

The Influence of Work-Life Balance and Work Stress on Job Satisfaction With Psychological Capital as a Mediating Variable (on Civil Servant Employees of the BKD DIY)

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INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) represent a vital asset in any organization, particularly in the public sector where the quality of services depends heavily on employee commitment and well-being. Efficient HR management extends beyond technical operations, emphasizing the holistic welfare of employees. Job satisfaction is a critical indicator of this welfare and has been shown to influence productivity, retention, and service quality significantly (Bergheim et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2023).

Work-life balance, defined as an individual's ability to juggle professional and personal responsibilities, has consistently been linked to higher job satisfaction (Zega & Zona, 2024). Conversely, work stress a response to excessive or conflicting work demands can undermine satisfaction and impede performance (Hu, 2025).

Emerging literature also highlights psychological capital (PsyCap) a combination of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience as a mediating resource that influences how employees cope with stress and manage life balance challenges (Zhang et al., 2023; Niswaty et al., 2021). High PsyCap helps individuals transform adverse conditions into opportunities for growth (Niswaty et al., 2021).

Evidence shows that PsyCap exerts a positive influence on job satisfaction across various work contexts, including among employees in high-pressure environments (Kariri, 2023; Nishwaty et al., 2021). In Indonesia, public sector employees including those at the Regional Civil Service Agency (BKD) of Yogyakarta Special Region face unique bureaucratic pressures,

including limited promotion transparency, poor working conditions, and poor work-life integration.

Despite the critical context, empirical research on civil servants in Indonesia examining the roles of work-life balance and work stress on job satisfaction, with psychological capital as a mediator, remains scarce. Existing studies focus on broader work settings or do not include PsyCap as a mechanism in this relationship framework (Hu, 2025; Zega & Zona, 2024).

This study aims to address both theoretical and empirical gaps by analyzing the influence of work-life balance and work stress on job satisfaction, with psychological capital serving as a mediating variable, in the context of Indonesian civil servants at BKD DIY. The findings are expected to contribute to the evolving body of knowledge by clarifying PsyCap's role in buffering adverse work conditions, and to inform HR strategies that enhance employee well-being and public sector performance..

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to a positive feeling about one's job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics (Robbins, 2013). According to Robbins (2022), job satisfaction can be assessed using the following six indicators:

1. Satisfaction with the work itself
2. Satisfaction with pay
3. Satisfaction with promotion opportunities
4. Satisfaction with supervision
5. Satisfaction with coworkers
6. Working conditions

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is a work-related stressor consisting of four components: time, energy, goal achievement, and strain (Fisher, 2001). A shortened version of the work-life balance indicators, as developed and validated by Dex and Bond (2005), includes:

1. Time
2. Energy
3. Goal Achievement
4. Strain

Work Stress

Work stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be uncertain but important. Stress represents a dynamic state where an individual is faced with opportunities, constraints, or demands related to what is desired, and the outcomes are perceived to be both uncertain and important (Robbins & Judge, 2022). Employee work stress can be identified through three indicators (Robbins & Judge, 2022):

1. Physiological
2. Psychological
3. Behavioral

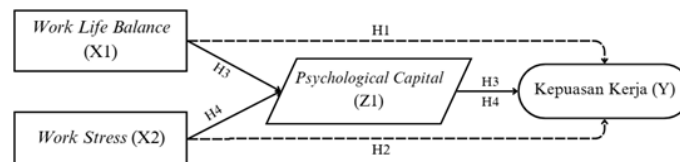
Psychological Capital

Psychological capital is a positive psychological state of development characterized by: (1) confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) perseverance toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to

succeed; and (4) the ability to bounce back from adversity (resiliency), even emerging stronger than before (Luthans et al., 2007). The four indicators of psychological capital are (Luthans et al., 2007):

1. Self-Efficacy
2. Optimism
3. Hope
4. Resiliency

Figure 1. Framework



H1: Work-life balance is presumed to have an effect on employee job satisfaction.

H2: Work stress is presumed to have an effect on employee job satisfaction.

H3: Psychological capital is presumed to mediate the effect of work-life balance on employee job satisfaction.

H4: Psychological capital is presumed to mediate the effect of work stress on employee job satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive analysis approach. Data were collected using questionnaires distributed offline in hard copy form to the respondents. The research was conducted at the Regional Civil Service Agency (BKD) of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). The respondents consisted of 85 civil servants working at BKD DIY. The sampling technique used in this study is exhaustive sampling or census sampling, meaning that the entire population at BKD DIY was taken as the sample, totaling 85 individuals. The collected data were then processed and analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method with the assistance of SmartPLS version 4.0 software. The SEM-PLS analysis process consisted of three main stages: the outer model assessment, the inner model assessment, and hypothesis testing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

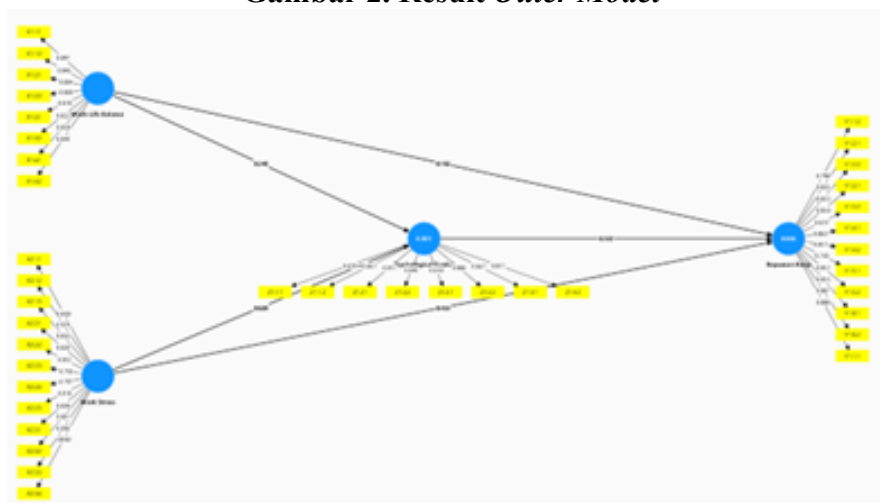
Outer Model

In the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, the evaluation of the outer model with reflective indicators aims to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. This evaluation involves testing convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability, and Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2019). These four criteria ensure that the observed indicators accurately and consistently represent the latent constructs.

1. Convergent validity is assessed through indicator loadings and AVE values. Loadings should ideally exceed 0.70, and AVE values should be greater than 0.50.
2. Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha evaluate internal consistency reliability, with values above 0.70 indicating satisfactory reliability (Henseler et al., 2016).

The following table presents the outer model evaluation results for this study:

Gambar 2. Result *Outer Model*



Source: Data Processed Smart PLS

Based on Figure 2, which presents the results of the outer model evaluation using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, it can be explained that all constructs in this model Work-Life Balance, Work Stress, Psychological Capital, and Job Satisfaction have reflective indicators that demonstrate good validity and reliability.

Each construct is measured by several indicators (as shown by labels such as WLB1–WLB8, WS1–WS12, PC1–PC10, and JS1–JS12), and based on the visualization in the figure, all indicators have factor loading values above 0.70. This indicates that each indicator makes a strong contribution in representing the latent construct being measured. High loading values signify that the indicators meet the criteria for convergent validity, in accordance with the standards set by Hair et al. (2019).

Furthermore, it can be interpreted that Psychological Capital mediates the relationship between Work-Life Balance and Work Stress on Job Satisfaction, as indicated by the directional arrows from both exogenous constructs to the mediating construct and subsequently to the endogenous construct. These arrows are also accompanied by coefficient values showing the strength of the relationships among constructs.

From the visualization of the structural model, it can also be assumed that the AVE values, composite reliability, and Cronbach's alpha of each construct have met the minimum threshold above 0.50 for AVE, and above 0.70 for both composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha since all indicators have high and consistent loadings. This reinforces the reliability and construct validity in this study.

Overall, Figure 2 demonstrates that the measurement model (outer model) in this research has fulfilled the evaluation criteria for validity and reliability, and is therefore appropriate for further analysis.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis testing was conducted using SMART PLS 4.0 software and the bootstrapping procedure, employing a two-tailed analysis at a 5% significance level. The direct effects between variables were analyzed using path coefficient values, while the indirect effects were determined through the total specific indirect effect values. A hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is ≤ 0.05 , with an alpha level (α) of 5%.

Tabel 1. Result of Path Coefficient

Variable	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Description
Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction	0,088	2,078	0,038	significant and positive influence
Work Stress → Job Satisfaction	0,109	4,171	0,000	significant and positive influence

Source: Data Processed Smart PLS 3.0

Tabel 2. Result of Indirect Effect

Variabel	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistic (O/STDEV)	P Values	Description
Work-Life Balance → Psychological Capital → Job Satisfaction	0,058	2,114	0,035	significantly mediates
Work Stress → Psychological Capital → Job Satisfaction	0,075	3,019	0,003	significantly mediates

Source: Data Processed Smart PLS 3.0

Based on the hypothesis testing results presented in Tables 1 and 2, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Work-Life Balance → Job Satisfaction

As shown in Table 1, the p-value is 0.038 (< 0.05), indicating that Hypothesis 1 is accepted. This means that work-life balance has a significant and positive influence on employee job satisfaction. This finding is in line with previous studies, such as Haar et al. (2014), who reported that employees with higher work-life balance tend to experience higher satisfaction at work due to better well-being and reduced role conflict.

2. Work Stress → Job Satisfaction

Table 1 also shows a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), supporting Hypothesis 2. Thus, work stress has a significant negative impact on employee job satisfaction. This is consistent with the findings of Kurniawan and Ardi (2020), which revealed that increased work stress contributes to lower job satisfaction due to psychological fatigue, reduced motivation, and higher emotional exhaustion.

3. Work-Life Balance → Psychological Capital → Job Satisfaction

As shown in Table 2, the p-value for the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction is 0.035 (< 0.05), supporting Hypothesis 3. Psychological capital acts as a significant mediator, suggesting that employees who manage work-life balance well are likely to develop higher levels of self-efficacy, hope,

optimism, and resilience, which in turn enhance their job satisfaction. Similar findings are reported by Luthans et al. (2007), who emphasized the mediating role of psychological capital in improving work outcomes.

4. Work Stress → Psychological Capital → Job Satisfaction

Table 2 also shows a p-value of 0.003 (< 0.05), confirming Hypothesis 4. This indicates that psychological capital significantly mediates the effect of work stress on job satisfaction. Employees with strong psychological capital are better equipped to cope with stress, thereby mitigating its negative effect on job satisfaction. This result is aligned with research by Avey et al. (2011), which suggests that psychological capital can buffer the impact of stressors and foster positive employee outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that work-life balance has a significant positive influence on the job satisfaction of civil servants at BKD DIY. Similarly, work stress was found to have a significant negative impact on job satisfaction. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that psychological capital plays a significant mediating role in both the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction, as well as the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of psychological resources such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience in enhancing employees' capacity to maintain satisfaction under varying work conditions.

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. The scope of the sample, limited to employees within a single government institution, may constrain the generalizability of the findings. Future research is encouraged to incorporate broader samples across different sectors and to explore additional moderating or mediating variables such as organizational support, leadership style, or personality traits to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee satisfaction. In doing so, future studies can expand upon the present findings and offer deeper insights into how individuals and organizations can jointly foster a more supportive and satisfying work environment.

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