



## **EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE WITH WORK-LIFE BALANCE MEDIATION**

Dyah Rahmawati, Toni Herlambang, Abadi Sanosra

Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember, Indonesia

Corresponding Author Email : [rahmawatidyahh@gmail.com](mailto:rahmawatidyahh@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the effects of employee engagement and work behavior on the performance of employees at the Department of Education in Jember Regency, with work-life balance serving as a mediating variable. The research population includes all employees of the Department of Education in Jember Regency, with a sample size of 115 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Warp PLS software. The findings indicate that both employee engagement and work behavior positively and significantly influence work-life balance. In turn, work-life balance positively and significantly affects employee performance. Additionally, work-life balance serves as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between employee engagement, work behavior, and employee performance. These results underscore the importance of employee engagement and work behavior in fostering a balance between work and personal life, which ultimately enhances employee performance. The practical implications of this study highlight the need for programs that support employee engagement and positive work behavior to strengthen work-life balance, thereby contributing to improved employee performance at the Department of Education in Jember Regency.

**Keywords:** Employee Engagement, Work Behavior, Work-Life Balance, Employee Performance, Department of Education, Jember Regency.

### **Introduction**

In today's dynamic and ever-changing era, public organizations, particularly the Department of Education, face significant challenges in ensuring optimal employee performance to achieve educational development goals. Employee engagement and work behavior are critical aspects that form the foundation for organizational progress (Damawan & Azizah, 2020). In this context, the Department of Education in Jember Regency, as an entity providing educational services, encounters complex challenges that require a deep understanding of the factors influencing employee performance.

Employee performance is a crucial indicator of individual contributions to organizational goals. Generally, employee performance includes efficiency in task completion, productivity levels, work quality, and dedication to the job (Zhenjing, Chupradit,

Ku, Nassani, & Haffar, 2022). In the Department of Education in Jember Regency, where achieving educational goals has a significant impact on the community, employee performance is key to improving the quality of education.

Employee engagement, a psychological dimension encompassing interest, identification, and attachment to one's work, plays a central role in creating a productive work atmosphere. Engagement reflects the extent to which employees feel connected to the organization's goals, values, and tasks (Turner, 2020a). Employees with high levels of engagement tend to be more dedicated, proactive, and satisfied with their jobs (Turner, 2020b). Therefore, understanding the factors that influence employee engagement is essential for enhancing productivity and performance quality in the Department of Education in Jember Regency.

Work behavior includes a range of actions, attitudes, and responses to the work environment, involving interactions with colleagues, supervisors, and job responsibilities. Positive work behavior can include adherence to organizational policies, collaboration, and active contributions to team efforts (Ramadhani et al., 2023). Conversely, negative work behavior may involve non-compliance, conflict, or reluctance to actively participate (Petitta & Córcoles, 2023). In-depth analysis of work behavior is important to understand internal organizational dynamics and form the basis for effective management strategies in the Department of Education in Jember Regency.

Work-life balance is a key element in modern organizational dynamics, embracing efforts to achieve a healthy balance between professional and personal life (Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2021). In the Department of Education in Jember Regency, where job demands and personal responsibilities may intersect, the importance of work-life balance cannot be overlooked. Work-life balance involves employees' ability to integrate and maintain a balance between job tasks and family life, recreation, and personal development (Witriaryani, Putri, Jonathan, & Abdullah, 2022).

The performance targets established for employees have consistently fallen short of the intended goals. Monthly performance data reveal a persistent discrepancy between actual performance metrics and the 100% target benchmark. Despite observed monthly fluctuations, there is a discernible trend of declining employee performance over time. This phenomenon suggests the presence of various influencing factors, including employee engagement, work behavior, and work-life balance, which warrant a deeper investigation to understand the potential correlations between employees' psychological conditions and their lifestyle patterns with organizational performance. The observed decline in performance and attendance rates may indicate shifts in employee engagement and motivation levels. High employee engagement typically correlates with better attendance and adherence to workplace norms. Conversely, the monthly decline in performance ratings could be indicative of the adverse effects of imbalances between job demands and personal life, as well as diminished motivation, impacting overall work behavior (Mursidi & Robbie, 2022). Consequently, a comprehensive examination of these variables, specifically employee engagement, work

behavior, and work-life balance, can provide crucial insights into the underlying dynamics affecting organizational performance. Focusing this study on the Department of Education in Jember Regency offers the potential to generate actionable recommendations for the enhancement and development of more effective and sustainable human resource management policies.

Previous research has provided diverse contributions regarding the relationship between employee engagement, work behavior, work-life balance, and employee performance. Employee engagement at Kimia Farma Pharmacy Business Unit in Jayapura, Papua, has a positive impact on employee performance, underscoring the importance of employee engagement in enhancing work outcomes in that sector (Tia, Mahdi, & Hayati, 2022). A strong positive influence of work behavior on employee performance has been demonstrated, emphasizing the role of positive work behavior in shaping individual performance in the workplace (Barasa, Togatorop, & Szeze, 2021). Work engagement can influence work-life balance, highlighting how employee engagement can help create a balance between work and personal life (Atthohiri & Wijayati, 2021). Furthermore, work-life balance impacts employee performance, illustrating the importance of achieving balance between work and personal life to enhance employee performance (Rosmadiani, Mailani, Novianti, Rahmawati, & Firmina, 2023). However, some studies have yielded different results. Work-life balance does not significantly affect the performance of auditors, highlighting the complexity of the relationship between work-life balance and performance (Rakhmanto & Rosnani, 2024). Innovative behavior negatively and insignificantly affects performance (Widyantari & Cipto, 2021), and employee engagement does not significantly impact employee performance at CV. Indospice in Manado (Yusuf, Taroreh, & Lumintang, 2019). These mixed findings suggest a gap in understanding how these variables interact in different contexts and sectors. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the relationships between employee engagement, work behavior, work-life balance, and performance within the Department of Education in Jember Regency, providing an opportunity to develop a nuanced understanding of these dynamics in the public sector and offer actionable insights for improving human resource management practices.

. Based on the identified phenomenon and the research gaps in previous studies, this study aims to explore the intricate relationships between employee engagement, work behavior, and work-life balance and their impact on employee performance within the Department of Education in Jember Regency. By addressing these gaps, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these factors interact and influence performance in the public sector, particularly in an educational context. The findings of this study are expected to offer actionable insights and recommendations for the development of more effective and sustainable human resource management policies, thereby enhancing organizational performance and contributing to the overall improvement of educational outcomes.

## Method

This study involves all 115 employees of the Department of Education in Jember Regency to investigate the effects of employee engagement, work behavior, and work-life balance on performance. The research utilizes WarpPLS version 8.0, a method of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) that effectively analyzes both structural and measurement models in research. This method allows for the simultaneous analysis of relationships between latent variables, which cannot be measured directly. WarpPLS can test causality and the influence among variables, including outer model analysis to assess validity and reliability, and inner model analysis to examine the relationships between latent variables. This research follows a series of steps, beginning with data collection through surveys or questionnaires distributed to all employees of the Department of Education in Jember Regency. The collected data includes information on levels of employee engagement, work behavior, work-life balance, and performance. Subsequently, WarpPLS is employed to test the structural model and identify the extent to which these variables are interrelated. The results of this analysis will provide in-depth insights into the factors influencing employee performance in the Department of Education in Jember Regency, along with implications and recommendations for improvement and development within the work environment. All personal and sensitive information will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

## Result and Discussion

### Result

Table 1. Direct Effect Result

No	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	P Value	Conclusion
H1	Employee Engagement -> Performance	0.198	0.014	Accepted
H2	Work Behavior -> Performance	0.350	<0.001	Accepted
H3	Employee Engagement -> WLB	0.680	<0.001	Accepted
H4	Work Behavior -> WLB	0.286	<0.001	Accepted
H5	WLB -> Performance	0.439	<0.001	Accepted

Table 1 indicates that both employee engagement and work behavior significantly enhance work-life balance, with work-life balance, in turn, having a substantial positive impact on employee performance. The strong path coefficients and significant p-values highlight the importance of fostering an environment that promotes high levels of engagement and positive work behaviors, as these factors contribute not only directly to better performance but also indirectly by improving work-life balance. These findings suggest that organizations aiming to boost employee performance should focus on strategies that enhance engagement and encourage constructive work behaviors, while also supporting employees in achieving a healthy balance between their work and personal lives. This integrated approach can lead to more sustainable improvements in performance, benefiting both the employees and the organization.

Table 2. Indirect Effect Result

No	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	P Value	Conclusion
H6	Employee Engagement -> WLB -> Performance	0.299	<0.001	Accepted
H7	Work Behavior -> WLB -> Performance	0.125	0.026	Accepted

Table 2 reveals the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationship between employee engagement, work behavior, and performance. Specifically, the indirect effect of employee engagement on performance through work-life balance is significant, with a path coefficient of 0.299 and a p-value of less than 0.001. This finding underscores the importance of work-life balance as a crucial intermediary that enhances the positive impact of employee engagement on performance. Additionally, the indirect effect of work behavior on performance through work-life balance, although smaller, is also significant, with a path coefficient of 0.125 and a p-value of 0.026. This result highlights that while work behavior directly improves performance, its effect is further amplified when work-life balance is considered. Collectively, these findings emphasize the critical role of work-life balance in amplifying the positive effects of both engagement and work behavior on performance, suggesting that organizations should integrate strategies to promote work-life balance to achieve optimal employee performance.

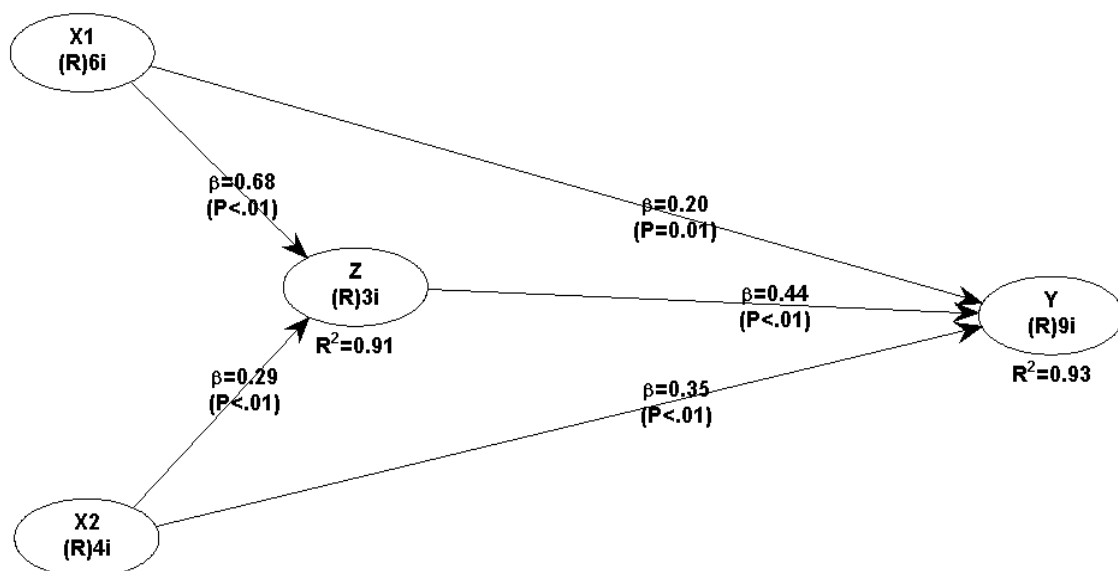


Figure 1. Path Analysis Results

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) in Figure 1 measures the extent to which variability in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the regression model. Firstly, for the model linking employee engagement (X1) and work behavior (X2) with work-life balance (WLB) (Z), the  $R^2$  coefficient is 0.905. This indicates that approximately 90.5% of the variability in work-life balance can be accounted for by employee engagement and work behavior. Secondly, for the model involving employee

engagement (X1), work behavior (X2), and work-life balance (WLB) (Z) in explaining employee performance (Y), the  $R^2$  coefficient is 0.932. This suggests that around 93.2% of the variability in employee performance can be explained by employee engagement, work behavior, and work-life balance. These results demonstrate that the proposed models in this study have a strong ability to explain variations in the dependent variable, thereby reinforcing the relevance and reliability of the findings in the context of the relationships between employee engagement, work behavior, work-life balance, and employee performance.

## Discussion

The analysis reveals that employee engagement significantly influences employee performance. Employees who feel proud of their work, understand organizational goals, and actively engage in their tasks exhibit higher performance levels (Fatmawati, 2022; Kenny & S O, 2019). This finding is consistent with the study conducted at Kimia Farma Pharmacy Business Unit in Jayapura, Papua (Tia et al., 2022). The implication of this result is that organizations should create an engaging work environment by fostering pride, aligning individual roles with organizational objectives, and providing clear communication. Regular feedback, recognition programs, and transparent goal-setting can enhance employee engagement and performance.

The analysis indicates a positive relationship between work behavior and employee performance. A strong link between positive work behavior and enhanced performance has also been identified (Barasa et al., 2021). This suggests that promoting constructive work behaviors, such as collaboration, compliance with policies, and proactive contributions, can significantly improve performance. Organizations should implement training programs and cultivate a supportive culture that encourages positive work behaviors.

Employee engagement positively impacts work-life balance, with engaged employees achieving greater satisfaction and balance between their professional and personal lives (Turner, 2020a, 2020b). This positive correlation is further supported by research findings (Atthohiri & Wijayati, 2021). The implication is that fostering employee engagement not only improves performance but also enhances work-life balance. Organizations should focus on creating engaging work environments and providing resources to help employees manage their work and personal responsibilities effectively.

Positive work behavior enhances employees' work-life balance, while negative behavior can disrupt it (Petitta & Córcoles, 2023; Ramadhani et al., 2023). This finding is reinforced by other studies (Barasa et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2021) (Barasa et al., 2021; Chen, Wang, Li, & Liu, 2022). The implication is that organizations should promote behaviors that support a healthy work-life balance. This can be achieved through flexible work arrangements, fostering a culture of respect and support, and encouraging positive interactions among employees.

Work-life balance significantly influences employee performance by boosting productivity and work quality (Brough, Timms, Chan, Hawkes, & Rasmussen, 2020; Zhenjing et al., 2022). The positive impact of work-life balance on performance is supported by research (Rosmadiani et al., 2023). The implication is that maintaining a good work-life



balance is crucial for achieving high employee performance. Organizations should consider implementing policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible working hours, remote work options, and wellness programs.

High employee engagement improves work-life balance, which in turn enhances employee performance (Ray & Cryan, 2021; Turner, 2020b). This relationship is supported by other studies (Atthohiri & Wijayati, 2021; Rosmadiani et al., 2023). The implication is that organizations should focus on increasing engagement and supporting work-life balance to maximize performance. Strategies could include providing meaningful work, growth opportunities, and resources for managing work and personal life effectively.

Effective work behavior supports both work-life balance and employee performance (Hulshof, Demerouti, & Le Blanc, 2020; Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2021). This relationship is further strengthened by findings from other research (Barasa et al., 2021; Rosmadiani et al., 2023). The implication is that fostering effective work behaviors can enhance both work-life balance and performance. Organizations should encourage behaviors that support a balanced life and recognize employees who demonstrate such behaviors.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis concludes that employee engagement and work behavior positively and significantly influence work-life balance and performance among employees of the Department of Education in Jember Regency. Employee engagement has a direct positive impact on work-life balance and performance, while work behavior similarly affects these outcomes. Moreover, work-life balance itself significantly enhances employee performance. Additionally, both employee engagement and work behavior indirectly improve performance through their positive effects on work-life balance. These findings underscore the importance of fostering an environment that supports employee engagement and positive work behaviors to achieve a balanced work-life dynamic, ultimately enhancing overall employee performance.

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