

Do Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction Drive Employee Performance? Evidence from an Indonesian Local Government

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines the effect of work-life balance (WLB) on employee performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, in the public-sector context of the Majene Regency Local Government, Indonesia

Design/Methodology/Approach: Although previous studies have linked Work-Life Balance (WLB) to performance, the existing evidence mostly comes from the private sector, while local government settings are still underexplored. A quantitative survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 90 local government employees selected through stratified probability sampling. The data were analyzed using the measurement model (outer model) in SmartPLS version 3.

Findings: The results show that WLB had no significant effect on either job satisfaction or employee performance, whereas job satisfaction had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Because the conditions for mediation were not met, job satisfaction did not mediate the WLB performance relationship. These findings indicate that, in a bureaucratic public-sector environment, the expected benefits of WLB may weaken, while job satisfaction remains a robust predictor of performance.

Keywords: *Work Life Balance; Job Satisfaction; Employee Performance; Local Government Majene Regency*

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are a vital asset that determines a company's success in facing global challenges, including those of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This revolution has transformed the way businesses and government organizations operate, particularly in human resource management (Buba et al., 2024). Employees are the primary factor influencing an organization's success (Herzberg,

2023), with performance serving as a key indicator of the extent to which the organization’s goals are achieved. Therefore, companies are required to continuously improve employee performance through various strategic approaches, one of which is implementing the work-life balance concept.

Work-life balance is a key concern in modern human resource management, particularly in maintaining a balance between personal life and work. Previous research has shown that work-life balance plays a significant role in improving employee performance and engagement (employee engagement)(Ahmaddien, 2023). In addition, this concept has been shown to influence employee job satisfaction, loyalty, and productivity, making it a key factor in managing the millennial workforce, which dominates today’s labor force (Sri Setyaningsih & Endah Nur Fitriyani, 2025). In the local government sector, heavy workloads, the demands of public service, and limited resources often place pressure on employees. These conditions can affect job satisfaction, which in turn impacts performance. Job satisfaction is understood as a feeling of positive employees’ attitudes toward their work, including aspects such as the work environment, relationships with supervisors, recognition, and opportunities for professional development. When employees are satisfied, they tend to demonstrate greater dedication and better job performance.

Previous studies have shown that work-life balance affects employee performance and job satisfaction, and that job satisfaction can serve as a mediating variable in this relationship. Other studies also confirm that job satisfaction can link work-life balance and performance, meaning that the effect of work-life balance is not only direct but also indirect through increased job satisfaction. Thus, examining the role of job satisfaction as a mediator is crucial for a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying the influence of work-life balance.

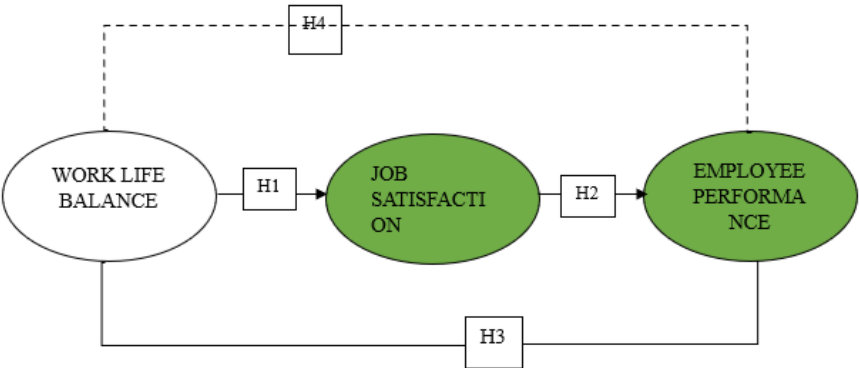


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the study

H1: Work-Life Balance Influences Job Satisfaction

The relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction is

very close, as achieving a balance between work and personal life can influence work quality. This is also supported by Sri Setyaningsih & Endah Nur Fitriyani (2025), Wanasiri & Aryanto (2025), and Wahyudin et al. (2025), who demonstrated a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. However, research by Andalas et al. (2024) indicates that work-life balance does not always have a significant effect on job satisfaction, suggesting that these varying results require further analysis.

H2: Job Satisfaction Influences Employee Performance

Employees who are satisfied at work create a positive environment within the organization that fosters successful outcomes. Commitment, absenteeism, performance, and productivity are directly related to job satisfaction (Sutanto et al., 2024).

H3: Work-Life Balance Affects Employee Performance

Work-life balance and employee performance are two interrelated aspects. Previous studies have shown that work-life balance significantly affects employee performance (Kurniasari, 2024; Greenhaus & Powell, 2023; Wanasiri & Aryanto, 2025). According to Herzberg's theory, work-life balance acts as a motivator that provides intrinsic motivation to employees, going beyond the mere fulfillment of basic needs.

H4: Work-Life Balance Affects Employee Performance, Mediated by Job Satisfaction.

A study conducted by Ramdani & Rahardjo (2021) found an indirect effect of work-life balance on employee performance through organizational commitment and job satisfaction as mediating variables. Furthermore, Robbins & Colter (2019) showed that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between work-life balance and performance.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research design. The data collection technique involves primary data obtained from responses to questionnaires distributed to the study's informants. A Likert scale was used. This method was chosen because the subjects of analysis in this study are individuals or employees, and these individuals are then compared with one another. The data used in this study are as follows: primary data. Primary data can be collected through field studies, which involve gathering data related to the issue under study by conducting direct research on the research subjects, including observation and questionnaires.

The population in this study consists of all local government employees in Majene Regency, totaling 150 people. This group comprises 45 civil servants, 52 full-time P3K employees, and 53 part-time P3K employees. The sampling method used in this study is

probability sampling. Probability sampling is a sampling technique in which every member of the population has a known, equal, or measurable probability of being selected for the research sample. The sample size was determined based on Arikunto (2019), who states that if the population is large—or more than 100—then the sample can be drawn at a rate of 10%–15%, 20%–25%, or more of the population. Based on this guideline, the researcher set the sampling percentage at 60% of the total population, resulting in a sample size of $150 \times 60\% = 90$. Thus, the sample size used in this study is 90 respondents.

The operational variables in this study include work-life balance and job satisfaction as independent variables, and employee performance as the dependent variable. The data collection methods used in this study include observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Data analysis was conducted using the measurement model (outer model), validity test, discriminant validity test, reliability test, structural model (inner model), R-squared value, path coefficients, and specific indirect effects in SmartPLS version 3.

Table 1. Operational Variables

Variable	Definitions	Indicator
Work Life Balance	Work-life balance is an employee's perception of whether the time, energy, and attention they devote to work and their life outside of work are in balance.	1. Time Balance 2. Engagement balance 3. Balance of satisfaction in work and personal life
Job Satisfaction	Job satisfaction is the degree to which employees are pleased with or satisfied by their work, compensation, coworkers, and working conditions.	1. Satisfaction with compensation and benefits 2. Satisfaction with the work environment 3. Satisfaction with supervisors and coworkers
Employee Performance	Employee performance is the extent to which employees complete their work tasks effectively, efficiently, and in accordance with the organization's established targets	1. Work quality 2. Work quantity 3. Responsibility at work

RESULTS

Based on the quantitative data analysis conducted on 90 local government employees in Majene Regency using SmartPLS 3, the following key findings were obtained:

Measurement model (outer model)

A measurement model was developed to determine the validity and reliability of the indicators used in the study. This testing aims to ensure that each indicator can represent the latent construct being measured.

The latent constructs in this study work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee performance were measured using several indicators, which were then analyzed using the Partial Least Squares method. The outer model was tested through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability tests to ensure that the measurement model used had a high degree of accuracy.

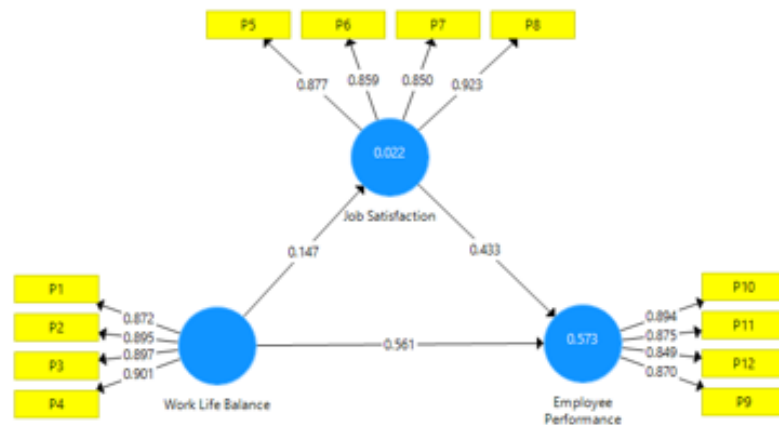


Figure 2. Outer Model Testing

Validity Test

a. Outer Loading

Table 2. Outer loading test results

	Work-Life Balance	Job Satisfaction	Employee Performance
P1	0.872		
P2	0.895		
P3	0.897		
P4	0.901		
P5		0.877	
P6		0.859	
P7		0.850	
P8		0.923	
P9			0.870
P10			0.894
P11			0.875
P12			0.849

The PLS algorithm analysis yielded the following outer loadings (loading factors) for the Work-Life Balance construct, which has four measurement indicators: P1 = 0.872, P2 = 0.895, P3 = 0.897, and P4

= 0.901. Next, for the "Job Satisfaction" construct with four measurement indicators, the values are P5 = 0.877, P6 = 0.859, P7 = 0.850, and P8 = 0.923. Furthermore, the factor loadings for the "Employee Performance" construct, with four measurement indicators, are P9 = 0.870, P10 = 0.894, P11 = 0.875, and P12 = 0.849.

The overall external loading results for the indicators of the Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance constructs all have loading factors of ≥ 0.50 . Thus, the indicators comprising the Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance constructs are classified as valid.

b. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Table 3. Test results of AVE values

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work-life balance	0.895	0.896	0.927	0.761
Job Satisfaction	0.901	0.910	0.931	0.770
Employee performance	0.914	0.926	0.939	0.794

The PLS analysis yielded the following AVE values for each construct: Work-Life Balance = 0.761, Job Satisfaction = 0.770, and Employee Performance = 0.794. All three constructs have values ≥ 0.50 , meaning they are considered valid.

Discriminant Validity Test

a. Cross-loading test

Table 4. Test results of cross-loading values

	Work-life balance	Job satisfaction	Employee performance
P1	0.549	0.088	0.872
P2	0.458	0.057	0.895
P3	0.533	0.132	0.897
P4	0.634	0.221	0.901
P5	0.502	0.877	0.097
P6	0.383	0.859	0.055
P7	0.429	0.850	0.174
P8	0.479	0.923	0.178
P9	0.870	0.472	0.563
P10	0.894	0.473	0.538
P11	0.875	0.395	0.548
P12	0.849	0.456	0.528

Based on the results of the analysis using the PLS algorithm, the cross-loadings for the Work-Life Balance construct, with its four measurement indicators, were found to be $P1 = 0.549$, $P2 = 0.458$, $P3 = 0.533$, and $P4 = 0.634$. Next, the values for the "Job Satisfaction" construct, with its four measurement indicators, are $P5 = 0.877$, $P6 = 0.859$, $P7 = 0.850$, and $P8 = 0.923$. Furthermore, the values for the Employee Performance construct, with four measurement indicators, are $P9 = 0.563$, $P10 = 0.538$, $P11 = 0.548$, and $P12 = 0.528$.

The overall cross-loading values for the indicators of the constructs "work-life balance," "job satisfaction," and "employee performance" were all above 0.70. However, some cross-loading values for the "employee performance" indicators were still below 0.70. Therefore, the next step is to conduct a discriminant validity test by comparing the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) values with the correlations among the latent constructs.

b. Inter-Construct Correlation Test

Table 5. Correlation test results between constructs

	Work Life Balance	Job Satisfaction	Employee Performance	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Square root of AVE
Work Life Balance	1.000	0.515	0.624	0.761	$\sqrt{0.761}=0.872$
Job Satisfaction	0.515	1.000	0.147	0.770	$\sqrt{0.770}=0.877$
Employee Performance	0.624	0.147	1.000	0.794	$\sqrt{0.794}=0.891$

The PLS results showed a correlation coefficient of 0.515 between the Work-Life Balance construct and the Job Satisfaction construct, and a correlation coefficient of 0.624 between the Work-Life Balance construct and the Employee Performance construct. These correlation coefficients between latent constructs are smaller than the square root of the AVE for the Work-Life Balance latent construct, which is 0.872.

Furthermore, the correlation between the latent construct "Job Satisfaction" and "Work-Life Balance" was 0.515, and the correlation between "Job Satisfaction" and "Employee Performance" was 0.147; these correlation values between latent constructs were smaller than the square root of the AVE for the latent construct "Job Satisfaction," which was 0.877.

Similarly, the correlation between the latent construct "Employee Performance" and the construct "Work-Life Balance" was 0.624. The correlation between the latent construct "Employee Performance" and

the construct “Job Satisfaction” was 0.147—both of which are lower than the square root of the AVE for the latent construct “Employee Performance,” which is 0.891. This means that all three constructs are classified as valid.

Reliability Test

Table 6. Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work Life Balance	0.859	0.896	0.927	0.761
Job Satisfaction	0.901	0.910	0.931	0.770
Employee Performance	0.914	0.926	0.939	0.794

The PLS algorithm results show composite reliability values of 0.927 for the Work-Life Balance construct, 0.931 for the Job Satisfaction construct, and 0.939 for the Employee Performance construct. All of these composite reliability values are above 0.70. Therefore, the Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance constructs have good reliability and are classified as valid.

Structural Model (Inner Model)

Structural equation modeling was conducted to identify the relationships among the latent constructs in the research model. This analysis aimed to determine the extent to which the variable “Work-Life Balance” influences “Job Satisfaction” and “Employee Performance,” as well as the influence of “Job Satisfaction” on “Employee Performance.”

This research model was analyzed using several tests, including the R-squared value, path coefficients, and specific indirect effects. The results of each of these tests were used to determine the strength of the research model and to test the proposed hypotheses.

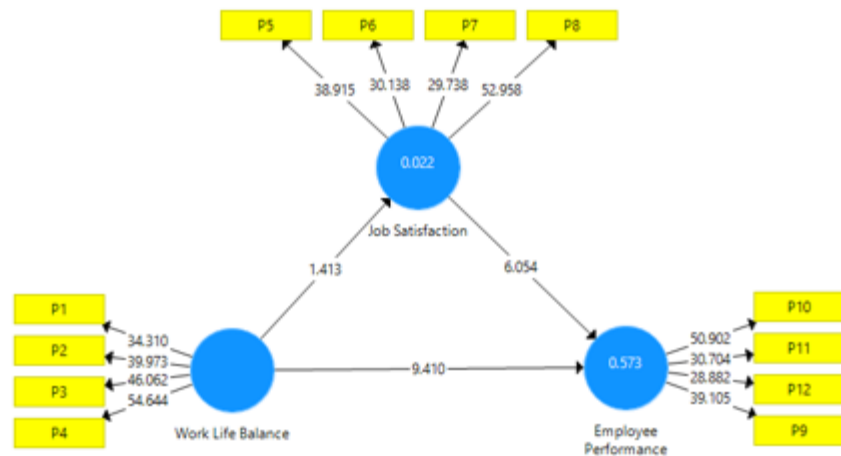


Figure 2. Inner Model

R-Square Value

Table 7. The results of the R-Square test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Work life balance					
Job satisfaction	0.573	0.588	0.065	8.812	0.000
Employee performance	0.022	0.035	0.034	0.632	0.264

The results of the bootstrapping analysis yielded an R-squared value of 0.573 for the Job Satisfaction construct and 0.022 for the Employee Performance construct. Thus, the R-squared value of 0.573 for the Job Satisfaction construct indicates that 57.3% of the variability in Employee Performance can be explained by the Work-Life Balance construct in the model, which falls into the moderate category. The remaining 42.7% is explained by other constructs not examined in this study.

Furthermore, the R-Square value for the “Employee Performance” construct is 0.022, which means that the variability in the “Employee Performance” construct explained by the “Work-Life Balance” and “Job Satisfaction” constructs in the model is 2.2%—also falling into the “Weak” category—while the remaining 97.8% is explained by other constructs not examined in this study.

Path Coefficients

Table 8. Test results of path coefficients

	Original	Sample	Standard	T Statistics	P
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	Sample (O)	Mean (M)	Deviation (STDEV)	(O/STDEV)	Values
Job satisfaction > Employee performance	0.433	0.434	0.074	5.885	0.000
Work-life balance > employee performance	0.561	0.563	0.064	8.699	0.000
Work-life balance > Job satisfaction	0.147	0.156	0.106	1.392	0.082

The results of the analysis using the bootstrapping method indicate that the construct “Job Satisfaction” has a significant positive effect on the construct “Employee Performance,” as evidenced by a parameter coefficient of 0.433. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.050 (significance level = 5%). This is also indicated by the T-statistic value of 5.885, which is greater than 1.661 (t-table value).

Furthermore, the “Work-Life Balance” construct also had a significant positive effect on the “Employee Performance” construct, as indicated by a parameter coefficient of 0.561. The significance value (P-value) of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.050 (significance level = 5%). This is also indicated by the T-statistic value of 8.699, which is greater than 1.661 (t-table value).

Furthermore, the work-life balance construct has a negative but insignificant effect on the job satisfaction construct, as indicated by a parameter coefficient of 0.147. The p-value of 0.082 is greater than the alpha level of 0.050 (significance level = 5%). This is also indicated by the T-statistic value of 1.392, which is smaller than 1.661 (t-table value).

Specific Indirect Effect

Table 9. Results of the test for specific indirect effects

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Work life balance > Job satisfaction > Employee performance	0.064	0.065	0.046	1.374	0.085

Based on the results of the bootstrapping analysis, it can be concluded that the specific indirect effect of the Work-Life Balance construct on Job Satisfaction through Employee Performance is 0.064, with a T-

statistic of 1.374, which is less than 1.96 (t-value). The p-value was 0.085, which is greater than the alpha level of 0.050 (significance level = 5%). The results of the study indicate that job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of work-life balance on employee performance among employees of the Majene Regency Government. This is indicated by the results of the specific indirect effect test, which yielded a path coefficient of 0.064, a T-statistic of 1.374, and a P-value of 0.085; thus, the indirect effect is not significant at the 5% significance level. Consequently, the hypothesis stating that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance cannot be accepted.

DISCUSSION

The Impact of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction

The results of the study indicate that work-life balance does not have a significant effect on employee performance in the Majene Regency Government. These findings suggest that the balance between work and personal life has not yet become a major factor in determining employee performance. One reason for this is the nature of public sector organizations, which are characterized by bureaucratic work systems and standardized procedures, and performance indicators established through operational standards. Under such circumstances, permanent employees are expected to complete their work in accordance with the organization's targets, so that their work-life balance does not directly affect the quality or quantity of their performance.

In addition, most government employees enjoy job security, stable income, and relatively consistent career paths. This situation means that employees' work motivation is influenced more by their sense of responsibility toward their duties and obligations as civil servants than by work-life balance. Therefore, work-life balance has not yet become a strong enough factor to improve employee performance within the bureaucracy. These findings are consistent with the research (Arimbawa et al., 2025), which found that work-life balance does not have a significant effect on the performance of government employees, either directly or through job satisfaction. This study explains that the characteristics of public-sector organizations mean that organizational factors—such as work systems and internal policies—have a more dominant influence on performance than work-life balance.

The results of this study can also be explained using Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which states that work-life balance functions primarily as a hygiene factor—meaning it can prevent job dissatisfaction but does not necessarily increase motivation and performance.

Job Satisfaction Influences Employee Performance

The results of this study indicate that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance among Majene Regency government employees. These results indicate that employees who experience higher levels of job satisfaction tend to demonstrate better job performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs typically show stronger commitment, greater responsibility, and a higher willingness to complete their tasks effectively. As a result, they are more motivated to achieve organizational goals and maintain the quality of public services.

This finding can be understood in light of the characteristics of public-sector organizations. Although government employees generally work in accordance with standard procedures and formal rules, job satisfaction remains an important psychological factor that influences how employees perform their duties. Satisfaction derived from supportive supervisors, harmonious relationships with coworkers, fair compensation, recognition, and opportunities for career development motivates employees to go the extra mile in their work. Conversely, employees who feel dissatisfied may do only the bare minimum required by organizational policies, without demonstrating additional initiative or creativity.

These findings are consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which explains that motivators—such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for personal development—create job satisfaction, which ultimately improves employee performance. When employees feel that their work makes a meaningful contribution and that the organization values their efforts, intrinsic motivation increases, leading to higher productivity and better performance outcomes.

Recent empirical studies also support these findings. (Buba et al., 2024) report that employees with higher job satisfaction consistently demonstrate better job performance because satisfaction strengthens motivation, commitment to the organization, and a willingness to contribute beyond the formal demands of the job. Likewise, Nawawi et al. (2025) found that job satisfaction significantly improves employee performance in Indonesian organizations, indicating that satisfied employees are more engaged and better able to achieve organizational goals. Nabhan & Munajat (2023) reported similar findings, concluding that job satisfaction positively influences employee performance through increased work engagement and organizational commitment, particularly in public organizations where psychological factors often play a more important role than financial incentives.

In the context of the Majene Regency Government, these findings suggest that improving employee performance should not rely solely on administrative regulations or work procedures. Instead, management should strengthen factors that enhance job satisfaction, such as a transparent promotion system, fair performance evaluations, supportive leadership, employee recognition, and opportunities for professional development. By creating a work environment that promotes employee satisfaction, public organizations can motivate employees to go beyond the minimum required standards, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of public services.

Work-Life Balance Affects Employee Performance

The results of the study indicate that job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of work-life balance on employee performance. This is because work-life balance does not have a significant impact on job satisfaction, meaning that one of the key conditions for a mediating effect is not met. In other words, improving work-life balance has not been shown to increase job satisfaction, which in turn leads to improved employee performance.

This situation indicates that organizational factors, such as compensation, relationships with supervisors, promotion opportunities, job security, and the work environment, more strongly influence employee job satisfaction in the Majene Regency Government. These factors have a greater impact on job satisfaction than work-life balance. As a result, changes in work-life balance were not significant enough to bring about changes in either job satisfaction or employee performance.

These findings are supported by research (Asniwati, 2025) among public sector employees, which showed that work-life balance does not affect job satisfaction, while psychological factors such as self-efficacy have a greater impact on improving job satisfaction and employee performance. The results indicate that in government organizations, performance improvement is influenced more by internal employee factors and organizational characteristics than by work-life balance policies.

Work-Life Balance Affects Employee Performance, Mediated by Job Satisfaction

The results of the study show that job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of work-life balance on employee performance among Majene Regency government employees. Thus, the hypothesis stating that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance cannot be accepted. These results indicate that improving work-life balance has not yet been able to enhance employee performance through increased job satisfaction.

Although employees feel they have a good work-life balance, this factor has not yet become a major determinant of job satisfaction. In public-sector organizations, job satisfaction is influenced more by organizational factors, such as leadership, reward systems, promotion opportunities, job security, and organizational support. Therefore, changes in work-life balance have not been significant enough to bring about changes in job satisfaction that would, in turn, lead to improved performance.

These findings indicate that the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance in the government sector does not always occur through job satisfaction. The characteristics of government organizations—which feature bureaucratic systems, standardized work procedures, and predetermined performance indicators—mean that employees are still required to complete their work in accordance with organizational targets. Thus, employee performance is influenced more by a sense of responsibility toward their duties, organizational commitment, and public service obligations than by perceptions of work-life balance.

From a theoretical perspective, the results of this study can be explained by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which states that work-life balance functions primarily as a hygiene factor. The presence of hygiene factors can reduce job dissatisfaction, but does not necessarily increase employee motivation or performance. Conversely, increased job satisfaction is more heavily influenced by motivator factors, such as recognition for achievements, opportunities for career development, greater responsibility, and recognition from organizations. Therefore, it is not enough for organizations to implement work-life balance policies; they must also strengthen motivational factors so that job satisfaction can increase and, ultimately, drive improved performance.

The results of this research align with research by Arimbawa et al. (2025), which found that job satisfaction has not been able to mediate the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance in government organizations because organizational factors more influence job satisfaction than work-life balance. In addition, research (Nawawi et al., 2025) explains that the effectiveness of work-life balance in improving performance depends on the organization's ability to boost employee motivation and job satisfaction. So, in the context of the Majene Regency Government, improving employee performance needs a more comprehensive strategy through strengthening leadership, fair reward systems, career development, and organizational support, in addition to implementing work-life balance policies.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine whether job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work–life balance and employee performance in an Indonesian local-government setting. Taken together, these results indicate that the performance benefits commonly attributed to work–life balance in private-sector research do not transfer automatically to bureaucratic public-sector contexts, where work–life balance appears to function as a hygiene factor rather than an active driver of performance. These conclusions should be read in light of the study's cross-sectional, single-site design, which constrains causal inference and generalisability; longitudinal and multi-site research incorporating potential moderators such as organizational support and leadership is needed to test the robustness and boundaries of the patterns reported.

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