

Motivation as a Moderator in the Relationship between Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the determinants of personnel performance by examining the influence of work-life balance and job satisfaction and evaluating the role of motivation as a moderation variable in these relationships. Using a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling analysis techniques based on Partial Least Squares or SEM PLS, this study involved 180 personnel of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police (POLDA) Sulawesi as respondents selected through structured sampling techniques. The results of statistical analysis provide empirical evidence that work-life balance has a positive and significant influence on both job satisfaction and employee performance directly. On the other hand, the findings of the study show that motivation partially does not have a significant influence on performance, but it has been shown to play a vital role as a moderation variable that strengthens the relationship between variables in the model. In addition, job satisfaction was identified as a strong mediator in bridging the influence of work-life balance on personnel work results. The conclusion of this study confirms that to optimize performance in a stressful police environment, synergy between proportionate work balance policies and the creation of a satisfactory environment is needed because the motivation of new personnel will effectively impact performance when supported by adequate psychological and well-being conditions.

Keywords: Work-life balance, Employee Performance, Motivation, Job Satisfaction

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis determinan kinerja personel dengan meneliti pengaruh keseimbangan kerja-hidup dan kepuasan kerja serta mengevaluasi peran motivasi sebagai variabel moderasi dalam hubungan tersebut. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan teknik analisis Structural Equation Modeling berbasis Partial Least Squares atau SEM PLS, penelitian ini melibatkan 180 personel Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Tenggara (POLDA) Sulawesi sebagai responden yang dipilih melalui teknik pengambilan sampel terstruktur. Hasil analisis statistik memberikan bukti empiris bahwa keseimbangan kerja-hidup memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja dan kinerja karyawan secara langsung. Di sisi lain, temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi sebagian tidak memiliki pengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja, tetapi telah terbukti memainkan peran penting sebagai variabel moderasi yang memperkuat hubungan antar variabel dalam model. Selain itu, kepuasan kerja diidentifikasi sebagai mediator yang kuat dalam menjembatani pengaruh keseimbangan kerja-hidup terhadap hasil kerja personel. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa untuk mengoptimalkan kinerja dalam lingkungan kepolisian yang penuh tekanan, diperlukan sinergi antara kebijakan keseimbangan kerja yang proporsional dan penciptaan lingkungan yang memuaskan karena motivasi personel baru akan secara efektif memengaruhi kinerja ketika didukung oleh kondisi psikologis dan kesejahteraan yang memadai.

Kata kunci: Keseimbangan kerja-hidup, Kinerja Karyawan, Motivasi, Kepuasan Kerja

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INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance is one of the topics that is gaining increasing attention in human resource management studies due to increasing work pressure, changing job demands, and employees' expectations for flexibility. An imbalance between work and personal life can lead to a decrease in productivity. A well-managed work-life balance has been proven to have a positive impact on employee

performance. Research shows that a structured work-life balance can increase employee engagement and reduce burnout, which directly impacts performance improvement (Wardani & Firmansyah, 2020; Alnagbi et al., 2025). Employees who feel balanced in work and personal roles are more likely to be emotionally committed to work, which ultimately impacts the productivity and overall performance of the organization.

The work-life balance variable is an important element in creating work welfare that has an impact on performance. Literature studies say that work-life balance not only affects work engagement and satisfaction, but can also reduce work stress and turnover intention. A study shows that an inadequate work-life balance can increase the risk of burnout and lower job satisfaction (Gamskjaer et al., 2021; Chen & Kao, 2023). Job satisfaction itself is the result of employees' positive perception of their work environment. A good work-life balance encourages increased job satisfaction which ultimately strengthens the commitment to the organization. Research such as Azeem & Akhtar (2014) and Sabrina & Kurniawati (2024) reveals that organizational support in implementing work-life balance policies contributes significantly to job satisfaction and productivity. The motivation variable as a moderator is very important because it strengthens the relationship between work-life balance and performance. Research by Faisal et al. (2022) shows that intrinsic motivation reinforces the positive influence of work-life balance on well-being and performance.

Previous research has highlighted a direct relationship between work-life balance and performance or job satisfaction. However, not many have comprehensively tested the role of motivation as a moderator variable, especially in the public service sector such as the police. Studies on work-life balance in the police environment in Indonesia are still limited, so generalization of results from other sectors is not appropriate to be applied directly in this context. This shows that there is an important research gap to be filled through this research. In addition, the theoretical gap arises due to the lack of integration between work-life balance, job satisfaction, and motivation within a single holistic model framework. Existing studies have examined these variables more separately or only in mediated relationships. Therefore, an integrative model approach is needed that tests how motivation as a moderator can strengthen the influence of work-life balance on performance, also considering the role of job satisfaction as an intermediate variable.

This research model proposes that work-life balance affects performance through job satisfaction, and this relationship is strengthened by motivation. This mechanism is in line with the theory of self-determination which states that individuals with high intrinsic motivation will be more motivated to perform well despite stress. In other words, a good work-life balance will have a greater impact on performance if the individual has a high level of motivation (Noermijati & Primasari, 2015; Udin, 2023).

Motivation as a moderator plays an important role in determining how much influence work-life balance has on performance. When employees are highly motivated, they are better able to manage work pressure and make optimal use of work-life balance policies. Research by Ebegetale et al. (2023)

and Alves et al. (2024) shows that work motivation can strengthen the relationship between organizational factors and performance. Therefore, this model is expected to provide a new understanding of how work-life balance, job satisfaction, and motivation are interrelated in influencing the performance of POLDA Sulawesi personnel.

This research was carried out on Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police (POLDA Sulawesi) personnel who have work characteristics with high intensity and pressure. Tasks in the field, involvement in operational activities, as well as the demands of discipline and preparedness make work-life balance an important issue in human resource management. This condition presents a big challenge for organizations in ensuring the psychological well-being and optimal performance of personnel. In addition, in the context of a hierarchical and structured police organizational culture, personnel motivation is key in the implementation of a work-life balance policy. This study provides space to examine how work-life balance, job satisfaction, and motivation can influence each other and contribute to performance in a unique work environment such as POLDA Sulawesi.

This study aims to analyze the influence of work-life balance on performance, job satisfaction, and the role of job satisfaction on the performance of POLDA Sulawesi personnel, as well as evaluate the role of motivation as a moderator variable that strengthens the relationship between work-life balance and performance. The contribution of this research includes three aspects, namely theoretical contributions by enriching the literature through an integrative model involving work-life balance, job satisfaction, and motivation in the context of police organizations; practical contributions in the form of policy recommendations for the management of POLDA Sulawesi in improving personnel performance through strengthening work-life balance and motivation; and contextual contributions in expanding understanding of the application of work-life balance in demanding and stressful work environments such as POLDA Sulawesi.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling analysis techniques based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The quantitative approach was chosen because it is able to objectively explain the causal relationship between variables through numerical data processing. SEM-PLS was used to analyze models of the complex relationship between work-life balance, job satisfaction, motivation, and personnel performance, as well as to test the role of moderation and mediation simultaneously. This technique is suitable for use in studies with latent constructs, a large number of indicators, and when the distribution of data is not completely normal. The analysis process is carried out through two stages, namely the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the evaluation of the structural model (inner model), including the test of the validity, reliability, and significance of the relationship between variables. A sample of 180 personnel The research instrument was compiled in the form of a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The use of the Likert scale allows for a more structured and standardized

measurement of respondents' perceptions. The questionnaire was given to POLDA Sulawesi personnel who were research respondents with sampling techniques adapted to the characteristics of the population. Data collection is carried out directly through the distribution of physical questionnaires as well as online to ensure optimal response rates. The data obtained is then processed using SEM-PLS software to generate a valid and reliable relationship model.

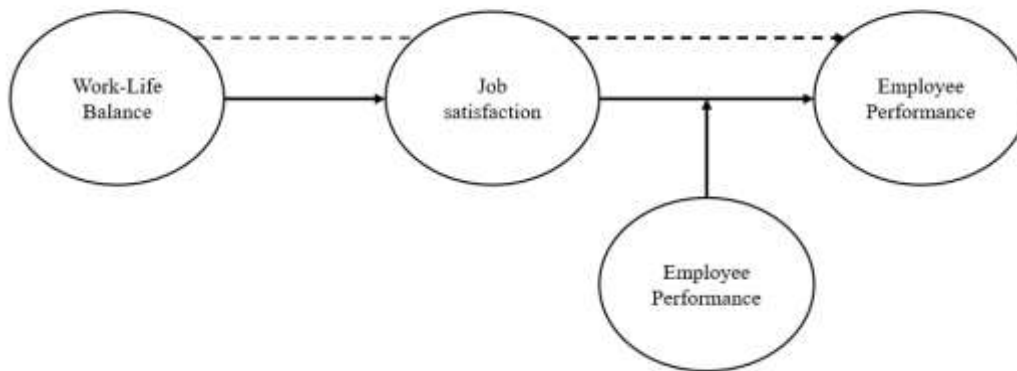


Figure 1. Research Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The table presents comprehensive demographic data from a study conducted among personnel of the South East Sulawesi Regional Police (POLDA Sultra), comprising a total sample of 180 respondents, with a focus on gender, age, education, and marital status. The data reveals that the respondent composition is predominantly male (86.11%), reflecting the general structural characteristic of the police force. In terms of age, the majority of personnel fall within the 31-45 years range (62.78%), representing a highly productive "mid-career" group that typically carries significant operational responsibilities. Regarding educational background, most respondents hold a bachelor's degree (68.33%), indicating a well-educated workforce with the cognitive maturity to manage complex professional tasks. Furthermore, a significant majority of the personnel are married (91.67%), which serves as a crucial demographic factor in this study; this high percentage of married individuals implies the existence of substantial family commitments that compete with professional duties. Overall, this profile indicates a population of experienced, educated professionals who face the dual demands of rigorous police duty and domestic responsibilities, making them highly relevant subjects for examining the dynamics of work-life balance and determining how motivation acts as a moderator to sustain employee performance in a high-pressure environment.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Testing Validity and Reliability

Variables	Items	Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average variance extracted
Motivation	M_1	0,915	0,930	0,949	0,825
	M_2	0,924			

	M_3	0,887			
	M_4	0,906			
	X_1	0,939			
Work-Life Balance	X_2	0,940	0,949	0,950	0,868
	X_3	0,937			
	X_4	0,911			
	Y_1	0,941			
Employee Performance	Y_2	0,933	0,958	0,959	0,889
	Y_3	0,948			
	Y_4	0,949			
	Z_1	0,930			
Job Satisfaction	Z_2	0,911	0,959	0,960	0,892
	Z_3	0,972			
	Z_4	0,963			

Based on the results of the recapitulation of validity and reliability tests presented in Table 1, the research instrument showed excellent measurement quality and met all goodness of fit criteria in the evaluation of the outer model. Specifically, the evaluation of convergent validity through the loading factor value showed that all indicator items in the variables Motivation, Work-Life Balance, Employee Performance, and Job Satisfaction had very high values, moving in the range of 0.887 to 0.972, which was far beyond the standard threshold of 0.70. The validity of this instrument is further strengthened by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all variables recorded above 0.80 (the lowest at Motivation at 0.825 and the highest at Job Satisfaction at 0.892), which indicates that each construct is able to explain more than 80% of the variance of its constituent indicators. On the other hand, the internal consistency test also showed very satisfactory results, where Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for the four variables were in the range of 0.930 to 0.960, well above the recommended limit of 0.70. The high value of these statistics confirms that the instrument used is not only valid in measuring what should be measured, but also has very stable and consistent reliability, so the resulting data is very feasible to proceed to the structural model analysis stage.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Testing

	1	2	3	4
Motivation	0,908			
Work-Life Balance	0,372	0,932		
Employee Performance	0,338	0,735	0,943	
Job Satisfaction	0,414	0,782	0,802	0,944

The evaluation of discriminant validity in Table 2 was carried out using the Fornell Larcker criteria to ensure that each latent construct is markedly different and unique from the other constructs statistically. The results of the analysis showed that the square root value of the Average Variance Extracted or AVE displayed on the diagonal line was consistently higher than the correlation value between any latent variable below it. For example, the root value of AVE for the Employee Performance variable of 0.943 is proven to be greater than the correlation of the variable with Motivation of 0.338 or with Work-life balance of 0.735 and Job Satisfaction of 0.802 and a similar consistency pattern is

also found in all other variables. This condition confirms that the research instrument has met the requirements for good discriminant validity where each variable is able to explain the variance of its own indicator more dominantly than the variance shared with other variables so that it can be concluded that there is no problem of multicollinearity between variables in this model.

Table 3. R Square

	R-square
Employee Performance	0,691
Motivation	0,612

Based on the results of the determination coefficient test listed in Table 3, the R Square value for the Employee Performance variable was recorded at 0.691 which indicates that this research model is classified as strong or substantial. This figure means that 69.1 percent of the variability in the performance of POLDA South Sulawesi personnel can be effectively explained by variations from independent variables in the model while the remaining 30.9 percent is explained by other factors outside this study. Furthermore, the R Square value for the Motivation variable was obtained as 0.612 which also indicates a moderate to strong category where 61.2 percent of the formation of personnel motivation can be explained by the construct that influences it. Overall, the high elevation of these two values proves that the structural model built has excellent predictive capabilities and is relevant in explaining the phenomenon of performance and motivation in the police environment.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results

	Original sample	P values
Motivation -> Employee Performance	0,064	0,223
Work-Life Balance -> Employee Performance	0,251	0,040
Work-Life Balance -> Job Satisfaction	0,782	0,000
Job Satisfaction -> Employee Performance	0,539	0,000
Motivation x Job Satisfaction		
Job Satisfaction -> Employee Performance	0,131	0,011

The results of statistical analysis on the direct influence pathway provide a contrasting picture of the determinants of personnel performance where the work-life balance variable shows a much more dominant impact than motivation. Specifically, Work-life balance has been shown to have a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.251$, $p = 0.040$) which indicates that the ability of personnel to divide time between the demands of police duties and personal life is the main key in encouraging the improvement of their performance in the field. On the other hand, the findings that are quite surprising can be seen in the Motivation variable which statistically shows a not significant effect on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.064$, $p = 0.223$) so that it can be interpreted that the provision of motivation alone without being supported by other conditional factors is not strong enough to drive personnel performance directly in this research model.

Evaluation of structural pathways involving job satisfaction variables reveals a very strong and consistent causal relationship that confirms the vital position of these variables in organizational

mechanisms. The test results prove that Work-life balance has a very large and significant influence on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.782$, $p = 0.000$) which means that the fulfillment of life balance is the main predictor that shapes personnel satisfaction with their work. Furthermore, Job Satisfaction itself has been shown to have a significant impact on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.539$, $p = 0.000$), these findings confirm that personnel who have a high level of psychological satisfaction tend to contribute to much more optimal and productive performance than their colleagues who feel less satisfied.

The findings regarding the effect of interaction or moderation are the main highlights in this study because they have succeeded in proving that synergy between variables is able to change the significance of the influence on performance. The interaction variable Motivation x Job Satisfaction was shown to have a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance ($\beta = 0.131$, $p = 0.011$) which statistically confirmed the existence of the moderation effect in the constructed structural model. This provides a deep understanding that although motivation is partially not significant, when the motivation meets or interacts with high job satisfaction conditions, the impact on personnel performance becomes real and very meaningful.

The moderation findings confirm that the job satisfaction variable serves as an effective catalyst in strengthening the relationship between the psychological aspects of personnel and their work results. The moderation effect by this interaction shows that the Employee Performance improvement strategy will achieve maximum results if the organization is able to integrate motivation programs with the creation of a satisfying work environment. In other words, increasing the motivation of new personnel will be effective in boosting performance if accompanied by adequate job satisfaction so that the combination of these two elements becomes a crucial strengthening factor in human resource management in the South Sulawesi POLDA environment.

Discussion

The results show that all the relationships between variables in the model have a significant influence, corroborating previous theoretical arguments and supporting empirical evidence from various studies. Work-life balance has been proven to directly affect the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel. A work-life balance provides space for personnel to manage stress, increase engagement, and maintain energy and focus while carrying out tasks. These findings are in line with the literature that states that a well-managed work-life balance contributes to increasing engagement and lowering burnout rates, which has an impact on more stable and optimal performance (Wardani & Firmansyah, 2020; Alnagbi et al., 2025).

In addition to its direct influence on performance, work-life balance also has a significant influence on job satisfaction. Personnel who feel they have a balance between the demands of work and personal life show higher levels of job satisfaction. This supports the findings of Azeem & Akhtar (2014) and Sabrina & Kurniawati (2024) who emphasize the importance of organizational policies in creating a work environment that allows employees to fulfill their professional and personal responsibilities in a balanced manner. In the context of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, where

operational pressure and demands are very high, the achievement of job satisfaction through work-life balance is an important factor to ensure the continuity of motivation and loyalty of personnel.

Job satisfaction has also been found to be a significant mediator between work-life balance and performance. In other words, work-life balance not only has a direct impact on performance, but also indirectly through increased job satisfaction. These findings reinforce the findings of research by Fried et al. (2008) and Miao (2011), who stated that job satisfaction can improve the quality of task performance, even in stressful work situations. In a police environment that demands high preparedness, personnel who are satisfied with their jobs will be more motivated to perform at their best, reduce the likelihood of emotional burnout, and maintain productivity stability.

Motivation has been shown to significantly strengthen the relationship between work-life balance and performance. Personnel who have a high level of motivation are able to utilize work-life balance more optimally, so that their performance increases more significantly than personnel who have low motivation. This is consistent with the theory of self-determination (Grant, 2008) as well as the findings of Faisal et al. (2022) and Udin (2023), which affirm that intrinsic motivation can be a reinforcer in challenging work situations. In the context of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, where tasks are often unexpected and stressful, motivation is an important psychological capital that allows personnel to maintain performance despite being under high pressure.

Overall, the significant findings of this study show that the combination of work-life balance, job satisfaction, and motivation has a strong impact on personnel performance. This integrative model not only reinforces the existing empirical evidence, but also makes a theoretical and practical contribution in unique work contexts such as policing environments. The managerial implications of these findings are very important, namely the need for organizations to design work welfare policies that support work-life balance, create an environment that increases job satisfaction, and strengthen internal motivation as a sustainable strategy to improve personnel performance.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that work-life balance has a significant influence on the performance of Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police personnel, both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction as a mediating variable. In addition, motivation has been shown to strengthen the relationship between work-life balance and performance, meaning that highly motivated personnel are able to feel the positive impact of work-life balance more optimally on their performance. These findings support the theory and results of previous research, and provide empirical evidence that the integrative model approach is able to explain more comprehensively the dynamics of performance in high-pressure organizations such as the police.

The implications of this research lead to the importance of police management to design and implement policies that support the work-life balance of personnel, while creating a work environment that is able to increase job satisfaction and maintain intrinsic motivation. Organizations need to pay

attention to non-financial aspects such as work flexibility, social support, and motivational leadership. For further research, it is recommended to explore other factors that can moderate or mediate the relationship between work-life balance and performance, such as resilience, work stress, or organizational support, as well as to expand the scope of the study to other police institutions in order to strengthen the generalization of these findings.

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