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Quality of Work Life and Work-Life Balance: The Mediating Roles of Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Commitment and Their Implications for Organizational Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT: Quality of work life (QWL) may shape employees' ability to balance work and personal responsibilities, but the mechanisms linking these conditions to organizational outcomes require contextual examination. This study examined the effects of QWL on job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment; assessed the relationships of these mediators with work-life balance (WLB); tested their indirect effects; and evaluated the association between WLB and organizational effectiveness. A quantitative, explanatory, cross-sectional survey was conducted among civil servants at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. From a population of 160 employees, 115 respondents were selected purposively based on work-related characteristics. The proposed relationships were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling with SmartPLS. QWL was positively associated with job stress ($\beta = 0.467$, $p < 0.001$), job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.892$, $p < 0.001$), and organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.677$, $p < 0.001$). Job stress ($\beta = 0.119$, $p = 0.281$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.154$, $p = 0.161$) were not significantly associated with WLB, whereas commitment was positively associated with WLB ($\beta = 0.575$, $p < 0.001$). The indirect effects through job stress and job satisfaction were not significant; the indirect effect through commitment was significant ($\beta = 0.389$, $p < 0.001$), while the direct QWL–WLB effect was not significant ($\beta = 0.042$, $p = 0.806$), indicating full mediation in the tested model. WLB was positively associated with organizational effectiveness ($\beta = 0.732$, $p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that, in this public-sector setting, commitment is a key pathway connecting QWL with WLB, which in turn is associated with organizational effectiveness.

1. INTRODUCTION

Quality of work life (QWL) concerns the conditions and experiences through which employees' work supports their well-being, participation, development, and sense of value. It encompasses more than physical working conditions: opportunities for growth, involvement in decisions, fair and meaningful rewards, and a supportive work environment may shape how employees experience their jobs. Walton's framework remains a useful point of reference for considering these dimensions of working life[1][2]. From a human-resource-management perspective, improving QWL can help align organizational requirements with employees' needs and capacities.

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to the extent to which people can manage work and non-work responsibilities without persistent conflict between these domains. The work–family literature emphasizes that work and personal roles can interfere with one another, but can also enrich one another through transferable skills, energy, and support [3][4]. In public organizations, where service obligations and administrative responsibilities may be substantial, WLB is relevant not only to individual well-being but also to the consistency and effectiveness of service delivery.

The relationship between QWL and WLB may operate through employees' psychological experiences. The job demands–resources model proposes that demands and available resources are associated with strain and motivational processes [5]. Social exchange theory also suggests that employees may respond to supportive organizational conditions with stronger attachment and willingness to contribute [6]. Job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment are therefore plausible mechanisms through which QWL may be linked to WLB, although their roles may vary by organizational context. For example, examined job stress, satisfaction, and commitment as mediators in the QWL–WLB relationship [7].

Despite this prior work, evidence from public-sector organizations in regional Indonesian settings remains useful because administrative structures, service demands, and employee experiences differ across contexts. This study extends the QWL–WLB model by examining organizational effectiveness as a downstream outcome and testing three potential mediators simultaneously: job stress, job satisfaction, and commitment. The study addresses four questions: (1) how QWL relates to stress, satisfaction, and commitment; (2) how these three variables relate to WLB; (3) whether they mediate the QWL–WLB relationship; and (4) whether WLB is associated with organizational effectiveness. The empirical setting is the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Indonesia.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Study design and setting

The study used a quantitative, explanatory design and a cross-sectional survey. Data were collected once using a structured questionnaire from civil servants working at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. The unit of analysis was the individual employee. The design was intended to test hypothesized associations among the study constructs rather than to establish temporal causality.

2.2 Population and sample

The study population comprised 160 employees. A sample of 115 employees was selected using purposive sampling rather than a probability formula. Eligibility was based on being an active employee, having relatively substantial workloads and job responsibilities relevant to the study variables, and agreeing to complete the questionnaire. The dissertation identifies the final sample as 115 respondents.

2.3 Measures

The conceptual model included six constructs: QWL, job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, WLB, and organizational effectiveness. QWL was represented by growth and development, participation, an innovative reward system, and the work environment. Job stress covered task demands, role demands, and interpersonal demands. Job satisfaction included facets such as the work itself, supervision, and co-worker relationships. Commitment represented employees' attachment to the organization, including affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. WLB was assessed through work-to-personal-life interference, personal-life-to-work interference, and enhancement experiences. Organizational effectiveness covered production, efficiency, adaptation, and organizational development. The questionnaire items and operational definitions were reported in the dissertation.

2.4 Data analysis

The structural model was estimated using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. The analysis assessed the explanatory power of endogenous constructs through R^2 and tested direct and indirect paths using the reported bootstrap p-values. A path was treated as statistically significant when $p < 0.05$. The manuscript reports standardized path coefficients (β) and p-values as provided in the dissertation. Full mediation was assessed by considering the significant indirect effect alongside the non-significant direct QWL–WLB path.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Explanatory power of the model

The reported R^2 values indicate that the model explained 34.2% of the variance in job stress, 85.5% in job satisfaction, 42.7% in organizational commitment, 47.8% in WLB, and 58.6% in organizational effectiveness. Job satisfaction had the highest

explained variance among the endogenous constructs, while job stress had the lowest. These values describe in-sample explanatory power and should not, by themselves, be interpreted as proof of out-of-sample predictive performance.

Table 1. Coefficients of determination for endogenous constructs

Endogenous construct	R^2	Variance explained
Job Stress	0.342	34.2%
Job Satisfaction	0.855	85.5%
Commitment	0.427	42.7%
Work-Life Balance	0.478	47.8%
Organizational Effectiveness	0.586	58.6%

3.2 Direct effects

As summarized in Table 2, QWL had positive and statistically significant associations with job stress ($\beta = 0.467$, $p < 0.001$), job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.892$, $p < 0.001$), and commitment ($\beta = 0.677$, $p < 0.001$). The positive QWL–stress coefficient is noteworthy because the hypothesized direction was negative. Thus, the result does not support the expected stress-reducing relationship. One possible interpretation is that employees experiencing stronger involvement, responsibility, or development opportunities may also face greater demands; however, this explanation is interpretive and was not directly tested by the study.

Neither job stress ($\beta = 0.119$, $p = 0.281$) nor job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.154$, $p = 0.161$) had a statistically significant association with WLB. In contrast, commitment was positively associated with WLB ($\beta = 0.575$, $p < 0.001$). WLB was also positively associated with organizational effectiveness ($\beta = 0.732$, $p < 0.001$). These results suggest that, in the observed setting, organizational attachment—not stress or satisfaction alone—was the clearest tested correlate of employees' ability to balance work and personal life.

Table 2. Direct structural relationships

Path	**β**	**p-value**	**Decision based on p < 0.05**
QWL → Job stress	0.467	<0.001	Significant; positive direction
QWL → Job satisfaction	0.892	<0.001	Significant; positive
QWL → Commitment	0.677	<0.001	Significant; positive
Job stress → WLB	0.119	0.281	Not significant;
Job satisfaction → WLB	0.154	0.161	Not significant;
Commitment → WLB	0.575	<0.001	Significant; positive
WLB → Organizational effectiveness	0.732	<0.001	Significant; positive

3.3 Biological Activity

The indirect effect of QWL on WLB through job stress was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.056$, $p = 0.305$). The indirect effect through job satisfaction was also not significant ($\beta = 0.137$, $p = 0.194$). Therefore, the data did not support job stress or job satisfaction as mediators of the QWL–WLB relationship in this sample. This does not mean that stress and satisfaction are unimportant to employee experience; rather, their specific indirect pathways were not statistically supported in the estimated model.

The indirect effect through commitment was significant ($\beta = 0.389$, $p < 0.001$). Because the direct QWL–WLB path was not significant ($\beta = 0.042$, $p = 0.806$), the dissertation interprets commitment as a full mediator. In substantive terms, better perceived work-life conditions may be related to stronger organizational commitment, which in turn is associated with better

WLB. This finding is consistent with a social-exchange interpretation in which supportive work experiences are associated with a stronger bond to the organization[6], while extending prior QWL–WLB research by linking WLB to organizational effectiveness in a public-sector setting.

Table 3. Indirect effects and the direct QWL–WLB path

Indirect path	Indirect β	p-value	Interpretation
QWL → Job stress → WLB	0.056	0.305	Not significant
QWL → Job satisfaction → WLB	0.137	0.194	Not significant
QWL → Commitment → WLB	0.389	<0.001	Significant indirect effect; full mediation reported
QWL → WLB (direct path)	0.042	0.806	Not significant

3.4 Implications for organizational effectiveness

The positive WLB–organizational effectiveness relationship ($\beta = 0.732$, $p < 0.001$) is the strongest downstream finding in the structural model. Employees who can manage work responsibilities alongside personal life may be better positioned to sustain attention, maintain work capacity, and contribute to organizational goals. In this study, organizational effectiveness was operationalized through production, efficiency, adaptation, and organizational development. The association supports the practical importance of WLB in public administration, while the cross-sectional design means that causal direction cannot be definitively established.

The unexpected positive QWL–stress association deserves particular attention. QWL should not be treated as a single guarantee of lower stress: the dimensions that provide growth, participation, or responsibility may coexist with heavy workloads or demanding roles. Public-sector managers should therefore pair development and participation initiatives with realistic workload allocation, role clarity, interpersonal support, and monitoring of employee strain. These recommendations are consistent with the job demands–resources perspective, but the specific mechanisms should be examined in future research rather than assumed from the current coefficients.

3.5 Study Limitations

Several limitations should be considered. First, the study used purposive sampling in one provincial government office, which limits statistical generalization to other organizations. Second, the cross-sectional survey does not establish temporal precedence or causal effects. Third, all constructs were measured through a questionnaire, so common-method and self-report biases cannot be ruled out. Fourth, the dissertation reports 115 selected respondents; the final manuscript should ensure that the respondent count, cleaned dataset, and all descriptive tables are fully consistent before submission. Future studies could use multiple public-sector sites, longitudinal data, and additional objective indicators of organizational effectiveness.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined how QWL relates to WLB through job stress, job satisfaction, and commitment, and how WLB relates to organizational effectiveness among employees of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Southeast Sulawesi Province. QWL was positively associated with stress, satisfaction, and commitment. Stress and satisfaction did not show significant direct or indirect relationships with WLB in the tested model. Commitment, however, was positively associated with WLB and significantly mediated the QWL–WLB relationship, while the direct path was not significant. WLB was positively associated with organizational effectiveness. The findings indicate that strengthening commitment and supporting employees' ability to balance work and personal life may be useful elements of public-sector human-resource management. Because the design was cross-sectional and the sample was purposive, these implications should be interpreted as evidence of associations rather than definitive causal effects.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

LM. Miftahul Ulum: conceptualization, investigation, data curation, formal analysis, and writing of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional and ethical requirements.

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