

## Sleep Quality Mediating the Relationship Between Workload Stress and Emotional Exhaustion in Employed Females

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “In recent years, the intersection between occupational stress, sleep quality, and emotional exhaustion has become a critical focus...” would benefit from citing more foundational theoretical works (e.g., Maslach & Leiter, 2016) to complement the contemporary references already included.

The discussion of physiological arousal and cognitive rumination could be expanded by briefly referencing the neuroendocrine mechanism (e.g., HPA axis) mentioned later. Linking these concepts early would strengthen theoretical coherence.

While the fit indices indicate an excellent model fit, the  $\chi^2$  significance ( $p < .001$ ) is typical with large samples. Consider noting this limitation in the text and emphasizing other indices (CFI, RMSEA) as primary fit indicators.

The mediation analysis results are clearly reported. However, adding confidence intervals (CIs) for the indirect effect would enhance statistical transparency and robustness.

This section draws strong parallels across professions. To enhance academic rigor, specify whether these prior studies also used mediation models or correlational approaches, to contextualize methodological comparability.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The section correctly identifies gender-related vulnerabilities but could integrate intersectional considerations (e.g., ethnicity, socioeconomic status) that might further modulate stress–sleep dynamics among women.

The statement “Given these converging lines of evidence, the present study aims...” clearly states the objective but lacks a formal hypothesis. Explicitly stating H1, H2, and H3 (e.g., “Sleep quality mediates the relationship between workload stress and emotional exhaustion”) would clarify the research design and improve scientific rigor.

The authors effectively relate findings to the JD-R model but should clarify how “sleep quality” functions as a personal resource rather than a job resource within that framework, to avoid conceptual ambiguity.

While consistent with prior research, this paragraph could benefit from integrating possible bidirectional causality (e.g., poor sleep may increase perceived workload stress), acknowledging potential reciprocal effects.

The authors mention “other factors such as social support, coping strategies...” but these are not empirically tested in this study. Reframe this as a limitation and future research suggestion rather than an empirical claim.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.