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Work-Life Balance, Quality of Work Life, and Employee Performance among Indonesian Civil Servants: the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

Andrea Yudhistira Mustika¹, Meiske Claudia², Ahmad Rifani³, Hastin Umi Anisah⁴, Cindyva Thalia Mustika⁵

¹²³⁴⁵Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Indonesia

Correspondence: meiske.claudia@ulm.ac.id

Abstract

Employee performance among Indonesian civil servants has become a critical issue under fiscal-efficiency policy, which increases work pressure while limiting operational resources. This study examines the relationships among work-life balance, quality of work life, job satisfaction, and employee performance at the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency. A cross-sectional explanatory survey was conducted with 158 operational civil servants. Data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The model explained 55.4% of the variance in employee performance and 46.8% of the variance in job satisfaction. All proposed relationships were statistically supported. Work-life balance had the strongest relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.537$), while quality of work life had the strongest direct relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$). Job satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance ($\beta = 0.196$) and between quality of work life and employee performance ($\beta = 0.147$). This study contributes by showing that job satisfaction acts as a psychological mechanism linking recovery conditions and workplace resources to civil-servant performance in a fiscally constrained public-sector setting. Practically, agencies should improve workload distribution, schedule predictability, supervisory support, coordination, and non-financial recognition. Because the design was cross-sectional, the findings indicate statistically supported relationships rather than definitive causal effects.

KEYWORDS

work-life balance; quality of work life; job satisfaction; employee performance; civil servant.

Introduction

The performance of civil servants is central to public-service delivery and good governance in Indonesia, particularly in infrastructure agencies whose outputs directly affect connectivity, economic mobility, and public welfare. While formal performance-management instruments exist, they often fail to capture the influence of work-life boundaries, employee well-being, and workplace quality on sustained performance outcomes (Fatimah et al., 2025; Haricharan, 2023; Mohammad et al., 2025).

At the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency, the official 2024 quarterly Employee Performance Target (Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai or SKP) recap classified employee performance into five categories: Very Good, Good, Poor, Very Poor, and No Rating. Across the first to fourth quarters, the number of employees rated Very Good was 77, 77, 74, and 48, respectively, while the Good category included 82, 87, 89, and 114 employees. The Poor category included one employee only in the third quarter, whereas the Very Poor category increased from none in the first quarter to one employee in both the second and third quarters and three employees in the fourth quarter. Six employees received no rating in the first quarter, with none recorded in the subsequent quarters. The reduction in Very Good ratings and the increase in Very Poor ratings

indicate an administratively meaningful downward shift in top-tier performance ratings rather than a statistically significant decline because the records were not subjected to inferential statistical testing.

These empirical conditions justify using work-life balance and quality of work life as key explanatory variables. Work-life balance is relevant because employees reported work spillover into personal time, while quality of work life is relevant because fiscal-efficiency measures affected workplace support, facilities, compensation perceptions, and administrative conditions. Examining these two variables provides a contextual explanation of employee performance that goes beyond formal appraisal metrics.

Work-life balance has been widely recognized as a critical determinant of employee outcomes. Building on the Effort-Recovery Model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998) and supported by more recent studies on employee well-being (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015), sustained work demands without adequate recovery accumulate as fatigue and progressively erode cognitive capacity, motivation, and performance. Complementary theoretical perspectives, such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), highlight that employee performance is influenced not only by demands but also by available resources and recovery opportunities. Recent empirical investigations in the Indonesian public sector consistently confirm that employees who maintain healthy boundaries between professional and personal domains display higher engagement and productivity (Aulia & Yaman, 2024; Satrya et al., 2025).

Quality of work life, in turn, captures the organization's capacity to meet employees' physiological, psychological, and social needs through fair compensation, safe conditions, participation, and growth opportunities (Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2024). When these conditions deteriorate, employees tend to withdraw discretionary effort, undermining both individual and organizational performance (Sihombing et al., 2024; Yusnita & Melati F, 2023).

Job satisfaction refers to employees' affective evaluation of their job and work environment. In this study, job satisfaction is treated as a mediating mechanism because work-life balance and quality of work life may first shape how satisfied employees feel before influencing their performance. Employees who have better recovery opportunities and more supportive work conditions are more likely to experience satisfaction, which can encourage stronger effort, commitment, and performance. However, previous findings remain inconsistent. Faustina and Julianti (2024) found that job satisfaction did not mediate the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance, while Putri and Ardiana (2024) reported no significant mediating role of job satisfaction in the quality-of-work-life pathway. These mixed findings indicate the need to re-examine job satisfaction as a mediator in the Indonesian civil-servant context, especially under fiscal-efficiency pressure.

The main novelty of this study is the mediation testing of job satisfaction in a fiscally constrained Indonesian public infrastructure agency. This context is important because civil servants at the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency are required to maintain public-service performance while facing budget-efficiency pressure and limited operational resources. Prior studies have produced inconsistent evidence on whether job satisfaction mediates the effects of work-life balance and quality of work life on employee performance. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by testing both direct and indirect relationships in one integrated model. The fiscal-efficiency setting provides the contextual novelty, while the Effort-Recovery Model and the Job Demands-Resources framework

provide the theoretical basis for hypotheses H1 to H7.

This study examines the direct relationships of work-life balance and quality of work life with employee performance and job satisfaction, as well as their indirect relationships with employee performance through job satisfaction, among civil servants at the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency. The study contributes theoretically by integrating the Effort-Recovery Model and the Job Demands-Resources framework to explain how personal recovery conditions and organizational work resources influence employee performance through an affective mechanism. It also extends the application of these frameworks to a fiscally constrained Indonesian public infrastructure agency, a context that remains underrepresented in previous research. Practically, the findings provide an operational basis for agency leaders to control workload, establish predictable work schedules, strengthen workplace facilities and supervisory support, and monitor job satisfaction as part of employee-performance management under budget constraints.

Literature Review

Employee performance refers to the extent to which employees achieve expected work outcomes in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, and contribution to organizational goals (Robbins & Judge, 2023). In the Indonesian public sector, employee performance is formally managed through the *Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai (SKP)* system, which serves as the basis for planning, monitoring, and evaluating civil servants' work contributions (Kementerian PANRB Republik Indonesia, 2021). Recent studies increasingly regard employee performance as a multidimensional construct shaped by competence, work environment, motivation, and psychological conditions, especially in public institutions facing accountability pressures and resource constraints (Fatimah et al., 2025; Mohammad et al., 2025). In such contexts, performance is highly sensitive to disruptions in employees' personal resources and the quality of organizational support.

Work-life balance refers to employees' ability to maintain an acceptable equilibrium between work demands and personal life so that neither domain excessively undermines the other (Haar & Brougham, 2022; Irawanto et al., 2021). Contemporary research emphasizes that work-life balance is not merely about dividing time, but also about managing role boundaries, maintaining psychological detachment from work, and preserving well-being across domains (Inegbedion, 2024; Pensar & Rousi, 2023). When employees are able to manage these boundaries effectively, they tend to experience lower strain and stronger positive work attitudes, which in turn support higher job satisfaction and better performance (Inegbedion, 2024; Udin, 2023).

Quality of work life encompasses employees' perceptions of whether the workplace provides fair, safe, supportive, and development-oriented conditions that enable them to function effectively while maintaining well-being (Haricharan, 2023; Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2024). In recent literature, quality of work life has been closely associated with equitable treatment, supportive supervision, healthy work environments, social integration, and opportunities for growth, all of which strengthen both individual and organizational outcomes (Anggraini et al., 2023; Aulia & Yaman, 2024). Empirical evidence from Indonesian organizations also shows that improvements in quality of work life are followed by higher job satisfaction and stronger employee performance (Aulia & Yaman, 2024; Luthtamy & Ekhsan, 2024; Siagian et al., 2024).

Job satisfaction refers to employees' affective evaluation of their job and work environment. In this study, job satisfaction is positioned as a mediating variable because workplace conditions may first shape employees' satisfaction before influencing their performance. Previous studies show that

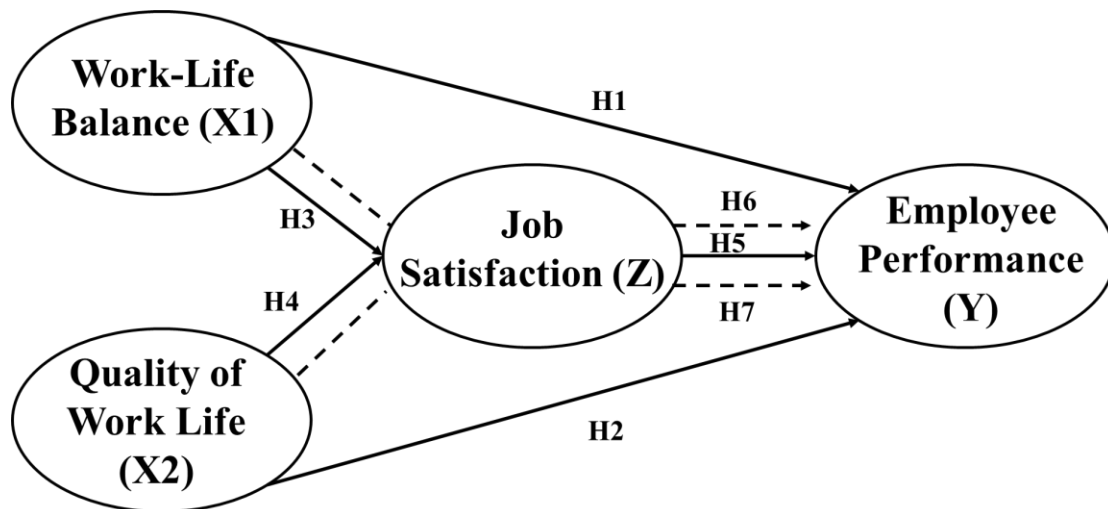


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

work-life balance and quality of work life can improve job satisfaction and employee performance (Medina-Garrido et al., 2023; Prasetyo & Wardoyo, 2023). However, empirical findings remain inconsistent. Faustina and Julianti (2024) found that job satisfaction did not significantly mediate the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. Similarly, Putri and Ardiana (2024) reported that job satisfaction did not significantly mediate the relationship between quality of work life and employee performance.

These inconsistent findings indicate that the mediating role of job satisfaction still requires further examination. Therefore, job satisfaction should not only be treated as an outcome of favourable work conditions, but also as a psychological mechanism that links work-life balance and quality of work life to employee performance.

Based on this logic, the present study tests a mediation model in which work-life balance and quality of work life influence employee performance both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. This model connects the Effort-Recovery Model and the Job Demands-Resources framework with the proposed hypotheses by positioning job satisfaction as the pathway between workplace conditions and employee performance.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The conceptual model frames employee performance as the outcome of a mediated process in which work-life balance and quality of work life operate as workplace-related antecedents, while job satisfaction functions as an affective mediator. Job satisfaction is positioned as a mediator because the reviewed literature suggests that employees first evaluate the balance, fairness, support, and quality of their work environment, and this evaluation subsequently influences their performance behavior. This position is consistent with recent studies that link work-life balance and quality of work life to job satisfaction and employee performance (Haar & Brougham, 2022; Inegbedion, 2024; Irawanto et al., 2021; Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2024). The Effort-Recovery Model explains the path from work-life balance to job satisfaction and employee performance, whereas the Job Demands-Resources framework explains how quality of work life, as a form of workplace resource, supports satisfaction and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001; Meijman & Mulder, 1998). In addition, Affective Events Theory explains why job satisfaction can serve as a psychological mechanism linking workplace experiences to employee performance (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Thus, the model includes two exogenous variables, namely work-life balance and quality of work life, one

mediating variable, namely job satisfaction, and one endogenous variable, namely employee performance.

Based on the conceptual framework in Figure 1, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Work-life balance has a positive effect on employee performance.
- H2: Quality of work life has a positive effect on employee performance.
- H3: Work-life balance has a positive effect on job satisfaction.
- H4: Quality of work life has a positive effect on job satisfaction.
- H5: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on employee performance.
- H6: Job satisfaction mediates the effect of work-life balance on employee performance.
- H7: Job satisfaction mediates the effect of quality of work life on employee performance.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional explanatory design to examine the relationships among work-life balance, quality of work life, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Because the data were collected at one point in time, the term “effect” in this study refers to statistically supported relationships within the PLS-SEM model and should not be interpreted as definitive causal evidence. Stronger causal inference would require longitudinal or experimental data (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Hair et al., 2022). The study was conducted at the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency, a public infrastructure agency responsible for national road and bridge development, maintenance, and supervision in South Kalimantan Province.

The initial population consisted of 166 civil servants working at the agency. Because this study focused on operational work conditions, eight senior structural positions were excluded, consisting of one agency head, four section heads, and three work-unit heads. Therefore, the eligible sampling frame consisted of 158 operational civil servants. A census was conducted among all eligible respondents, and all 158 questionnaires were usable for analysis. This approach was considered appropriate for a bounded organizational population, although the possibility of self-report and non-response bias cannot be fully eliminated (Saunders et al., 2023; Sekaran & Bougie, 2020).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 42 indicators across four constructs: work-life

Table 1. Measurement Instrument Summary

Construct	Source	Items	Measurement Focus
Work-life balance	Hayman's work-life balance construct	11	Work demands, personal life, and role interference
Quality of work life	Walton's model; Nanjundeswaraswamy et al. (2024)	10	Fairness, safety, growth, social integration, and work relevance
Job satisfaction	Spector's job satisfaction facets	6	Satisfaction with work conditions, supervision, rewards, and job experience
Employee performance	Civil-servant performance indicators; Kementerian PANRB Republik Indonesia (2021); Fatimah et al. (2025)	15	Quality, quantity, timeliness, responsibility, and contribution to organizational targets

balance, quality of work life, job satisfaction, and employee performance (see Table 1). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The items were adapted from established instruments and adjusted to the Indonesian public-sector context. The adaptation process focused on aligning item wording with civil-servant work conditions, public infrastructure duties, and the organizational context of the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency, without changing the conceptual meaning of the original indicators. Before the main survey, an initial field check was conducted with ten civil servants to assess item clarity, contextual relevance, and readability. The feedback showed that several items required simpler wording and clearer reference to civil-servant work conditions. Therefore, minor wording adjustments were made to improve clarity and reduce ambiguity. No construct, indicator meaning, or measurement scale was changed during this process.

The complete list of item codes, original measurement sources, adaptation notes, and sample adapted item wording is presented in Appendix A. Respondents were informed about the academic purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. No personal identity was reported in the analysis. To reduce common method bias, the questionnaire used neutral wording, separated items by construct, and assured respondents that there were no right or wrong answers. Nevertheless, because all variables were measured using self-reported questionnaires at a single time point, common method bias remains a limitation of the study (Podsakoff et al., 2024).

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM was selected instead of covariance-based SEM because this study examined a prediction-oriented mediation model with multiple latent variables, a relatively bounded sample of 158 respondents, and no requirement for strict multivariate normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2022). The PLS algorithm

was run using the path weighting scheme with standardized data to estimate the measurement and structural models. The measurement model was evaluated using outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted, Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio. Discriminant validity was assessed using HTMT, with values below 0.90 indicating adequate distinction among the constructs. The structural model was evaluated using R^2 , Q^2 , f^2 , path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and indirect effects. The significance of direct and indirect relationships was tested through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples, using a two-tailed test at a 5% significance level.

Result and Discussion

General Overview of the Research Object

The South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency is a technical unit under the Ministry of Public Works. The agency is responsible for the construction, preservation, maintenance, and supervision of national roads and bridges in South Kalimantan Province. The characteristics of the 158 respondents are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that most respondents were male, aged 51–60 years, held bachelor's degrees, and had worked for 21–30 years. These characteristics indicate that most respondents had substantial work experience and sufficient knowledge of the agency's procedures and working conditions. Age and tenure may influence perceptions of workload, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and performance. Since all 158 eligible operational civil servants participated in the study, the respondents adequately represented the operational population of the agency. Information on respondents' specific work units and civil-service ranks was not collected in the questionnaire and therefore was not included in the descriptive analysis. The respondent profile was limited to gender, age, education, tenure, and employment status, which were considered sufficient to describe the operational civil-servant population examined in this study.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 presents the mean, standard deviation, and response distribution of the four research constructs. All constructs recorded observed responses across the full five-point Likert scale, with a minimum response of 1 and a maximum response of 5. These values represent the observed response range of the questionnaire items rather than the standardized latent-variable scores generated by SmartPLS.

Using the theoretical midpoint of 3.00 as a benchmark, all four constructs received generally favourable evaluations. Work-life balance recorded the highest mean value of 3.784, followed by quality of work life at 3.723, employee performance at 3.686, and job satisfaction at 3.664. The standard deviations ranged from 0.878 to 0.985, indicating moderate variation in respondents' assessments. Most responses were concentrated in categories 4 and 5. However, job satisfaction had the highest combined proportion of responses in categories 1 and 2, indicating that some employees still reported less favourable job experiences.

Table 4 shows that employee performance was positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.634$), quality of work life ($r = 0.606$), and work-life balance ($r = 0.364$). Job satisfaction was also positively correlated with work-life balance ($r = 0.553$) and quality of work life ($r = 0.425$). The correlation between work-life balance and quality of work life was very low ($r = 0.039$), indicating that both variables represent different aspects of employees' work conditions. These results provide preliminary support for the proposed model, while hypothesis testing was conducted through bootstrapped PLS-SEM.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	96	60.76%
	Female	62	39.24%
Age	21–30 years	10	6.33%
	31–40 years	26	16.46%
	41–50 years	36	22.78%
	51–60 years	86	54.43%
Education	Junior high school	1	0.63%
	Senior high school/vocational school	54	34.18%
	Diploma	10	6.33%
	Bachelor's degree	81	51.27%
	Master's degree	12	7.59%
Tenure	1–10 years	27	17.09%
	11–20 years	38	24.05%
	21–30 years	92	58.23%
	More than 30 years	1	0.63%
Employment status	Civil servant	158	100.00%

Source: Primary Data, 2026.

PLS-SEM Analysis Results

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was assessed through indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator reliability was examined using outer loading values, while internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Convergent validity was assessed using average variance extracted. The assessment followed the recommended criteria of outer loadings above 0.70, reliability values above 0.70, and AVE values above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022).

The final measurement model comprised 42 indicators. All outer loading values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, ranging from 0.732 to 0.853. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.885 to 0.958, composite reliability values ranged from 0.913 to 0.963, and AVE values ranged from 0.617 to 0.640. These results demonstrate adequate indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, and convergent validity for all indicators included in the final measurement model. The detailed measurement results are presented in Table 5.

After indicator reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity were established, discriminant validity was examined using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. HTMT was reported separately because it assesses whether each construct is empirically distinct from the other constructs. HTMT values below 0.90 indicate adequate discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015) (see Table 6).

The HTMT values ranged from 0.079 to 0.684. The highest value was found between job satisfaction and employee performance, but it remained below the recommended threshold of 0.90. Therefore, all constructs were empirically distinct, and the measurement model met

the required validity and reliability criteria.

Common method bias was statistically assessed using the full collinearity VIF procedure. Full collinearity VIF was calculated from the SmartPLS latent variable scores by treating each latent construct as a dependent variable and regressing it on the remaining latent constructs. The resulting VIF values were compared with the recommended threshold of 3.30. As shown in Table 7, the VIF values were 1.590 for work-life balance, 1.753 for quality of work life, 2.178 for job satisfaction, and 2.243 for employee performance. Because all values were below 3.30, the results indicate that common method bias was unlikely to be a serious threat in this study. Nevertheless, this diagnostic does not completely eliminate the possibility of common method bias because the data were self-reported and collected at one point in time.

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was assessed through explanatory power, effect size, predictive relevance, and hypothesis testing. R-square was used to determine the proportion of variance explained in the endogenous constructs, while f-square was used to assess the relative contribution of each predictor. Predictive relevance was evaluated using Q-square, PLSpredict, and CVPAT (Hair et al., 2022; Shmueli et al., 2019).

The R-square value for employee performance was 0.554, with an adjusted R-square of 0.545 (see Table 8). This means that work-life balance, quality of work life, and job satisfaction jointly explained 55.4 per cent of the variance in employee performance. The R-square value for job satisfaction was 0.468, with an adjusted R-square of 0.461. This indicates that work-life balance and quality of work life explained 46.8 per cent of the variance in job satisfaction.

Predictive relevance was first assessed through the blindfolding procedure. Employee performance obtained a Q-square value of 0.343, while job satisfaction obtained a Q-square value of 0.287. Both values were above zero, indicating that the structural model had predictive relevance. The PLSpredict procedure also produced positive Q²predict values of 0.457 for employee performance and 0.439 for job satisfaction.

The f-square results show that work-life balance had a large effect size on job satisfaction. Quality of work life had medium effect sizes on both employee performance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction had a medium effect size on employee performance, while the direct relationship between work-life balance and employee performance had a small effect size (see Table 9).

The PLSpredict results showed that all indicator-level Q²predict values were above zero. The PLS-SEM model also produced lower root mean square error values than the linear model benchmark for all indicators of employee performance and job satisfaction. These results indicate that the model demonstrated adequate out-of-sample predictive performance.

The CVPAT results further supported the predictive capability of the model. The overall PLS-SEM prediction loss was significantly lower than the indicator-average benchmark, with an average loss difference of -0.418 and a p-value below 0.001. The PLS-SEM prediction loss was also significantly lower than the linear-model benchmark, with an average loss difference of -0.180 and a p-value below 0.001. Therefore, the proposed model demonstrated acceptable explanatory and predictive performance.

The mediation assessment showed that the direct and indirect relationships were significant and operated in the same positive direction. Work-life balance had a significant direct relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.145$, $p = 0.030$) and a significant indirect relationship through job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.196$, $p < 0.001$). Quality of work life also had a significant direct relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$, $p < 0.001$) and a significant indirect relationship

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Response Distribution of the Research Constructs

Research Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5
Work-Life Balance	3.784	0.916	4.60	9.84	24.51	25.14	35.90
Quality of Work Life	3.723	0.878	4.57	9.66	24.24	31.79	29.75
Job Satisfaction	3.664	0.985	5.49	16.35	16.46	29.75	31.96
Employee Performance	3.686	0.951	4.91	15.56	16.72	31.46	31.35

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Values in columns 1 to 5 are percentages.

Source: Primary Data, 2026.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix among Latent Constructs

Construct	1	2	3	4
1. Work-Life Balance	1.000			
2. Quality of Work Life	0.039	1.000		
3. Job Satisfaction	0.553	0.425	1.000	
4. Employee Performance	0.364	0.606	0.634	1.000

Note: Values represent zero-order correlations among latent construct scores.

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

through job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.147$, $p = 0.001$). These findings indicate complementary partial mediation for both relationships. However, because the study used a cross-sectional design, these statistically significant relationships should not be interpreted as definitive causal evidence.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing used bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to assess the significance of each proposed relationship. A hypothesis was accepted when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05, indicating statistical significance at the 5 percent level (Hair et al., 2022).

To provide a more detailed interpretation of the bootstrapping output presented in Figure 2, Table 10 reports the results of the direct and indirect effect testing for all proposed hypotheses.

All seven hypotheses were statistically supported. Work-life balance showed the strongest relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.537$), while quality of work life had the strongest direct relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$). Job satisfaction partially mediated both relationships, with an indirect effect of 0.196 and a VAF of 57.48% for the work-life-balance pathway, and an indirect effect of 0.147 and a VAF of 24.83% for the quality-of-work-life pathway. Because both the direct and indirect effects were positive and statistically significant, the mediation was classified as complementary partial mediation. These findings indicate that work-life balance is associated with performance mainly through job satisfaction, whereas quality of work life is associated with performance through both direct and indirect pathways. Since the study used a cross-sectional design, the results should be interpreted as statistically supported relationships rather than definitive causal effects.

Effect of Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance

Work-life balance was positively associated with employee performance, but the direct relationship was relatively small ($\beta = 0.145$; $f^2 = 0.031$). This result supports the Effort-Recovery Model because employees who have sufficient recovery time are better able to preserve energy, concentration, and emotional stability. However, the small effect size indicates that balanced work and personal roles alone do not strongly determine performance in this organizational setting.

The limited direct contribution can be understood from the operational context of the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency. Employees must complete administrative and technical duties, coordinate across work units, meet strict deadlines, and manage field-related risks. During the fiscal-efficiency period, restrictions on official travel, meetings, facilities, and other operational resources also affected the way employees completed their duties. Under these conditions, performance depends more immediately on the availability of workplace resources, clear procedures, supervisory support, safety arrangements, and effective coordination than on work-life balance alone. This explains why quality of work life had a stronger direct relationship with performance ($\beta = 0.445$; $f^2 = 0.340$).

The finding is consistent with Andian and Kadarningsih (2025), Prasetyo and Wardoyo (2023), and Haar and Brougham (2022), who reported that healthier work-life arrangements are associated with better work outcomes. In this study, however, work-life balance appears to support performance mainly by protecting employees' energy and strengthening their job satisfaction. Therefore, feasible managerial actions include limiting unnecessary after-hours assignments, improving schedule predictability, and distributing workloads more evenly. These actions require limited additional spending and are realistic under the agency's fiscal-efficiency constraints.

Effect of Quality of Work Life on Employee Performance

Quality of work life had a positive and comparatively strong relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$; $f^2 = 0.340$). This finding is consistent with the Job Demands-Resources framework, which proposes that adequate job resources help employees meet demanding work requirements and sustain performance. In the studied agency, those resources include safe working conditions, clear procedures, fair treatment, supportive supervision, functional facilities, teamwork, and opportunities to develop work-related capabilities.

The stronger direct effect of quality of work life is understandable because many duties at the agency depend on concrete workplace resources and coordination. In this study, quality of work life can be interpreted through several dimensions. Fairness supports performance when employees perceive task allocation, workload distribution, appraisal, and compensation practices as consistent and transparent. Safety is important because road and bridge activities require employees to perform administrative and field-related duties under secure working conditions. Growth opportunities help employees improve their technical and administrative capabilities. Social integration strengthens cooperation across administrative and implementation units, while supportive supervision provides direction, feedback, and problem-solving assistance. Facilities also play a direct role because employees need adequate work tools, operational support, and functional infrastructure to complete their duties effectively. When these dimensions are weak, employees may face practical barriers in completing their work. The descriptive results also showed that perceived income fairness and commitment to completing tasks with coworkers were among the lower-rated quality-of-

Table 5. Measurement Model Assessment

Variable	Item	Outer Loading	CA	CR	AVE	Decision
Work-Life Balance	WLB.1	0.798	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.2	0.796	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.3	0.784	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.4	0.778	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.5	0.737	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.6	0.823	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.7	0.781	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.8	0.818	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.9	0.810	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.10	0.732	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
	WLB.11	0.779	0.938	0.947	0.617	Valid
Quality of Work Life	QWL.1	0.828	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.2	0.783	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.3	0.802	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.4	0.798	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.5	0.795	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.6	0.789	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.7	0.809	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.8	0.814	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.9	0.782	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
	QWL.10	0.803	0.938	0.947	0.640	Valid
Job Satisfaction	JS.1	0.747	0.885	0.913	0.636	Valid
	JS.2	0.782	0.885	0.913	0.636	Valid
	JS.3	0.853	0.885	0.913	0.636	Valid
	JS.4	0.809	0.885	0.913	0.636	Valid
	JS.5	0.792	0.885	0.913	0.636	Valid
	JS.6	0.797	0.885	0.913	0.636	Valid
Employee Performance	EP.1	0.811	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.2	0.801	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.3	0.800	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.4	0.785	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.5	0.783	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.6	0.786	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.7	0.827	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.8	0.836	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.9	0.799	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.10	0.759	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.11	0.813	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.12	0.742	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.13	0.737	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.14	0.832	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid
	EP.15	0.811	0.958	0.963	0.633	Valid

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

Table 6. HTMT Assessment

Construct Pair	HTMT
Job Satisfaction ↔ Employee Performance	0.684
Quality of Work Life ↔ Employee Performance	0.636
Quality of Work Life ↔ Job Satisfaction	0.459
Work-Life Balance ↔ Employee Performance	0.380
Work-Life Balance ↔ Job Satisfaction	0.602
Work-Life Balance ↔ Quality of Work Life	0.079

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

work-life indicators. These results suggest that fairness, teamwork, supervision, safety, facilities, and development opportunities deserve managerial attention rather than treating quality of work life as a single general condition.

This result supports Aulia and Yaman (2024), Sihombing et al. (2024), and Nanjundeswaraswamy et al. (2024), who found that supportive and fair working conditions are associated with stronger employee performance. The evidence does not imply that every workplace intervention will automatically improve performance. It indicates that practical improvements should focus on the dimensions most closely related to daily task completion. Under fiscal constraints, feasible actions include clarifying work procedures, improving coordination, strengthening supervisory feedback, maintaining essential safety standards, and communicating compensation and task-allocation decisions more transparently.

Effect of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction

Work-life balance had the strongest relationship in the model with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.537$; $f^2 = 0.540$). This large effect indicates that employees' ability to manage work and personal responsibilities is closely associated with how positively they evaluate their jobs. When work demands repeatedly extend into evenings, weekends, or family time,

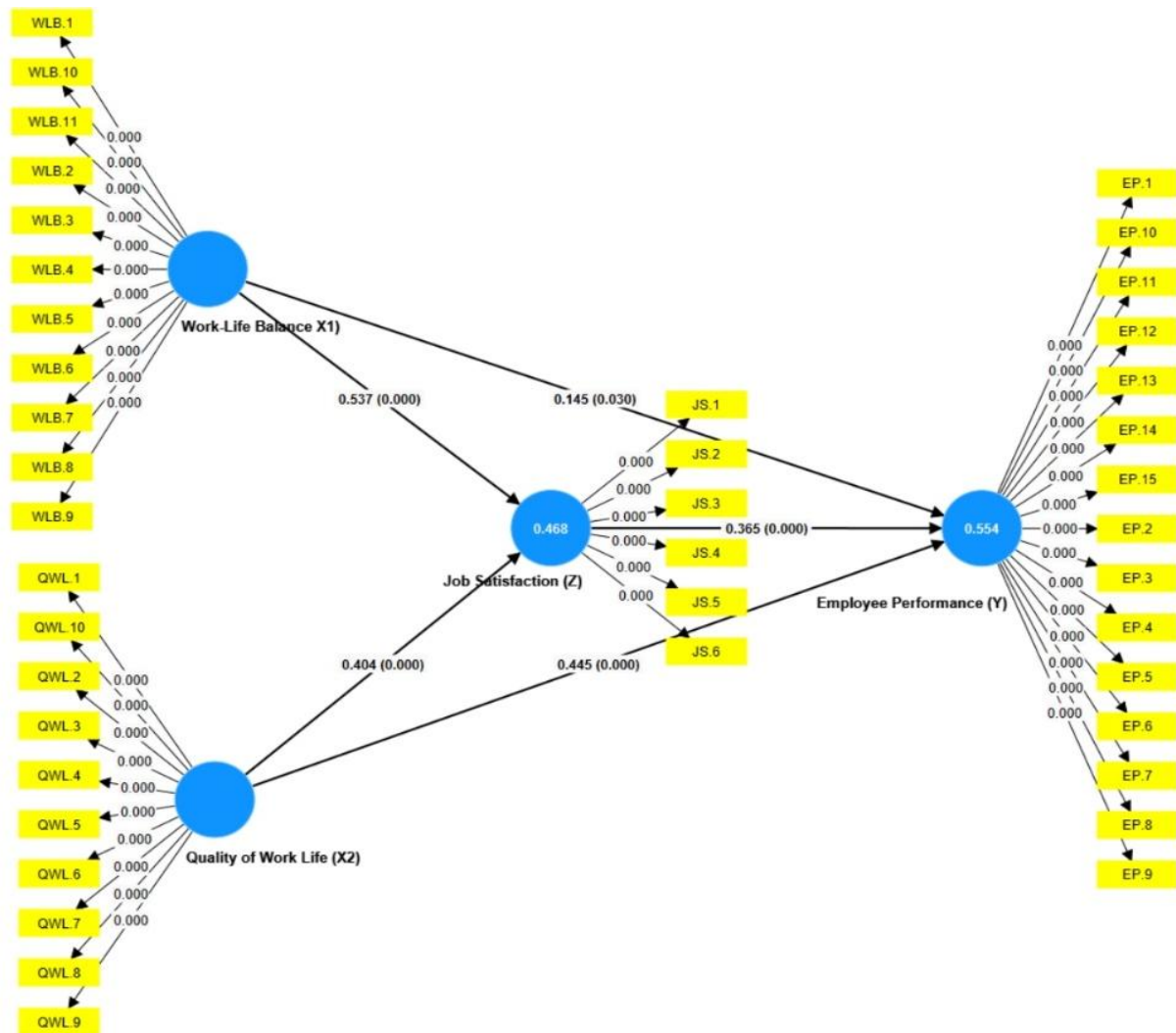


Figure 2. Structural Model Output (Bootstrapping)

Table 7. Full Collinearity VIF Assessment

Construct	Full collinearity VIF	Decision
Work-Life Balance	1.590	Below 3.30
Quality of Work Life	1.753	Below 3.30
Job Satisfaction	2.178	Below 3.30
Employee Performance	2.243	Below 3.30

Source: Author calculation based on SmartPLS latent variable scores, 2026.

employees may still complete their duties but experience lower satisfaction with their overall work situation.

This relationship is particularly relevant in the agency because employees face deadline-driven administrative work, coordination demands, and field assignments. The respondent profile also shows that many employees have long organizational tenure and are in age groups likely to carry substantial family responsibilities. Schedule uncertainty and after-hours work may therefore affect their satisfaction more strongly than their immediate task output. The result is consistent with Irawanto et al. (2021), Haar and Brougham (2022), and Inegbedion (2024), who found that healthier boundaries between work and personal life are associated with more favourable job attitudes.

The evidence supports low-cost managerial adjustments rather than broad promises of flexible work for every position. The agency can reduce avoidable after-hours communication, provide earlier notice of field assignments, clarify urgent and

non-urgent tasks, and monitor workload concentration across employees. These measures are feasible under fiscal-efficiency conditions and may improve satisfaction without reducing accountability or service standards.

Effect of Quality of Work Life on Job Satisfaction

Quality of work life was positively associated with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.404$; $f^2 = 0.306$). This medium effect indicates that employees are more satisfied when they perceive their workplace as fair, safe, supportive, and meaningful. The finding also shows that quality of work life should be interpreted through its specific dimensions rather than as a general workplace atmosphere.

In this study, the lower-rated indicators related to income fairness and commitment to completing tasks with coworkers point to two relevant concerns. First, employees may compare compensation and workload arrangements with those of their colleagues, making transparent and consistent procedures important for maintaining satisfaction. Second, the demands of coordination across administrative and field units may create uneven experiences of teamwork. These issues become more visible during fiscal-efficiency measures because restricted resources can increase competition for facilities, travel opportunities, and operational support.

The result is consistent with Putri and Ardiana (2024), Siagian et al. (2024), Yusnita and Melati (2023), and Nanjundeswaraswamy et al. (2024). Their findings similarly show that fairness, meaningful work, supportive relationships, and development opportunities shape job satisfaction. The evidence supports practical actions such as clearer task

Table 8. Explanatory Power and Predictive Relevance

Endogenous Construct	R-square	Adjusted square	R-Q-square	Q ² predict	Interpretation
Employee Performance	0.554	0.545	0.343	0.457	Moderate
Job Satisfaction	0.468	0.461	0.287	0.439	Moderate

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

Table 9. Effect Size Assessment

Relationship	f-square	Interpretation
Work-Life Balance → Employee Performance	0.031	Small
Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction	0.540	Large
Quality of Work Life → Employee Performance	0.340	Medium
Quality of Work Life → Job Satisfaction	0.306	Medium
Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.159	Medium

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

allocation, consistent supervisory communication, recognition of employee contributions, and access to low-cost learning opportunities. These recommendations are more feasible than large financial incentives in the current budget context. Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job satisfaction was positively associated with employee performance ($\beta = 0.365$; $f^2 = 0.159$). The medium effect size indicates that satisfaction has a meaningful, but not exclusive, role in explaining performance. Satisfied employees are more likely to maintain effort, respond constructively to work demands, and remain committed to completing organizational responsibilities. However, performance also depends on operational resources, procedures, skills, and supervisory conditions.

In the agency context, job satisfaction is especially relevant because material incentives and operational resources are constrained. Employees who perceive fair appraisal, supportive supervision, recognition, and meaningful public-service contributions may maintain performance even when financial flexibility is limited. This interpretation is consistent with Gazi et al. (2022), Kui et al. (2022), Mujahidin (2024), and Prasetyo and Wardoyo (2023), who reported positive relationships between job satisfaction and performance.

The practical implication is not that satisfaction alone guarantees high performance. Rather, the evidence suggests that non-financial management practices can help sustain effort. Timely feedback, transparent appraisal, visible recognition, and respectful supervisory communication are feasible actions that can strengthen satisfaction without requiring major additional expenditure.

Mediating Function of Job Satisfaction in the Link between Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

Job satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. The direct effect of work-life balance on performance was 0.145, while the indirect effect through job satisfaction was 0.196. The VAF value was 57.48%, indicating complementary partial mediation because both the direct and indirect effects were positive and statistically significant. Thus, job satisfaction transmitted a substantial part of the relationship, and the indirect pathway was stronger than the direct pathway.

This result means that work-life balance is associated with performance mainly when employees interpret balanced work arrangements as a positive feature of their job. Predictable

schedules, limited intrusion into personal time, and reasonable recovery opportunities can improve employees' satisfaction, which in turn is associated with stronger concentration, commitment, and work continuity. The finding is consistent with Amelia et al. (2023), Nuurramadhan and Darmastuti (2024), Prasetyo and Wardoyo (2023), and Medina-Garrido et al. (2023).

For management, the coefficient pattern suggests that work-life initiatives should not be treated only as scheduling rules. Their effectiveness depends on whether employees experience them as fair, supportive, and responsive to their needs. Feasible actions include clearer expectations regarding working hours, advance notice of assignments, balanced workload distribution, and supportive communication. Because the study is cross-sectional, these results indicate statistically supported relationships rather than definitive causal effects.

Mediating Function of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship between Quality of Work Life and Employee Performance

Job satisfaction also partially mediated the relationship between quality of work life and employee performance. The direct effect of quality of work life on performance was 0.445, whereas the indirect effect through job satisfaction was 0.147. The VAF value was 24.83%, indicating complementary partial mediation. Unlike the work-life balance pathway, most of the relationship operated directly rather than through job satisfaction.

This pattern reflects the practical nature of quality of work life in the agency. Fair treatment, safe working conditions, functional facilities, supportive supervision, growth opportunities, and effective social integration can directly help employees complete their duties. At the same time, these conditions may improve employees' evaluation of their jobs, creating an additional indirect pathway through job satisfaction. The result aligns with Alridho et al. (2024), Aulia and Yaman (2024), Siagian et al. (2024), and Nanjundeswaraswamy et al. (2024)tion is that the agency should prioritize workplace improvements that remove operational barriers while also strengthening employees' sense of fairness and support. Under fiscal-efficiency constraints, this may include protecting essential facilities, clarifying procedures, improving coordination, maintaining safety practices, and providing constructive supervision. These measures are supported by the findings, while larger recommendations involving compensation reform or extensive new programs should be presented as longer-term managerial options rather than direct conclusions from the study.

Practical Implications

The practical implications are derived directly from the strongest empirical findings. First, because quality of work life had the strongest direct relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$), agency leaders should prioritize improvements in daily work conditions, including essential facilities, work safety, coordination, clear procedures, and constructive supervision. Second, because work-life balance had the strongest relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.537$), managers should protect employees' recovery opportunities by clarifying task priorities, distributing workloads fairly, giving earlier notice of field assignments, and reducing unnecessary

Table 10. Results of Direct and Indirect (Mediation) Effects

Hyp.	Structural Path	Coefficient	t-Statistic	95% Bootstrap CI	p-Value	Decision
<i>Direct Effects</i>						
H1	Work-Life Balance → Employee Performance	0.145	2.167	[0.005, 0.270]	0.030	Accepted
H2	Quality of Work Life → Employee Performance	0.445	6.386	[0.310, 0.585]	<0.001	Accepted
H3	Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction	0.537	7.133	[0.385, 0.678]	<0.001	Accepted
H4	Quality of Work Life → Job Satisfaction	0.404	5.473	[0.252, 0.542]	<0.001	Accepted
H5	Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.365	4.284	[0.192, 0.526]	<0.001	Accepted
<i>Mediation Effects</i>						
H6	Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.196	3.596	[0.097, 0.312]	<0.001	Accepted
H7	Quality of Work Life → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance	0.147	3.454	[0.067, 0.234]	0.001	Accepted

Note: β represents the standardized path coefficient. The 95% bootstrap confidence intervals do not include zero, indicating that all direct and indirect effects are statistically significant

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026.

after-hours communication. Third, because job satisfaction partially mediated both relationships, practical interventions should not only focus on performance outputs but also monitor employees' satisfaction with supervision, recognition, fairness, and work conditions. These actions are feasible under fiscal-efficiency constraints because they emphasize managerial coordination and non-financial recognition rather than large new spending. Compensation reform, extensive remote-work arrangements, and large development programs may remain relevant long-term options, but they should not be presented as direct consequences of the statistical findings because their feasibility depends on regulation, job type, and available resources.

Within the fiscal-efficiency policy context, the most feasible actions are those that require limited additional expenditure. These include clarifying task priorities, distributing workloads more evenly, providing earlier notice of field assignments, reducing unnecessary after-hours communication, maintaining essential safety and work facilities, improving coordination across units, strengthening supervisory feedback, and recognising employee contributions through non-financial means. Compensation reform, extensive remote-work arrangements, and large development programs may be relevant managerial options, but they should not be presented as direct consequences of the statistical findings because their feasibility depends on regulation, job type, and available resources.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design measured work-life balance, quality of work life, job satisfaction, and employee performance at one point in time. Therefore, the identified relationships should not be interpreted as definitive causal effects or as evidence of changes over time.

Second, although procedural and statistical steps were used to reduce common method bias, this issue cannot be fully eliminated. Procedurally, respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their identities and responses would remain confidential. The questionnaire also used neutral wording, grouped items according to their respective constructs, and emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers. Statistically, the full collinearity VIF assessment showed values below the recommended

threshold, indicating that common method bias was unlikely to be a serious threat. However, all variables were still measured using self-reported questionnaires completed by the same respondents at a single point in time. Future studies should collect data from multiple sources, separate the measurement of predictor and outcome variables over time, or include a marker variable to provide stronger evidence against common method bias.

Conclusion

This study found that work-life balance, quality of work life, and job satisfaction were significantly associated with employee performance among 158 operational civil servants at the South Kalimantan National Road Implementation Agency. Work-life balance had its strongest relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.537$), while quality of work life showed the strongest direct relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$). Job satisfaction was also positively associated with employee performance ($\beta = 0.365$). The model explained 55.4% of the variance in employee performance and 46.8% of the variance in job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction provided complementary partial mediation in both relationships. The indirect effect of work-life balance on employee performance was 0.196, with a VAF of 57.48%, while the indirect effect of quality of work life was 0.147, with a VAF of 24.83%. These findings support the Effort-Recovery Model and the Job Demands-Resources framework by showing that employee performance is associated with both recovery opportunities and supportive workplace resources, partly through employees' job satisfaction.

Under fiscal-efficiency constraints, feasible managerial actions include improving workload distribution, increasing schedule predictability, reducing unnecessary after-hours assignments, clarifying work procedures, strengthening supervisory feedback, improving coordination, and providing non-financial recognition. These recommendations are limited to the empirical relationships identified in this study.

The findings should not be generalized beyond operational civil servants in the single agency examined. The cross-sectional design and self-reported measures do not establish definitive causal relationships and may involve common method bias. Future research should prioritize longitudinal studies during fiscal-austerity implementation, comparisons

across public agencies, the use of objective performance data, and the inclusion of employee well-being and perceived organizational support.

Author contributions

Andrea Yudhistira Mustika was responsible for formulating and designing the analytical framework, collecting the research data, supplying data or analytical instruments, carrying out the analysis, interpreting the findings, and preparing the manuscript. Meiske Claudia contributed to the development and design of the analysis, the provision of data or analytical tools, the interpretation of the results, the writing of the manuscript, and other forms of supporting contribution. Ahmad Rifani contributed by providing data or analytical tools, participating in manuscript

preparation, and offering additional supporting assistance. Hastin Umi Anisah contributed to the writing of the manuscript and to other supporting activities. Cindyva Thalia Mustika contributed to data collection, manuscript writing, and other supporting contributions.

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