



## Work-Life Balance: An Inhibiting or Supporting Employee Engagement on Performance?

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### ABSTRACT

In an increasingly competitive business environment, employee engagement has become a crucial factor in determining the success of an organization. Employees who are actively engaged in their work demonstrate higher levels of productivity, stronger innovation, and greater loyalty to the organization. However, the main challenge currently faced is how to ensure that employee engagement can effectively improve performance. One of the factors that can moderate this relationship is work-life balance, which plays an important role in maintaining employee well-being while also improving employee performance at the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office (BPS). This study explores the role of work-life balance as a moderating variable that affects employee engagement on performance using a descriptive quantitative approach. The research population consists of 111 employees of the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office using a saturated sampling technique. Data collection techniques were carried out through questionnaires and structured interviews. Data were analyzed using descriptive analysis, reliability and validity tests, as well as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The research results prove that employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. However, work-life balance hinders the impact of employee engagement on employee performance.

**Keyword:** Employee Engagement, Work-Life Balance, Employee Performance

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, organizations face immense pressure to continuously adapt to the dynamic work environment, especially amidst global competition and demands for innovation [1]. One of the most important assets that must be well-managed by organizations is human resources (HR) (Siahaan, 2017). Employees are not only seen as task executors but also as the main drivers of innovation and value creation [2]. In this context, employee performance becomes a key indicator of organizational success [3]. However, performance management cannot be carried out simply, especially due to various internal and external challenges faced by modern organizations [4].

One important issue that is often discussed in research related to Human Resources is employee engagement [5]. Various literatures indicate that employee engagement has a positive relationship with performance [6-8]. Employees who are emotionally and cognitively engaged tend to be more committed to the organization, have high work enthusiasm, and contribute maximally to achieving the organization's goals. However, at the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office there are several issues that hinder employee engagement [9]. This leads to a low sense of responsibility towards work outcomes, as well as a lack of effort to ensure that each task is completed with optimal quality [10]. Employees also experience difficulties in applying new knowledge and skills to daily tasks, limited focus while performing their work, and low enthusiasm for working longer hours [11]. Moreover, many employees feel that their contributions to the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office vision are still not optimal [12]. This is due to the lack of organizational support in terms of training and career development, excessive workload, and lack of recognition for employee contributions [13]. Additionally, an organizational culture that does not support innovation and work-life balance, limited understanding of the organization's vision and mission, as well as the mismatch between tasks and employee skills also contribute to their low engagement [14]. These factors hinder employee motivation and commitment to contribute

maximally to the organization. Previous research shows that employee engagement has a significant impact on employee performance [15]. However, there are also studies that state that employee engagement does not have a significant impact on performance [16-18]. Most existing studies tend to focus on the direct influence between employee engagement and performance, without considering other factors that could strengthen or weaken that influence.

In the context of modern organizations, work-life balance has become one of the most relevant factors. Employees who are unable to balance their professional and personal lives often experience excessive stress, which can ultimately reduce their performance [19]. At the Central Bureau of Statistics of North Sumatra Province, there are challenges related to the work-life balance of employees. Many employees find it difficult to enjoy time with their families due to the heavy workload. In addition, ineffective task management often causes work to not be completed on time. This results in many employees having to sacrifice time with their families to complete office tasks. This is because the workload at the Central Bureau of Statistics of North Sumatra Province is classified as high and complex, as it encompasses various aspects of work that demand precision, speed, and accuracy in the processing and presentation of statistical data. Therefore, the results of this study aim to prove and conduct an in-depth analysis of whether work-life balance hinders or supports employee engagement and performance.

North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office employees must complete various tasks within tight deadlines, especially in the preparation of periodic statistical reports such as the Consumer Price Index, Regional Gross Domestic Product, employment data, and other sectoral statistics. In addition, North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office (BPS) has a significant responsibility in conducting large-scale surveys and censuses such as the Population Census, Agricultural Census, and National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas), which involve field data collection and coordination with field officers to ensure that the data collected is accurate and complete. Beyond these main tasks, employees are often assigned additional duties such as internal training, administrative management, and technical assistance for regional government agencies, which further increases their workload [20, 21]. The high demands for data accuracy and validity also contribute to employees having to work longer hours to ensure that the data produced is error-free, considering that this data forms the basis for public policy formulation [22, 23]. As a result of this high workload, many employees struggle to maintain their work-life balance.

Most previous research has focused on the direct influence between employee engagement and performance, without considering that this relationship can be affected by other variables, such as work-life balance. In this context, there is a significant research gap, namely the lack of understanding of how work-life balance can strengthen the influence of employee engagement on performance [24]. Moreover, in the literature review, few studies address this phenomenon in the context of modern organizations that are continuously evolving and facing challenges from the era of digitalization and globalization. Previous research shows that employee engagement is directly positively related to performance. Additionally, other studies have demonstrated the importance of work-life balance in improving employee performance [25-30]. However, this research differs from previous studies because its focus is on the moderating role of work-life balance in that relationship, which has rarely been discussed in depth in the literature. With this approach, the research is expected to provide novelty in the literature related to modern HR management and practical relevance for organizations that want to optimize employee performance in an increasingly complex work environment.

### **1.1 Employee engagement**

Employee engagement refers to the level of commitment, motivation, and participation of employees towards their work and organization, which significantly affects both individual and overall organizational performance [31, 32]. Research shows that engaged employees tend to be more productive, satisfied, and have higher retention rates [33, 34] and positively impact customer satisfaction and team performance [35, 36]. Engagement consists of three main dimensions: cognitive, affective, and behavioral, which include attention, positive feelings, and the effort expended by employees in their work [37]. Factors influencing employee engagement include leadership support, career development opportunities, organizational culture, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace [38]. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory reveals that engagement is influenced by the balance between job demands and available resources. While the Social Exchange theory emphasizes the importance of a fair exchange between the organization and employees [39]. Employee engagement is also associated with better performance, high satisfaction, and low absenteeism and turnover rates [40].

### **1.2 Work-life balance**

Work-life balance refers to a state where individuals can effectively manage the demands of work and their personal lives without sacrificing their health or well-being [41]. Research shows that a good work-life balance can increase job satisfaction, reduce stress, and enhance the physical and mental well-being of employees [42]. This balance is influenced by various factors, including work flexibility, social support, and company policies that support employees' personal lives [43]. Role Theory explains that conflicts between work and personal life occur when the demands of both roles are contradictory [44], while the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory emphasizes the importance of maintaining personal resources to reduce fatigue and stress [45]. A good balance between work and personal life not only contributes to individual well-being but can also enhance organizational performance by reducing absenteeism and increasing employee loyalty [46].

### 1.3 Employee performance

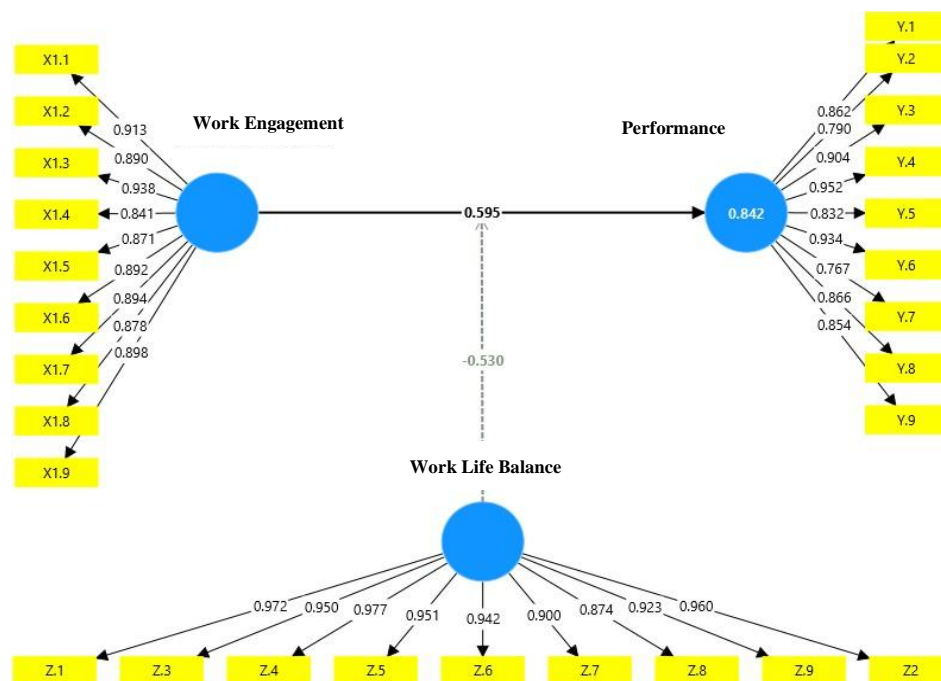
Employee performance refers to the level of work achievement produced by employees in carrying out the tasks and responsibilities assigned by the organization [47]. Research shows that high employee performance can enhance productivity, efficiency, and organizational competitiveness [48]. Factors that influence employee performance include individual skills and competencies, motivation, organizational support, and a conducive work environment [49]. The Expectancy Theory, developed by [50], explains that employee performance is influenced by individuals' expectations of the outcomes they will achieve from their efforts, while the Goal Setting Theory [51] emphasizes the importance of setting clear and measurable goals to enhance performance. Additionally, effective leadership and constructive feedback can enhance employee motivation and performance. Optimal employee performance not only benefits individuals but also contributes to the achievement of organizational goals, such as increased customer satisfaction and financial growth.

## 2. METHODS

The research method used is descriptive with a quantitative approach by collecting primary and secondary data. This research was conducted at the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office (BPS). The population of this study consists of all employees of the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office totaling 111 people, covering various levels of positions from staff executors to structural officials. The determination of the sample in this study uses the saturated sampling technique, where the entire population is made the research sample. The data collection technique involved the distribution of questionnaires and structured interviews with all employees of the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Office. Data analysis includes descriptive analysis, reliability and validity tests, and inferential statistical analysis with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Employee Engagement as an independent variable, Work-Life Balance as a mediating variable, and employee performance as a dependent variable.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings from the conducted research, which examines the influence of employee engagement on employee performance through work-life balance as a moderating variable. By using the structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, the analysis results will illustrate the strength of the relationships between variables, both partially and overall. All the results of this testing will serve as the basis for answering the research questions and providing evidence-based recommendations for human resource management at the Central Bureau of Statistics of North Sumatra Province and other organizations.



**Figure 1.** Loading Factor Full Model

Figure 1 is the Full Model Loading Factor in this study, illustrating the relationships between latent variables and their indicators. This model consists of three main latent variables, namely Employee Engagement (X1), Work-Life Balance (Z), and Employee Performance (Y), with each variable measured by several indicators.

**Table 1.** Validity and Reliability Test

Indicators	Variable	Outer Loading	AVE	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)
X1.1	Work Engagement (X1)	0.913	0.794	0.967	0.973
X1.2		0.890			
X1.3		0.938			
X1.4		0.841			
X1.5		0.871			
X1.6		0.892			
X1.7		0.894			
X1.8		0.878			
X1.9		0.898			
Z.1	Work Life Balace (Z)	0.972	0.882	0.983	0.985
Z.3		0.950			
Z.4		0.977			
Z.5		0.951			
Z.6		0.942			
Z.7		0.900			
Z.8		0.874			
Z.9		0.923			
Z2		0.960			
Y.1	Performance (Y)	0.862	0.747	0.957	0.965
Y.2		0.790			
Y.3		0.904			
Y.4		0.952			
Y.5		0.832			
Y.6		0.934			
Y.7		0.767			
Y.8		0.866			
Y.9		0.854			

The results of the validity and reliability tests presented in Table 4.1 indicate that the measurement model has very good psychometric quality. All indicators have outer loading values above the threshold of 0.70, indicating strong convergent validity and significant contributions from each indicator in representing the latent variable. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for the Employee Engagement construct ( $X1 = 0.794$ ), Work-Life Balance ( $Z = 0.882$ ), and Employee Performance ( $Y = 0.747$ ) are all above 0.50. This indicates that more than 50% of the variance of the indicators is explained by their respective latent constructs, thus confirming the model's convergent validity. From the reliability aspect, the Cronbach's alpha values of 0.967 (X1), 0.983 (Z), and 0.957 (Y) indicate very good internal consistency, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Additionally, the composite reliability values of each construct 0.973 (X1), 0.985 (Z), and 0.965 (Y) confirm the high reliability and internal consistency of the constructs. Thus, these results affirm that the measurement model possesses adequate validity and reliability for use in further structural analysis, providing a solid foundation for scientifically and deeply exploring inter-variable relationships.

**Table 2.** Discriminant validity - Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	Work Life Balace	Work Engagement	Empoloyee Performance	Work Life Balance x Work Engagement
Work Life Balace				
Work Engagement	0.307			
Employee Performance	0.618	0.599		
Work Life Balance x Work Engagement	0.380	0.343	0.165	

Table 4.2 shows the results of the discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) to ensure that the constructs in this study have adequate discriminant validity. This study not only examines the relationships between variables but also analyzes the influence between constructs. The resulting HTMT values indicate that the influence of Work-Life Balance on Employee Engagement is 0.307, the influence of Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance is 0.618, and the influence of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance is 0.599. Additionally, the moderation variable of work-life balance affecting employee engagement towards employee performance shows an HTMT value of 0.165. All values are below the threshold of 0.85, indicating that the discriminant validity between constructs has been met. This confirms that the constructs used in this study can explain the intended effects well.

**Table 3** Multicollinearity Testing

	VIF
Work Life Balance →Employee Performance	1.217
Employee Performance →Employee Performance	1.174
Work Life Balance → Employee Performance →Employee Performance	1.240

Table 3 shows the results of the multicollinearity test with VIF values for Work-Life Balance (1.217), Employee Engagement (1.174), and their interaction (1.240). All VIF values are below the threshold of 5, indicating that there is no multicollinearity issue in this model. This means that the independent variables are not strongly correlated with each other, so the regression analysis can be interpreted validly.

**Table 4. R Square**

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Employee Performance	0.842	0.838

Table 4 R Square shows the extent to which the independent variables can explain the variability of the dependent variable, namely Employee Performance. The R-square value of 0.842 indicates that 84.2% of the variability in employee performance can be explained by the variables Work-Life Balance, Employee Engagement, and their interaction in the regression model. Meanwhile, the adjusted R-square value of 0.838 provides an adjustment for the number of predictor variables used in the model. This value is slightly lower than the R-square to avoid overestimation, but it still indicates that the model has very good predictive ability, with most changes in employee performance being explained by these variables.

**Table 5. F Square**

	Work Life Balance	Work Engagement	Employee Performance	Work Engagement x Work Engagement
Work Life Balance			2.203	
Work Engagement			1.911	
Employee Performance				
Work Life Balance → Work Engagement			1.806	

**Table 5.** F Square is used to measure the effect size of each independent variable on the dependent variable. Based on Cohen's guidelines, an  $f^2$  value above 0.35 indicates a large effect, so an  $f^2$  value above 1 in this table indicates a very large effect of each variable on Employee Performance. This confirms that changes in these variables significantly contribute to the improvement or decline in employee performance in the research model.

**Table 4.2 Path Coefficients**

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Work Life Balance →Employee Performance	0.651	0.649	0.058	11.151	0.000
Employee Performance →Employee Performance	0.595	0.594	0.057	10.420	0.000
Work Life Balance → Employee Performance →Employee Performance	-0.530	-0.522	0.045	11.827	0.000

The research results displayed in Table 4.2 Path Coefficients show that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with a path coefficient of 0.651, a T-statistics value of 11.151, and a P-value of 0.000. This indicates that the better the balance between personal life and work, the higher the employee performance will be. Furthermore, employee engagement also has a positive and significant impact on employee performance with a path coefficient of 0.595, T-statistics of 10.420, and a P-value of 0.000, indicating that the higher the level of employee engagement in their work, the more optimal the performance produced. However, the research results indicate that work-life balance as a moderating variable actually weakens the influence of employee engagement on employee performance. This is indicated by a path coefficient of -0.530, T-statistics of 11.827, and a P-value of 0.000, which show a negative and significant effect. This means that although work-life balance and employee engagement individually have a positive impact on performance, the combination of both simultaneously can actually reduce employee performance. This is because when employees focus too much on their personal lives and mental health, they will reduce their effort at work. In other words, maintaining a work-life balance can cause employees to lower their priorities on work, which ultimately reduces their performance.

## 5. Discussion

The research results prove that employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. This means that the higher the employee engagement in their work, the higher the performance produced by the employees. This is because the employees of the central statistics agency tend to have strong intrinsic motivation to work well, as seen from their enjoyment of every challenge in their work and their desire to contribute the best to the central statistics agency. This high intrinsic motivation encourages employees to work harder, be more focused, and thus produce high performance. The second reason why employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee performance is because the central statistics agency has a strong organizational culture and emphasizes service-oriented, accountable, competent, harmonious, and loyal values. Where these cultural values encourage employees to commit to always wanting to be involved and always wanting to participate in every assigned work activity. The concrete forms that prove that the employees of the central statistics agency are committed to engaging with the organization are that they tend to be more proactive in completing tasks, take initiative, are innovative, meticulous, resilient in facing pressure and challenges, and demonstrate high responsibility in their work, which ultimately enhances their performance. The third reason why employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee performance is that high employee engagement tends to encourage them to work towards clear goals, strive to achieve targets, and complete tasks efficiently. This condition will increase employee and team productivity, as well as enhance organizational productivity. The fourth reason why employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee performance is that employee engagement affects not only individuals but also teams. Engaged employees are more likely to be able to collaborate with colleagues, share ideas, and support one another. This creates a more harmonious and effective work environment, which ultimately has a positive impact on team and organizational performance. The fifth reason is that employees who feel engaged in their work are less likely to take leave or resign from their jobs. With higher attendance rates and strong loyalty, they can be more consistent in contributing to their work, thereby improving long-term performance. This research is supported by.

Research results prove that work-life balance can weaken the influence of employee engagement on employee performance. This means that work-life balance does not always have a positive impact on employee engagement and performance. This is because employees who have a high work-life balance tend to be able to evenly divide their attention between work and personal life. Although they are engaged in work, they are also able to allocate time and energy for family, hobbies, or health. Thus, employees do not fully allocate their time and energy to office work, which reduces the impact of engagement on performance. The second reason why work-life balance can weaken the impact of employee engagement on employee performance is that optimal work-life balance is often associated with stricter and more rigid work hour limitations, such as unwillingness to work excessive overtime, unwillingness to bring work home, and unwillingness to complete work outside of working hours. This will significantly limit the maximum contribution of employees, so even though they are highly engaged, their productivity or work output is not as high as employees who are more flexible in allocating their time to work. The third reason why work-life balance can weaken the impact of employee engagement on employee performance is that employees who are too focused on work-life balance will lose the desire to achieve more. Employees are reluctant to accept additional challenges that could enhance their performance because they do not want to sacrifice their personal balance. Employees with a high work-life balance are more likely to choose jobs with a reasonable workload compared to those who prioritize engagement and career achievement. This can lead them to produce average performance contributions, resulting in an average career. Therefore, more flexible policies and better workload management strategies are needed to improve employee well-being without reducing organizational productivity. Recent research shows that organizations that support work-life balance through flexible policies or employee wellness programs are able to improve employee performance.

## 6. Conclusion

Employee Engagement Has a Positive and Significant Impact on Employee Performance. The higher the employee engagement in their work, the higher the performance produced. This is due to strong intrinsic motivation, an organizational culture that encourages commitment, and the presence of clear work goals. In addition, employee engagement also enhances teamwork, creates a more effective work environment, and reduces absenteeism and turnover rates. Work-Life Balance Weakens the Impact of Engagement on Employee Performance Although work-life balance has its benefits, in the context of employee engagement, this balance can actually reduce the positive impact of engagement on performance. Employees who are too focused on work-life balance tend to limit their contributions outside of working hours, are less flexible in allocating time for additional tasks, and are less motivated to achieve higher performance. Thus, organizations need to design policies that allow employees to remain highly engaged in their work while maintaining a healthy work-life balance, without sacrificing productivity and organizational achievements.

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