

**THE EFFECT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION
ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MEDIATED BY WORK STRESS
(Study at the Department of Tourism and Culture of Lamongan Regency)**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of work-life balance and job satisfaction on employee performance mediated by work stress. The study was conducted at the Lamongan Regency Tourism and Culture Office with a quantitative approach and involved 51 respondents. Data collection used a survey approach and the research instrument was a questionnaire measured using a Likert scale. Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) through the SmartPLS 3.0 program. The results showed that job satisfaction had a positive and significant effect on employee performance, while work-life balance did not have a significant effect. In addition, work stress did not mediate the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction on employee performance. These findings provide insight into the importance of job satisfaction in improving employee performance and show that work stress does not always act as an intervening variable.

INTRODUCTION

In the competitive modern work era, high work demands often cause an imbalance between work and personal life. High work pressure, long working hours, and increasing responsibilities are often sources of stress that have a negative impact on work motivation and productivity (Rossa et al., 2024). This condition can be exacerbated if employee job satisfaction with the work environment, reward system, and social relationships in the workplace are also disrupted. Conversely, employees who are able to maintain work-life balance and feel satisfied with their jobs tend to have better abilities in managing stress and showing optimal performance (Fauzief & Yanuar, 2021).

The Lamongan Regency Tourism and Culture Office is an institution that has a high workload in managing various annual programs, ranging from cultural preservation to tourism promotion. Although the performance report shows satisfactory achievements in the last two years, it is undeniable

that employees face internal challenges, such as repetitive work pressure and binding work contracts, which can affect their work-life balance and job satisfaction (Disparbud Lamongan, 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, this phenomenon can be explained through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, where work-life balance is related to the fulfillment of social and security needs, while job satisfaction touches on aspects of self-esteem and self-actualization. When these needs are not met, work stress can emerge as a signal of imbalance in time management and work pressure (Adhitarma & Adnyani, 2023). However, there have not been many studies that comprehensively examine the relationship between work-life balance, job satisfaction, job stress, and performance in one integrated model, especially in local government agencies.

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of work-life balance, job satisfaction, and job stress in influencing employee performance. Adhitarma and Adnyani (2023) found that work-life balance and job satisfaction have a significant positive effect on performance, while job stress has a significant negative effect. Research by Pradnyani and Rahyuda (2022) revealed that work-life balance and competence have a positive effect on performance, but have a negative effect on job stress; job stress itself has a negative effect on performance and partially mediates the relationship. Meanwhile, a study by Fauziek and Yanuar (2021) stated that job satisfaction does not directly affect performance, but reduces job stress which then mediates increased performance. Similar findings were also revealed by Darmawan (2023) who studied employees of PT Adhi Karya, where work-life balance affected stress and job satisfaction, and job stress was shown to mediate the relationship. These diverse results indicate the potential for inconsistencies in previous findings and open up space for further research, especially in the context of local government agencies, which have not been studied in depth.

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of work-life balance and job satisfaction on employee performance, and to test the role of work stress as a mediating variable. This study is important because there are not many studies that specifically examine the relationship in government agencies at the regional level. This study is expected to provide empirical evidence and become a reference for more effective human resource management policies, especially in the public sector.

The benefits of this study are divided into two, namely theoretically enriching the literature on the influence of work-life balance and job satisfaction on employee performance by considering work stress as a mediator; and practically providing strategic recommendations for government agencies in improving employee performance through psychological well-being and stress management approaches.

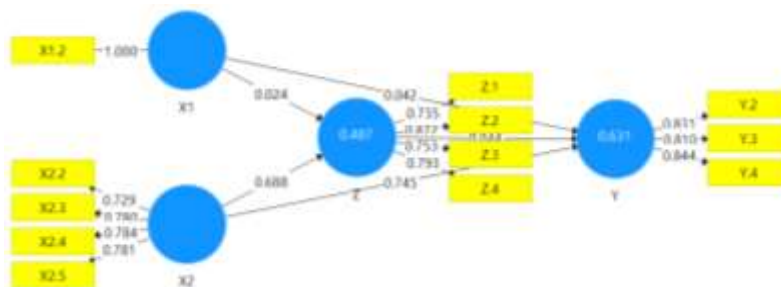
Therefore, this study is present as an effort to answer the literature gap by using a quantitative approach and SEM-PLS analysis. It is expected that this study can provide a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between work-life balance, job satisfaction, job stress, and employee performance in the context of the Lamongan Regency Tourism and Culture Office.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted at the Lamongan Regency Tourism and Culture Office. The type of research used in this study is a quantitative descriptive approach with data obtained from distributing questionnaires containing indicators of each variable including work-life balance (X1), job satisfaction (X2), employee performance (Y) and work stress (Z). The population of this study was all employees of the Lamongan Regency Tourism and Culture Office, with a sample size of 51 respondents. Data analysis used the SmartPLS 3.0 program with the Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. Reliability was tested through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values, while validity was tested using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cross Loading, and HTMT. Hypothesis testing was carried out based on the path coefficient and P-value from the bootstrapping results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The measurement model (outer model) is used to evaluate the relationship between the latent construct and the indicators that form it. Figure 1 is the result of the measurement model evaluation.



Picture 1 Outer Model

The results of the outer model analysis show that all indicators used in this study have met the convergent validity criteria. The outer loading test shows that almost all indicators have values above 0.70, which according to Hair et al. (2019) indicates adequate validity. In the Work-Life Balance variable (X1), only indicator X1.2 remains with an outer loading value of 1,000. Meanwhile, the indicators in the Job Satisfaction (X2), Job Stress (Z), and Employee Performance (Y) variables all show outer loading values between 0.729 and 0.877, which can be concluded as valid indicators that consistently reflect their respective constructs.

Table 1 Outer Loading Result

Indikator	Hasil Outer Loadings	Rate of Thumb	Keterangan
X1.2	1.000	0.700	Valid
X2.2	0.729	0.700	Valid
X2.3	0.780	0.700	Valid
X2.4	0.784	0.700	Valid
X2.5	0.781	0.700	Valid
Y.2	0.831	0.700	Valid
Y.3	0.810	0.700	Valid
Y.4	0.844	0.700	Valid
Z.1	0.735	0.700	Valid
Z.2	0.872	0.700	Valid
Z.3	0.753	0.700	Valid
Z.4	0.793	0.700	Valid

Discriminant validity was tested using three approaches, namely cross loading, AVE, and HTMT. The cross loading table shows that each indicator has the highest loading on the construct it is supposed to measure compared to other constructs. For example, indicator Z2 has a loading of 0.872 on the Job Stress construct and is lower on other constructs. This strengthens the discriminant validity of the construct (Utami & Nugroho, 2021). In addition, the AVE values of all variables are above 0.50—Work-Life Balance (1,000), Job Satisfaction (0.591), Employee Performance (0.687), and Job Stress (0.624)—which indicates that more than 50% of the indicator variance can be explained by each construct (Nuryakin & Wulandari, 2020). However, HTMT shows the potential for violation of discriminant validity in the relationship between Job Satisfaction (X2) and Employee Performance (Y) with a value of 1.023, exceeding the threshold of 0.90 (Shmueli et al., 2019).

Table 2 Cross Loading Values

Indikator	Work-Life Balance (X1)	Kepuasan Kerja (X2)	Kinerja Pegawai (Y)	Stres Kerja (Z)
X1.2	1,000	0,410	0,361	0,306
X2.2	0,345	0,729	0,510	0,606
X2.3	0,340	0,780	0,783	0,404
X2.4	0,222	0,784	0,575	0,624
X2.5	0,360	0,781	0,555	0,518
Y.2	0,307	0,667	0,831	0,534
Y.3	0,201	0,658	0,810	0,424
Y.4	0,388	0,645	0,844	0,474
Z.1	0,128	0,350	0,278	0,735
Z.2	0,408	0,660	0,607	0,872
Z.3	0,179	0,398	0,397	0,753
Z.4	0,173	0,675	0,447	0,793

Table 3 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Values

Variabel	Work-Life Balance	Kepuasan Kerja	Kinerja Pegawai	Stres Kerja
<i>Work-Life Balance</i>				
Kepuasan Kerja	0,470			
Kinerja Pegawai	0,411	1,023		
Stres Kerja	0,311	0,834	0,688	

Construct reliability was tested through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values. All constructs in the model showed values above 0.70, both for Cronbach's Alpha and CR, indicating that all variables have good internal consistency (Hair et al., 2021). The highest value was found in the Work-Life Balance variable at 1,000, followed by Job Stress (0.806), Employee Performance (0.772), and Job Satisfaction (0.769).

Table 4 Construct Reliability and Validity

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (ρ_A)	Composite Reliability (ρ_c)	AVE
<i>Work-Life Balance</i>	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Kepuasan Kerja	0,769	0,770	0,852	0,591
Kinerja Pegawai	0,772	0,772	0,868	0,687
Stres Kerja	0,806	0,847	0,868	0,624

Structural model analysis (inner model) shows that Job Satisfaction (X2) has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance (Y) with a T-statistic of 5.665 and a P-value of 0.000. On the other hand, Work-Life Balance (X1) does not show a significant influence on performance, with a T-statistic of only 0.450 and a P-value of 0.653. The R² value on the Job Stress construct (Z) is 0.487, and on Employee Performance (Y) is 0.631, indicating that each model has moderate to strong explanatory power in explaining data variations.

Table 5 R-Square Values

Variabel	R-Square	Keterangan
Kinerja Pegawai	0,631	Kuat
Stres Kerja	0,487	Sedang

Mediation test shows that Job Stress does not mediate the relationship between Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance (T-statistic = 0.062; P-value = 0.951) or the relationship between

Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance (T-statistic = 0.279; P-value = 0.781). These results indicate that Job Stress is not a significant intermediary variable in this model.

Table 6 Path Coefficients

<i>Hypotheses</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDV)</i>	<i>P Values</i>	<i>Keterangan</i>
<i>Direct Effect</i>			
<i>Work-Life Balance (X1) – Kinerja Pegawai (Y)</i>	0,450	0,653	Negatif dan Tidak Signifikan
<i>Kepuasan Kerja (X2) – Kinerja Pegawai (Y)</i>	5,665	0,000	Positif dan Signifikan
<i>Indirect Effect</i>			
<i>Work-Life Balance (X1) – Stres Kerja (Z) – Kinerja Pegawai (Y)</i>	0,062	0,951	Negatif dan Tidak Signifikan
<i>Kepuasan Kerja (X2) – Stres Kerja (Z) – Kinerja Pegawai (Y)</i>	0,279	0,781	Negatif dan Tidak Signifikan

The findings of this study provide evidence that Job Satisfaction has a dominant role in improving Employee Performance, in line with the research of Adhitarma and Adnyani (2023), which states that satisfied employees have higher motivation and work engagement. On the other hand, the absence of an effect of Work-Life Balance on performance contradicts the research of Pradnyani and Rahyuda (2022), possibly because in the context of bureaucracy, work-life balance has not been a major concern and its impact is not felt directly by employees. In addition, the insignificance of the mediation effect of Work Stress can be explained by a relatively good stress management system or high social support in the work environment, as stated by Fauziek and Yanuar (2021).

Thus, it can be concluded that in the context of the Lamongan Regency Tourism and Culture Office, performance improvement strategies are more effectively directed at strengthening aspects of job satisfaction compared to managing work-life balance or work stress as intermediary variables.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, indicating that the higher the level of job satisfaction felt by employees, the higher their performance. On the other hand, work-life balance does not show a significant effect on employee performance, indicating that the balance between work and personal life has not become a major factor influencing productivity in the work environment of government agencies. In addition, work stress has not been proven to act as a mediating variable, either in the relationship between work-life balance or job satisfaction on employee performance. These results underline the importance of increasing job satisfaction as a primary strategy in human resource management, while the role of job stress as an intermediary factor is not confirmed in the context of this study. The practical implications of these findings are the importance of creating a work environment that can increase employee satisfaction and manage work stress effectively to encourage improved performance, especially in public sector organizations. This study also provides theoretical contributions in understanding the dynamics of the relationship between work-life balance, job satisfaction, job stress, and performance in the context of regional bureaucracy.

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