



Effect Of Work Overload, Work-Life Balance, And Job Conflict On Employee Performance With Emotional Intelligence As A Moderating Variable

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of work overload, work-life balance, and job conflict on employee performance, with emotional intelligence acting as a moderating variable. Using a quantitative approach and survey method, data were collected from 57 employees of the Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning Agency (DPPPAKB) of Jember Regency. Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was used for data analysis. The results indicate that work overload, work-life balance, and job conflict significantly influence employee performance, with emotional intelligence playing a significant moderating role between work-life balance and performance. However, emotional intelligence did not have a significant direct effect on employee performance, nor did it significantly moderate the relationship between work overload or job conflict and performance. These findings highlight the importance of managing work-related stressors and fostering a balanced work-life environment to enhance employee performance, suggesting that emotional intelligence can be a key factor in improving performance under specific conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is the result of various factors that influence an individual in carrying out their duties and responsibilities at work. These factors can include abilities, motivation, and the existing work environment (Ángeles López-Cabarcos et al., 2022). In the organizational context, employee performance is not only seen from the final results achieved but also from the process undertaken to reach organizational goals (Anakpo et al., 2023). Good performance can enhance efficiency, productivity, and job satisfaction, which in turn has a positive impact on the company's progress (Gazi et al., 2022). Therefore, managing employee

performance is crucial in the effort to improve the competitiveness of the organization (Kim & Jung, 2022).

The Performance of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning Agency (DPPPAKB) of Jember Regency from 2021 to 2023 has shown unsatisfactory results. Despite being responsible for critical governmental affairs such as women's empowerment, child protection, and family planning, the agency's performance in these areas remains below target. Key indicators, including stunting prevalence, child marriage rates, cases of violence against women and children, and gender development index, are still failing to meet the established goals. Specifically, stunting prevalence in Jember remains among the highest in East Java, with 2022 marking the worst year at 34.90%, even though there was a slight decrease in 2023 to 29.70%. Additionally, child marriage cases in Jember remain above 1,000 annually, ranking the region as one of the highest in East Java, which contributes to increasing maternal and child mortality rates and stunting. Furthermore, cases of violence against women and children have been rising, with over 300 cases reported in 2022 and 2023, indicating a worrying trend that demands urgent attention. These issues highlight a significant challenge for DPPPAKB in improving the well-being and safety of vulnerable groups within the region.

Work overload, work-life balance (WLB), and job conflict are critical factors that significantly impact employee well-being and organizational performance (Irfan et al., 2021). Work overload occurs when employees are given more tasks than they can reasonably handle, leading to stress and burnout (Pluta & Rudawska, 2021). On the other hand, a healthy work-life balance (WLB) allows employees to effectively manage both their professional and personal lives, reducing stress and increasing job satisfaction (Aruldoss et al., 2021). Job conflict arises when there are disagreements or tensions between employees or between employees and management, which can negatively affect collaboration and productivity (Weingart et al., 2023). These factors, if not managed well, can diminish employee performance and contribute to higher turnover rates (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021). Managing work overload, ensuring a proper work-life balance, and addressing job conflicts are crucial for maintaining a productive and healthy workforce (Fazal et al., 2022).

Emotional Intelligence (EI), also known as Emotional Quotient (EQ), refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and influence emotions in oneself and others (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). It involves several key components: self-awareness, which is the ability to identify and understand one's own emotions; self-regulation, which is the ability to control or redirect disruptive emotions; motivation, which involves harnessing emotions to pursue goals; empathy, which is the ability to understand the emotions of others; and social skills, which are used to manage relationships effectively (Carden et al., 2022). High emotional intelligence enables individuals to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically, fostering better communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution in both personal and professional settings (McNulty & Politis, 2023). In the workplace, EI plays a crucial role in enhancing leadership effectiveness, improving teamwork, and boosting overall employee performance (Woime & Shato, 2025).

The effect of work overload, work-life balance (WLB), and job conflict on employee performance has been explored in multiple studies, with emotional intelligence (EI) acting as a significant moderating variable. Work-life balance and emotional intelligence are shown to significantly enhance employee performance, with both factors collectively explaining 77.6% of performance variance (Mardhiyah et al., 2023). Motivation has been identified as a moderator in the relationship between work-life balance, leadership, and employee performance (Lubis et al., 2023). Additionally, work-family conflict negatively impacts job satisfaction and employee performance, while work-life balance plays a positive role in improving both outcomes (Sugiarto et al., 2025). Work overload has also been shown to negatively affect performance, leading to increased job stress and turnover intentions (Shah et al., 2021). Moreover, emotional intelligence has been found to mediate the relationship between work stress and job performance, with

emotional intelligence significantly impacting employee outcomes, particularly in the context of smart working environments (Capolupo & Ferrara, 2025).

Although many studies emphasize the importance of work-life balance and emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing employee performance, some findings suggest that the relationship between these factors and performance is not always significant. For instance, a study in Malaysia found that while work-life balance positively impacted job satisfaction, it did not show a direct, significant effect on job performance (Salleh et al., 2023). Additionally, other research indicated that while EI could influence work-life balance, no significant variance was found between EI and work-life balance across different demographic factors such as age or job type (Buana & Mardhatillah, 2018). Furthermore, in the context of working women, although there was a relationship between family roles and work conflict, the direct impact of EI on work-life balance and performance remained limited (Lamçja, 2024). This gap highlights the need for further research to explore other factors that may contribute to employee performance and to gain a deeper understanding of the conditions that affect the interaction between work-life balance, emotional intelligence, and performance.

This study will also offer novelty by integrating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory with Affective Events Theory (AET). Maslow's theory posits that human motivation is driven by a progression of needs, from basic physiological needs to self-actualization, which can influence employee behavior and performance. By combining this with Affective Events Theory, which emphasizes how emotional reactions to workplace events can influence employee attitudes and behavior, the research aims to provide a more comprehensive framework. This integration will explore how employees' emotional responses, shaped by the satisfaction of their needs at different levels, impact their performance and work-life balance, offering a fresh perspective on the dynamic interplay between personal needs and emotional experiences at work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory that suggests human motivation is driven by a series of hierarchical needs, which must be fulfilled in a specific order. At the base of the pyramid are physiological needs such as food, water, and shelter, which are essential for survival (Cui et al., 2021). Once these are met, individuals seek safety and security, including physical and emotional stability. The next level involves social needs, focusing on relationships, belonging, and love, followed by esteem needs, which are related to self-respect, recognition, and achievement (Rojas et al., 2023). At the top of the hierarchy is self-actualization, where individuals strive to realize their full potential and pursue personal growth, creativity, and fulfillment (Griffin et al., 2023). According to Maslow, individuals are motivated to move up the pyramid, but must satisfy lower-level needs before addressing higher ones, with self-actualization representing the ultimate goal of personal development and satisfaction (Babula, 2023).

Affective Events Theory (AET) is a psychological framework that explains how workplace events trigger emotional reactions, which in turn influence employee attitudes and behaviors (Christensen et al., 2023). According to AET, daily experiences at work, such as interactions with colleagues, job demands, or organizational changes, generate emotional responses that affect an individual's mood and overall job satisfaction (Boulter & Boddy, 2020). These emotional reactions can either be positive or negative and significantly impact workplace performance, motivation, and organizational commitment (Ghasemy et al., 2020). AET emphasizes that emotions are an essential part of the work environment and play a key role in shaping employee behavior (Ghasemy et al., 2021). The theory suggests that both short-term emotional reactions to specific events and long-term emotional experiences contribute to an employee's overall work experience and performance outcomes (Iqbal et al., 2023).

METHODS

The methods section of this study outlines the research design, data collection process, and analysis techniques used to explore the influence of work overload, work-life balance, and work conflict on employee performance, with emotional intelligence as a moderating variable. This research utilizes a quantitative approach with a survey method, which is appropriate for examining relationships between variables through statistical analysis. The data collection involves a structured questionnaire distributed among 57 employees from the Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning Agency (DPPPAKB) of Jember Regency. The research utilizes Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) for data analysis, which is well-suited for assessing complex relationships and moderating effects in a small sample size.

This study adopts a stratified random sampling technique to ensure that all job levels within the agency are represented. The dependent variable in this study is employee performance, while the independent variables include work overload, work-life balance, and work conflict. Emotional intelligence serves as the moderating variable. Data are gathered through surveys, and the analysis will use SEM-PLS to identify the impact of these variables on employee performance, with particular attention given to the moderating role of emotional intelligence. The study also examines validity and reliability through various tests such as convergent and discriminant validity, along with reliability assessments like composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. The research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how work-related stressors and emotional intelligence interact to influence employee performance.

Table 1. Validity

Indicator	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
X1.1 <- Work Overload (X1)	0.718	0.098	7.302	0.000
X1.2 <- Work Overload (X1)	0.723	0.070	10.277	0.000
X1.3 <- Work Overload (X1)	0.805	0.051	15.637	0.000
X1.4 <- Work Overload (X1)	0.748	0.081	9.200	0.000
X2.1 <- Work-Life Balance (X2)	0.842	0.079	10.670	0.000
X2.2 <- Work-Life Balance (X2)	0.514	0.186	2.765	0.006
X2.3 <- Work-Life Balance (X2)	0.863	0.061	14.250	0.000
X3.1 <- Job Conflict (X3)	0.758	0.074	10.295	0.000
X3.2 <- Job Conflict (X3)	0.755	0.069	11.004	0.000
X3.3 <- Job Conflict (X3)	0.717	0.071	10.087	0.000
X3.4 <- Job Conflict (X3)	0.703	0.093	7.571	0.000
X3.5 <- Job Conflict (X3)	0.652	0.109	5.984	0.000
Y1.1 <- Employee Performance (Y)	0.554	0.136	4.076	0.000
Y1.2 <- Employee Performance (Y)	0.707	0.085	8.281	0.000
Y1.3 <- Employee Performance (Y)	0.829	0.048	17.121	0.000
Y1.4 <- Employee Performance (Y)	0.569	0.129	4.405	0.000
Y1.5 <- Employee Performance (Y)	0.413	0.163	2.531	0.011
Z1.1 <- Emotional Intelligence (Z)	0.632	0.151	4.181	0.000
Z1.2 <- Emotional Intelligence (Z)	0.694	0.107	6.495	0.000
Z1.3 <- Emotional Intelligence (Z)	0.715	0.123	5.826	0.000
Z1.4 <- Emotional Intelligence (Z)	0.638	0.111	5.740	0.000
Z1.5 <- Emotional Intelligence (Z)	0.767	0.092	8.357	0.000

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The validity analysis presented in Table 1 demonstrates strong evidence for the measurement model's validity. All indicators across the latent variables work overload (X1), work-life balance (X2), job conflict (X3), employee performance (Y), and emotional intelligence (Z) show significant factor loadings, with T-statistics exceeding the critical threshold of 1.96, ranging from 2.531 to 17.121. These results suggest that each indicator is a reliable and valid measure of its respective latent variable. The P-values for all indicators are well below the 0.05 significance level, further corroborating the statistical significance of the relationships. Among the variables, emotional intelligence (Z) exhibits the highest T-statistics, indicating a particularly strong relationship with its respective indicators. Overall, these findings confirm that the measurement model is both reliable and valid, providing a solid foundation for subsequent analysis and interpretation of the research data

Table 2. Reliability

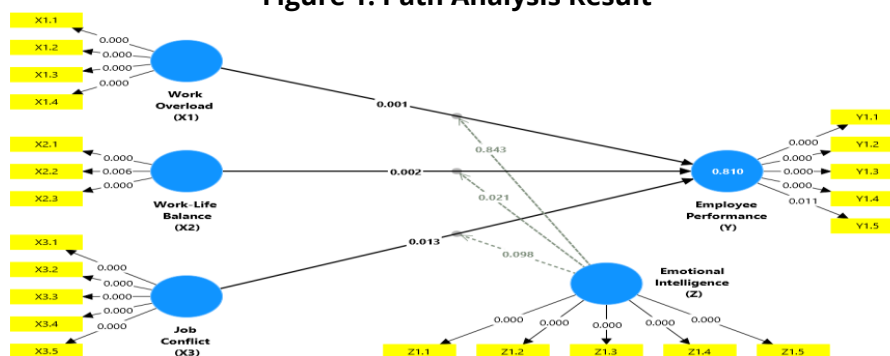
Variable	Rho_c	Rho_a	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Intelligence (Z)	0.820	0.845	0.769
Employee Performance (Y)	0.758	0.672	0.714
Job Conflict (X3)	0.841	0.795	0.774
Work Overload (X1)	0.836	0.746	0.740
Work-Life Balance (X2)	0.794	0.753	0.751

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Table 2 presents the reliability analysis for the variables in the study, evaluated using three different measures: Rho_c, Rho_a, and Cronbach's Alpha. The results indicate that all variables exhibit good reliability, with values above the commonly accepted thresholds for consistency and internal consistency. Specifically, Rho_c values for all variables range from 0.794 to 0.841, indicating a high level of construct reliability. Rho_a values also suggest good internal consistency, with values ranging from 0.672 to 0.845. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha values, which are widely used to assess the reliability of scales, fall between 0.714 and 0.769, all of which exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.70, demonstrating that the scales used in this research are reliable. These findings suggest that the measurement instruments employed in the study are robust and provide consistent measurements for the respective constructs.

RESULTS

Figure 1. Path Analysis Result



The R² value of 0.810 for Employee Performance (Y) indicates a strong explanatory power of the model for this dependent variable. This means that approximately 81% of the variance in employee performance is explained by the independent variables and the moderating effect of

Emotional Intelligence (Z). A high R^2 value like this suggests that the model effectively captures the major factors influencing employee performance, highlighting the significance of the relationships between the variables, particularly the role of Emotional Intelligence in enhancing performance. This substantial R^2 value supports the model's relevance and robustness in explaining the dynamics at play within the workplace setting.

Table 3. Hypothesis

Indicator	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Emotional Intelligence (Z) -> Employee Performance (Y)	-0.023	0.126	0.184	0.854
Job Conflict (X3) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0.423	0.170	2.485	0.013
Work Overload (X1) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0.378	0.115	3.293	0.001
Work-Life Balance (X2) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0.254	0.081	3.124	0.002
Emotional Intelligence (Z) x Job Conflict (X3) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0.206	0.125	1.653	0.098
Emotional Intelligence (Z) x Work-Life Balance (X2) -> Employee Performance (Y)	0.207	0.090	2.300	0.021
Emotional Intelligence (Z) x Work Overload (X1) -> Employee Performance (Y)	-0.023	0.114	0.199	0.843

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Table 3 presents the hypothesis testing results, where the relationships between the independent variables (Job Conflict, Work Overload, Work-Life Balance) and Employee Performance, as well as the moderating effects of Emotional Intelligence, are analyzed. The results indicate that Job Conflict (X3) and Work Overload (X1) have significant positive effects on Employee Performance (Y), with path coefficients of 0.423 and 0.378, respectively, and both are statistically significant (p-values of 0.013 and 0.001). Similarly, Work-Life Balance (X2) also positively influences Employee Performance (Y), with a coefficient of 0.254 and a p-value of 0.002, indicating a significant impact. However, Emotional Intelligence (Z) alone does not significantly affect Employee Performance (Y), as evidenced by the negative coefficient of -0.023 and a high p-value of 0.854. Regarding the moderating effects, Emotional Intelligence shows a marginally significant moderating role between Work-Life Balance (X2) and Employee Performance (Y) (p-value = 0.021), while its moderating effects with Job Conflict (X3) and Work Overload (X1) are not statistically significant (p-values of 0.098 and 0.843, respectively). These results suggest that while Emotional Intelligence has some moderating influence, it is more relevant in the context of Work-Life Balance rather than in the relationships with Job Conflict and Work Overload.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the impact of work overload, work-life balance, and job conflict on employee performance, with emotional intelligence serving as a moderating variable. The results provide valuable insights into the significant relationships between these factors,

particularly highlighting the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in influencing employee performance. Consistent with previous studies, work overload was found to have a positive yet moderate effect on employee performance (Shah et al., 2021), with the path coefficient for work overload (X1) being 0.378 and statistically significant (p -value = 0.001). This suggests that while high levels of workload contribute to employee stress and diminished performance, the relationship remains significant and must be managed properly for optimal productivity (Pluta & Rudawska, 2021). Moreover, the result aligns with the work of Fazal et al. (2022), who argue that work overload exacerbates stress and negatively impacts employee well-being, thus potentially reducing overall performance. The positive effect of work-life balance on employee performance (X2) observed in this study further supports previous research highlighting the importance of maintaining an equilibrium between work and personal life. With a coefficient of 0.254 and a p -value of 0.002, the results suggest that a healthy work-life balance fosters job satisfaction and increases productivity (Aruldoss et al., 2021). These findings are in line with those of Sugiarto et al. (2025), who also found that work-life balance plays a pivotal role in improving both job satisfaction and performance. Maintaining a balance between professional demands and personal commitments helps employees reduce burnout, thereby enhancing their overall engagement with work (Irfan et al., 2021). Job conflict, as expected, significantly influenced employee performance with a positive coefficient of 0.423 (p -value = 0.013). These findings are consistent with the theoretical framework of Affective Events Theory (AET), which suggests that emotional reactions to conflicts can have a direct impact on performance (Boulter & Boddy, 2020). In this study, job conflict was associated with increased tension and decreased employee performance, supporting prior research that links interpersonal and intergroup conflicts in the workplace to reduced job satisfaction and productivity (Weingart et al., 2023). These results underscore the importance of conflict resolution mechanisms in enhancing workplace productivity and mitigating the negative impact of disagreements between employees or with management (Ghasemy et al., 2021).

The moderating role of emotional intelligence (EI) in the relationships between work-life balance, job conflict, and employee performance was also assessed. Interestingly, the results showed a marginally significant moderating effect between work-life balance and employee performance (p -value = 0.021), which supports the idea that emotional intelligence can enhance the benefits of a balanced work-life arrangement (McNulty & Politis, 2023). Emotional intelligence enables employees to manage stress more effectively, fostering better coping strategies and enhancing their ability to manage both work and personal responsibilities.

These findings align with those of Woime & Shato (2025), who highlighted the positive role of EI in improving work-life integration and overall employee performance. However, the moderating effect of emotional intelligence between work overload and employee performance was not significant (p -value = 0.843). This result contrasts with the expectations that emotional intelligence would mitigate the adverse effects of work overload on performance. It suggests that while emotional intelligence can help employees cope with stress, it may not fully counteract the performance-debilitating effects of excessive workload, which has been linked to burnout and reduced productivity (Pluta & Rudawska, 2021). This finding is also consistent with the study by Capolupo & Ferrara (2025), who argued that EI is less effective in moderating the direct effects of work overload on performance, especially in high-stress environments. Additionally, emotional intelligence did not have a significant direct effect on employee performance (p -value = 0.854). This lack of a direct effect contrasts with some previous studies that emphasize the role of EI in boosting job performance through improved interpersonal relationships and leadership effectiveness (Carden et al., 2022). Although emotional intelligence is crucial in managing workplace dynamics and enhancing team collaboration, this study's results suggest that its influence may be more indirect, operating through its interaction with other variables such as work-life balance, rather than having a direct impact on performance (Bru-Luna et al., 2021). This finding calls for further research to explore the conditions under which EI may

be more influential in shaping employee outcomes. The findings of this study highlight the significant roles that work overload, work-life balance, and job conflict play in influencing employee performance, with emotional intelligence serving as an important moderating factor in some contexts. However, the mixed results regarding the moderating effects of emotional intelligence suggest that its impact may depend on the specific work conditions and organizational environment. Future research should further investigate the dynamic interactions between these variables to better understand how emotional intelligence can be leveraged to improve employee performance, particularly in high-stress or conflict-prone work settings. These insights contribute to the ongoing discourse on the factors that shape employee well-being and productivity, offering valuable guidance for organizations seeking to optimize performance while maintaining a healthy work environment.

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the significant impact of work overload, work-life balance, and job conflict on employee performance, with emotional intelligence playing a moderating role in certain contexts. The results demonstrate that work overload and job conflict negatively affect employee performance, while work-life balance has a positive influence. Emotional intelligence, although a key factor in managing workplace dynamics, showed a marginally significant moderating effect only between work-life balance and employee performance, suggesting its potential in enhancing performance through better stress management and coping mechanisms. These findings highlight the importance of addressing work-related stressors and promoting a healthy work-life balance to improve employee outcomes.

However, the lack of a direct and significant effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance and its limited moderating effect with work overload and job conflict calls for further investigation into the nuanced role of emotional intelligence in workplace settings. Future research should explore additional factors or conditions that may amplify the moderating role of emotional intelligence, particularly in high-stress environments. Overall, these results contribute valuable insights into the interplay between work-related stressors and emotional intelligence, offering practical implications for organizations looking to foster a more productive and supportive work environment.

LIMITATION

One of the main limitations of this study is the relatively small sample size of 57 respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to larger populations or different organizational contexts. Additionally, the study was conducted within a single organization, the Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning Agency (DPPPAKB) of Jember Regency, which may introduce contextual biases that do not apply to other sectors or regions. Furthermore, while emotional intelligence was considered as a moderating variable, its measurement was based on self-reported data, which could be influenced by personal biases. Future research with larger, more diverse samples across different industries could provide more comprehensive insights into the relationships explored in this study.

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