibrium between work and non-work domains. This reinforces the argument that career development is a key institutional mechanism through which organizations can promote employee well-being and Work Life Balance, particularly in high-pressure sectors such as healthcare. *H05 Organisational rewards have no significant effect on Work Life Balance.*

3.0 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework reveals the relationship between the independent variable (Career Development) and the dependent variable (Work Life Balance). The arrows show the direction of the investigation.

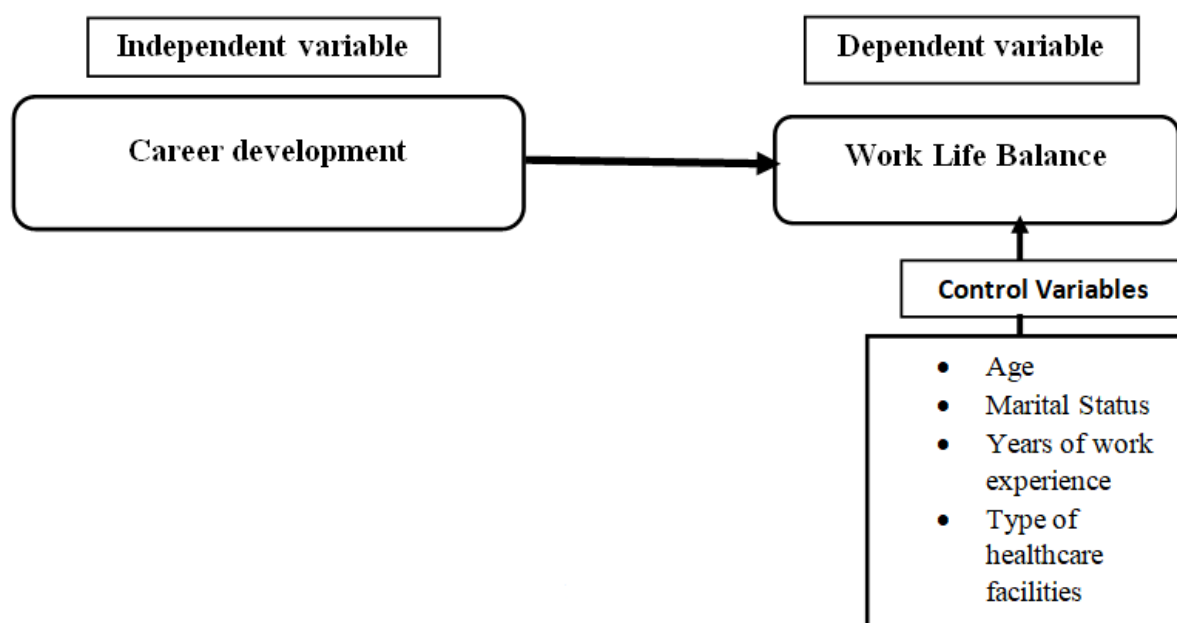


Figure 1: Research Framework

4.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross sectional research design. The target population was health workers in healthcare facilities in Bamenda municipality. The sample size was calculated using the Cochran formula, 1977 for calculating the minimum sample size. The multistage and random purposive sampling techniques were used to administer 456 questionnaires, used to capture the perspectives of the health workers on career development and work life balance. Both physically and electronically using google forms due to the tight schedule of the workers. For the multistage due to the large population, from the large cluster of healthcare facilities, some healthcare facilities were selected in Bamenda Municipality I, II and III, then the purposive random sampling technique was used to select health workers and questionnaires administered. Random purposive sampling was also used because it focuses on depth rather than breadth, enabling rich, context-specific insights. Health workers on internship, for example, the laboratory technicians, were not considered in this study since they are not on a salary and they would not have any information on organizational rewards, and would not give a good representation of what pertains in the various healthcare facilities. The purposive sampling method is advantageous because with this sampling technique, participants who directly address the research questions are selected, ensuring high-quality, relevant data. A 4-point likert scale was used to construct the questionnaires, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and omitting the neutral because we did not want the respondents to be indifferent.

The following model was used to capture Career Development and Work Life Balance. Greenhaus and Allen (2011) found that organizations that invest in career development programs tend to see improved Work Life Balance among employees, as these programs foster a sense of control and satisfaction in one's career trajectory. Additionally, research by Kossek et al. (2012) indicated that effective career development strategies correlate positively with Work Life Balance, suggesting that employees who perceive opportunities for advancement are better equipped to manage their work and personal commitments. These findings support the relevance of the proposed regression model in understanding the dynamics between career development and Work Life Balance in healthcare settings. First, we specify a model of the effect of aggregate career development index on employee work life balance as follows:

$$WLB_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CD_i + \beta_2 AGE_i + \beta_3 MS_i + \beta_4 EXP_i + \beta_5 TYPE_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Later on, a disaggregated model of the effect of various components of career development on employee work life balance as shown below:

$$WLB_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 TD_i + \alpha_2 JO_i + \alpha_3 PCM_i + \alpha_4 SCC_i + \alpha_5 OR_i + \alpha_6 AGE_i + \alpha_7 MS_i + \alpha_8 EXP_i + \alpha_9 TYPE_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Where: WLB is Work Life Balance index which is the dependent variable is measured using flexible work options, family leave system, recreational services, child care services, employment assistance programmes. CD is Career Development index which is the independent variable, encompassing aspects such as training and development (TD), job opportunities (JO), promotion and career movements (PCM), supervision and career counselling (SCC) as well as organisational rewards (OR). AGE is the age of the worker, MS is the marital status of the worker, EXP refers to worker experience and TYPE is the type of healthcare facilities. ε is the error term, capturing the variability in Work Life Balance not explained by career development.

Reliability and validity tests were done to ensure that the data collection and model instruments were reliable and valid. The scale's reliability was quantified using Cronbach alpha. The data collected was coded using SPSS version 23.0 and analysed using STATA 14. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The present study employed Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to investigate the effect of Career Development on Work Life Balance. estimate the model's parameters. To determine the internal consistency of the model's constructs, a reliability test was used. In this attempt, Cronbach's Alpha was used, with an accepted threshold of 0.6 or higher. The internal consistency of the participants was not violated for any of the variables, as Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.6419 to 0.7333. These exceeded Chua (2006) recommended threshold of 0.60. Consequently, the instruments and constructs were valid and reliable for the study.

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table below presents the summary of descriptive statistics for the key variables used in the study. It is important to note that the indices for the main constructs were generated using Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA). MCA is a multivariate data reduction technique used to construct composite indices from categorical variables, particularly those derived from Likert-scale responses. In this study, MCA was employed to aggregate multiple related items into single indices for constructs such as career development. This approach allows for a more robust representation of the underlying latent variables. Furthermore, the indices were normalized prior to analysis, which explains why all the values range between 0 and 1. Normalization ensures comparability across variables by rescaling the MCA-generated scores onto a standardized interval, where values closer to 0 indicate lower levels of the construct and values closer to 1 indicate higher levels. This transformation enhances interpretability and allows for meaningful comparison of the relative intensity of each variable across respondents.

Table 1: Summary of descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Career development index	456	0.1663616	0.278234	0	1
Training and development index	456	0.1511934	0.234902	0	1
Job opportunities index	456	0.128632	0.237327	0	1
Promotion & career movements index	456	0.116094	0.2148008	0	1
Supervision & career counselling index	456	0.1296254	0.2398042	0	1
Organisational rewards index	456	0.1314954	0.2364286	0	1
Work life balance index	456	0.1370588	0.2243199	0	1
Job dissatisfaction index	456	0.8760081	0.1885894	0	1
Burnout index	456	0.8990249	0.179659	0	1
Turnover intention index	456	0.8797593	0.1933607	0	1
Work disengagement index	456	0.9067714	0.1699988	0	1
Worker age	456	31.39693	4.841477	23	58
Marital status (unmarried)	456	0.4407895	0.497027	0	1
Experience	456	4.342105	2.466036	0.75	30
Public healthcare facilities	456	0.4605263	0.4989868	0	1
Private healthcare facilities	456	0.4473684	0.4977683	0	1

Source: Author's computation, 2025

From table 1 above, beginning with the career-related variables, the *Career Development Index* recorded a mean of 0.1663616 (SD = 0.278234), suggesting a generally low level of perceived

career development among respondents. Similarly, the *Training and Development Index* has a mean of 0.1511934 (SD = 0.234902), indicating that respondents perceive limited access to training and development opportunities. The *Job Opportunities Index* recorded a mean of 0.128632 (SD = 0.237327), while the *Promotion and Career Movements Index* recorded a mean of 0.116094 (SD = 0.2148008). These low mean values collectively suggest that opportunities for advancement and internal mobility are perceived to be limited within the study context.

In addition, the *Supervision and Career Counselling Index* recorded a mean of 0.1296254 (SD = 0.2398042), indicating that respondents perceive supervisory support and career guidance as relatively weak. Likewise, the *Organisational Rewards Index* and *Work Life Balance Index* recorded mean values of 0.1314954 (SD = 0.2364286) and 0.1370588 (SD = 0.2243199), respectively. These results suggest that reward systems and Work Life Balance provisions are not strongly established, which may have implications for employee motivation and retention.

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha reliability test results

Variables	No of items	Alpha	Decision
Training and development	5	0.6871	Acceptable
Job opportunities	5	0.6642	Acceptable
Promotion and career movements	5	0.6516	Acceptable
Supervision and career counselling	5	0.6806	Acceptable
Organisational rewards	5	0.6489	Acceptable
Work life balance	7	0.7333	Good

Source: Author's computation, 2025

Table 2 above presents the results of the reliability test conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to assess the internal consistency of the various constructs used in the study. The analysis evaluates whether the items measuring each variable are sufficiently correlated to reliably represent the underlying construct. In social science research, a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.60 and above is generally considered acceptable, while values closer to or above 0.70 indicate good reliability.

To begin with, the variable Training and Development recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.6871. This value falls within the acceptable range, indicating that the five items used to measure this construct are reasonably consistent and reliable. Although slightly below the conventional threshold of 0.70, it still demonstrates that the items adequately capture the concept of training and development within the study context.

Similarly, Job Opportunities yielded an Alpha value of 0.6642, which is also within the acceptable range. This suggests that the five items measuring this variable exhibit a satisfactory

level of internal consistency. The result implies that the indicators used are appropriate for capturing employees’ perceptions of job opportunities within the organization. In the same vein, Promotion and Career Movements recorded a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.6516, while Supervision and Career Counselling reported a value of 0.6806. Both values fall within the acceptable range, indicating that the respective items reliably measure the intended constructs. These results suggest that respondents’ views on career progression and supervisory support are consistently captured by the questionnaire items.

Furthermore, Organisational Rewards produced a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.6489, which is also considered acceptable. This implies that the items used to measure reward systems, though slightly below the ideal threshold, are sufficiently consistent for analytical purposes. In addition, Work Life Balance recorded a relatively higher Alpha value of 0.7333, which falls within the “good” reliability category. This indicates strong internal consistency among the seven items used, suggesting that the construct is well captured and robust.

Table: 3 Overall Variance Inflation Factors test results

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
tdev	4.42	0.226242
jobo	3.66	0.273434
prom	4.04	0.247534
sup	3.98	0.251458
orgr	3.48	0.287221
age	4.21	0.237585
2.ms	3.14	0.318699
exp	1.73	0.577163
type		
2	3.34	0.299546
3	3.36	0.297566
Mean VIF	3.54	

Source: Author’s computation, 2025

Results from table 3 indicate that the mean VIF is 3.54 which is greater than the threshold of 2.5 as prescribed by Gujarati (2004). However, it should be noted that no individual VIF exceeds 10 which implies that multicollinearity is not a call for concern in the study. Therefore, we conclude that multicollinearity is not a major issue in the model.

Table 4: OLS results for the Effect of Career Development on Work life balance in healthcare facilities in Bamenda municipality, Cameroon.

VARIABLES	(1) WLB	(2) WLB
Career development index	0.711*** (0.0319)	
Training and development index		0.310*** (0.0829)
Job opportunities index		0.177** (0.0855)
Promotion and career movements index		0.173** (0.0752)
Supervision and career counselling index		0.178** (0.0747)
Organisational rewards index		0.0928 (0.0803)
Worker age	0.00102 (0.00230)	0.000792 (0.00219)
Marital status (Unmarried)	0.0197 (0.0216)	0.0200 (0.0215)
Experience in health	0.00268 (0.00278)	0.00370 (0.00306)
Type of healthcare facilities (Public)	0.0377* (0.0201)	0.0356** (0.0181)
Type of healthcare facilities (Private)	0.0275 (0.0197)	0.0235 (0.0179)
Constant	-0.0633 (0.0834)	-0.0646 (0.0794)
Observations	456	456
R-squared	0.782	0.787
Prob> F	0.0000	0.0000
Mean VIF	2.76	3.54
Breusch Pagan P-value	0.0000	0.0000

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: Author's computation

The findings presented in Table 4 provide strong empirical evidence that career development exerts a positive and statistically significant influence on employee Work Life Balance within

healthcare facilities in Bamenda Municipality, Cameroon. Specifically, the coefficient of the career development index is 0.711 and is statistically significant at the 1% level, indicating a robust and economically meaningful relationship. This implies that a one-unit increase in career development practices leads to a substantial 0.711 increase in the Work Life Balance index, *ceteris paribus*. Based on this result, the null hypothesis stating that career development has no significant effect on employee Work Life Balance is firmly rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This outcome suggests that career development is not only statistically relevant but also substantively important in shaping employees' ability to harmonize professional responsibilities with personal life demands in healthcare settings. From a theoretical standpoint, this finding aligns with Human Capital Theory, which posits that investments in employee development enhance productivity and well-being, thereby reinforcing balanced work-life outcomes.

This finding is strongly supported by recent empirical literature which consistently highlights the positive externalities of career development on employee well-being and life balance. For example, Alzyoud et al. (2022) demonstrate that structured career development initiatives significantly reduce work-related stress and enhance employees' capacity to manage competing life roles. Similarly, Kim and Lee (2023) find that healthcare institutions that prioritize career advancement create psychologically supportive environments that reduce role conflict and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, Hassan et al. (2021) argue that career development acts as a critical organizational resource that enhances psychological resilience, thereby improving employees' ability to maintain equilibrium between work and non-work domains. These empirical contributions collectively reinforce the argument that career development is a key institutional mechanism through which organizations can promote employee well-being and Work Life Balance, particularly in high-pressure sectors such as healthcare.

Turning to the disaggregated results, the training and development index reveals a positive and statistically significant effect on Work Life Balance, with a coefficient of 0.310 significant at the 1% level. This indicates that a unit increase in training and development practices results in a 0.31 increase in employee Work Life Balance, holding other factors constant. The implication of this finding is that investment in employee skills and capacity building enhances efficiency, reduces job strain, and improves time management, thereby allowing employees to better allocate time between work and personal life. Consequently, the null hypothesis that training and development has no significant effect on employee Work Life Balance is rejected. This result is consistent with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits that job resources such as training reduce job demands and improve employee well-being.

Similarly, the job opportunities index exhibits a positive and statistically significant effect on Work Life Balance at the 5% level, with a coefficient of 0.177. This indicates that increased access to internal job opportunities significantly enhances employees' Work Life Balance. A one-unit increase in this index leads to a 0.177 improvement in Work Life Balance, suggesting that organizational flexibility in job assignments and internal mobility reduces monotony and burnout, thereby facilitating better balance. Based on this result, the null hypothesis that job opportunities have no significant effect on Work Life Balance is rejected. This finding aligns with Zhang et al. (2023), who argue that job mobility and internal career pathways reduce occupational stagnation and enhance employee flexibility, which are critical components of work-life integration.

The promotion and career movements' index also demonstrates a positive and statistically significant effect on Work Life Balance, with a coefficient of 0.173 at the 5% level. This suggests that opportunities for promotion and career advancement significantly improve employees' Work Life Balance by enhancing job satisfaction, motivation, and perceived organizational support. The implication is that when employees perceive a clear pathway for upward mobility, they are more likely to experience reduced stress and improved balance between professional and personal obligations. Accordingly, the null hypothesis that promotion and career movements have no significant effect on Work Life Balance is rejected. This finding is in line with Ojo and Adebayo (2022), who found that career advancement opportunities enhance psychological empowerment and reduce work-family conflict, thereby improving overall employee well-being.

Furthermore, the supervision and career counselling index has a positive and statistically significant effect on Work Life Balance at the 5% level, with a coefficient of 0.178. This implies that supportive supervision and career guidance significantly enhance employees' ability to balance work and personal life. The presence of mentorship and guidance structures within healthcare institutions reduces uncertainty and provides employees with coping mechanisms for managing job-related stress. Based on this result, the null hypothesis that supervision and career counselling has no significant effect on Work Life Balance is rejected. This finding is supported by Wang et al. (2021), who emphasize that supervisory support is a critical determinant of employee well-being, particularly in high-stress environments such as healthcare.

Finally, the organisational rewards index exhibits a positive but statistically insignificant effect on Work Life Balance, with a coefficient of 0.0928. This indicates that although reward systems may contribute positively to employee well-being, their direct impact on Work Life Balance is not statistically meaningful in this context. Consequently, the null hypothesis that organisational rewards have no significant effect on Work Life Balance is not rejected. This suggests that while

financial and non-financial rewards are important for employee motivation, they may not be sufficient in isolation to influence Work Life Balance, especially when compared to more direct career development mechanisms such as training and promotion. This finding highlights the need for a more holistic approach to employee well-being, where rewards complement rather than substitute structural career development practices.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The objective of this study was to analyse the effect of Career Development on Work Life Balance in Healthcare Facilities in the Bamenda municipality, Cameroon. The findings provide strong empirical evidence that career development exerts a positive and statistically significant influence on employee Work Life Balance within healthcare facilities in Bamenda the Municipality. Specifically, the coefficient of the career development index is 0.711 and is statistically significant at the 1% level, indicating a robust and economically meaningful relationship. This implies that a one-unit increase in career development practices leads to a substantial 0.711 increase in the Work Life Balance index, *ceteris paribus*. Based on this result, the null hypothesis stating that career development has no significant effect on employee Work Life Balance is firmly rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This outcome suggests that career development is not only statistically relevant but also substantively important in shaping employees' ability to harmonize professional responsibilities with personal life demands in healthcare settings.

It is therefore recommended that training and awareness programs designed to educate both management and employees about the significance of work life balance can enhance organizational culture. Such programs encourage understanding and acceptance of Work Life Balance initiatives, cultivating a supportive atmosphere where healthcare providers feel empowered to pursue their careers with a balance, without fear of judgment or repercussions. Equally, to encourage in-service training, as far as career development is concerned, just like the post graduate medical institute of health known as the Baptist institute of Health Sciences (BIHS), which was established in 2007 and recognised by the government in 2017, it was created to educate and empower medical providers with a solid foundation in medical sciences, medical research skills in order to provide patients with holistic healthcare. This facility has helped to facilitate career development so that their workers can easily strike a balance between their studies and work without going far or travelling, and also reducing expenditure. This enables them to achieve healthcare experience which is tailored to the needs of the patients. Other healthcare facilities can emulate this. For example, the Catholic Presbyterian owned healthcare facilities, the government can also increase the specialty options available for the training facilities they have. Like the Regional Hospital has a nursing school on campus but some of the doctors who train them and attend to patients at same time also need to develop their careers.

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