



Jurnal Surya Pasca Scienta

Vol. XIV No. II (2025) ISSN: 2774-5236, 2407-6648

<https://journal.universitassuryadarma.ac.id/index.php/jimspc>

The Influence of Work-Family Conflict and Occupational Stress on the Performance of Female Employees, with Work-Life Balance as a Mediating Variable, at the Regional Office of the Directorate General of Taxes in Central Jakarta

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Article Info

Article history:

Received : Agust 31, 2025

Revised : Sept 09, 2025

Accepted : Sept 10, 2025

Keywords:

Strategic management, work discipline, employee performance

DOI: 10.35968/jimspc.v14i2.1648

Abstract

This study investigates the complex relationships between work-family conflict, workplace stress, and the performance of female employees, with work-life balance serving as a mediating variable. The research was conducted at the Regional Office of the Directorate General of Taxes in Central Jakarta, focusing on female employees who face unique challenges in balancing their professional and personal responsibilities. This research utilized a quantitative approach, employing Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to examine data from 88 female employees selected through the Slovin sampling method from a total population of 688 employees. The Conservation of Resources Theory and Spillover Theory provide a theoretical framework for understanding the impact of work-family conflict and job stress on employee performance through work-life balance mechanisms. Research indicates that work-family conflict and job stress negatively impact employee performance, whereas work-life balance somewhat moderate these relationships. The findings reveal that female professionals facing increased work-family conflict and workplace stress demonstrate reduced performance, whereas those achieving a better work-life balance exhibit improved performance outcomes despite facing similar challenges. This study contributes to organizational behavior literature by providing empirical evidence of the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationship between workplace stressors and performance outcomes for female employees in the public sector. The findings suggest that companies should implement comprehensive work-life balance policies and support systems to enhance female employee performance and overall organizational effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern, rapidly evolving workplace, female professionals face unprecedented challenges in reconciling their careers with parental responsibilities (Chen et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2024). The challenge of work-family conflict has become increasingly significant as organizations require improved performance while individuals strive to balance their professional and personal life (Abdou et al., 2024; Corrente et al., 2024). This challenge is particularly acute for female employees, who generally bear greater responsibility for family caregiving and household management, hence complicating their work experience (Acilar & Saebø, 2023; Medina et al., 2023).

Work-family conflict, defined as the tension between work and family role obligations, has been identified as a significant predictor of employee performance outcomes (Ratnaningsih & Idris, 2023; Zeng et al., 2023). Recent studies demonstrate that when individuals face conflict between their professional and domestic obligations, their job performance, contentment, and organizational commitment significantly decline (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024; Inegbedion, 2024). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among female professionals who often face societal expectations to excel in both career and domestic spheres (Yavorsky et al., 2021; Aydin et al., 2023).

Simultaneously, occupational stress has emerged as a crucial factor influencing employee performance in modern organizations (Elshaer et al., 2024; Kinyita, 2015). Work-related stress encompasses the physical and emotional responses that occur when job demands surpass an employee's abilities, resources, or requirements (Bärtl et al., 2024; Bradley et al., 2023). Female professionals often encounter increased job stress due to the additional responsibilities of family obligations, leading to a complex variety of pressures that can negatively impact their professional performance (Attell et al., 2017; Szcześniak et al., 2024).

The concept of work-life balance has received increased attention as a potential mediator that assists individuals in managing the competing demands of professional and familial obligations (Duan & Deng, 2022; Udin, 2023). Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to effectively distribute time, energy, and commitment across professional and personal domains (Kim, 2014; Wijaya & Suwandana, 2022). Research demonstrates that employees with improved work-life balance achieve better performance outcomes, while facing significant work-family conflict and work-related stress (Talukder & Galang, 2021; Vernia & Senen, 2022).

The Indonesian public sector, particularly the Directorate General of Taxes, provides a unique context for examining these connections (Li et al., 2022; Abdullah et al., 2022). Women in this sector face unique challenges, including heightened workload demands, rigorous performance targets, and limited flexibility in work arrangements (Shouman et al., 2022; Bocean et al., 2023). Understanding the influence of work-family conflict and work stress on performance, together with the mediating function of work-life balance in these interactions, is crucial for developing effective organizational policies and treatments.

Previous research has shown significant relationships between work-family conflict, job stress, and employee performance across various organizational contexts (Irfan et al., 2023; Katili et al., 2021). However, limited studies have specifically examined the mediating role of work-life balance in these relationships among female employees in the Indonesian public sector (Isa & Indrayati, 2023; Ogamegbunam, 2023). This research gap is significant because of the unique cultural, social, and organizational factors that characterize the Indonesian workplace.

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides a framework for understanding these relationships by asserting that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect resources, with stress occurring when resources are threatened, depleted, or inadequate (Hobfoll, 2011; Aybas et al., 2022). Female employees experiencing work-family conflict and work-related stress deplete

their personal resources, leading to reduced performance (Obrenovic et al., 2020; Fietz et al., 2021). Work-life balance can serve as a resource conservation strategy that maintains performance levels despite these limitations.

The Spillover Theory explains how experiences in one life domain might affect experiences in another domain (Gagnano et al., 2020; Mensah & Adjei, 2020). Female employees may have adverse effects, including work-family conflict and occupational stress, which can permeate both work and family spheres, leading to a cyclical deterioration in well-being and performance (Boakye et al., 2023; Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2023). Interventions designed to enhance work-life balance can interrupt this cycle by producing advantageous spillover effects that enhance performance outcomes.

This study centers on three fundamental research aims. To examine the direct effect of work-family conflict on the performance of female employees at the Regional Office of the Directorate General of Taxes in Central Jakarta. Secondly, to investigate the direct impact of occupational stress on the performance of female employees inside the identical organizational context. Third, to investigate the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationships among work-family conflict, workplace stress, and employee performance. These objectives seek to provide comprehensive insights into the complex mechanisms via which workplace stressors influence performance outcomes and how work-life balance may serve as a protective factor for female employees in the Indonesian public sector.

2. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The hypotheses of this study are grounded in established theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence from prior research. The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Spillover Theory provide the conceptual framework for understanding the relationships between work-family conflict, workplace stress, work-life balance, and employee performance.

Interference between Occupational and Familial Obligations and Employee Productivity

Work-family conflict refers to a form of inter-role conflict where the obligations from work and family domains are fundamentally incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Recent empirical research consistently demonstrates that work-family conflict negatively impacts employee performance across various organizational contexts (Huang et al., 2024; Abdou et al., 2024). Female employees experiencing conflict between work and family responsibilities suffer a depletion of cognitive and emotional resources, leading to impaired focus, motivation, and overall job performance (Chen et al., 2022; Corrente et al., 2024).

The COR hypothesis clarifies this connection by asserting that individuals have a limited supply of resources, and when these resources are threatened or depleted by work-family conflict, performance declines (Aybas et al., 2022; Obrenovic et al., 2020). Female employees, sometimes bearing a disproportionate responsibility for family care, may experience increased resource depletion during periods of work-family conflict (Yavorsky et al., 2021; Medina et al., 2023). This resource depletion leads to less concentration, increased absenteeism, and lower quality of job output (Ratnaningsih & Idris, 2023; Zeng et al., 2023).

H1: Work-family conflict negatively affects the performance of female employees.

Workplace Stress and Employee Efficiency

Work stress encompasses the physiological and psychological responses that occur when job demands exceed an individual's capacity to cope (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Recent research have shown a substantial inverse relationship between work-related stress and employee

performance (Elshaer et al., 2024; Szcześniak et al., 2024). Elevated occupational stress in female employees adversely affects their performance by impairing cognitive function, reducing motivation, and hindering decision-making capabilities (Bärtil et al., 2024; Bradley et al., 2023).

The physiological and psychological effects of work-related stress directly impact performance outcomes by diminishing attention, memory, and problem-solving abilities (Attell et al., 2017; Kinyita, 2015). Female employees may encounter increased work-related stress due to added pressures linked to gender role expectations and limitations on work-family balance (Aydin et al., 2023; Acilar & Saebø, 2023). The aggregate effect of stress can lead to burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and, ultimately, inferior performance results (Chen et al., 2022; Elshaer et al., 2024).

H2: Occupational stress negatively affects the performance of female employees.

Balance between Professional and Personal Life and Employee Productivity

Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to manage the competing demands of professional and personal responsibilities (Greenhaus et al., 2003). Extensive research demonstrates that employees with a better work-life balance exhibit superior performance (Duan & Deng, 2022; Udin, 2023). When female employees effectively balance their professional and personal responsibilities, they experience less stress, increased job satisfaction, and elevated motivation, resulting in improved performance outcomes (Kim, 2014; Talukder & Galang, 2021).

The beneficial relationship between work-life balance and performance can be explained in various ways. Initially, balanced employees demonstrate diminished resource depletion and maintain heightened energy levels for work-related activities (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024; Inegbedion, 2024). Secondly, work-life balance mitigates role conflict and ambiguity, enabling individuals to concentrate more effectively on their professional responsibilities (Vernia & Senen, 2022; Irfan et al., 2023). Third, persons with balance demonstrate heightened job satisfaction and organizational engagement, leading to enhanced performance outcomes (Katili et al., 2021; Isa & Indrayati, 2023).

H3: A balance between work and personal life significantly improves the performance of female employees.

Work-Family Conflict and Work-Life Balance

The relationship between work-family conflict and work-life balance is inherently negative, as disagreement between professional and familial domains directly hinders an individual's ability to achieve balance (Allen et al., 2000; Frone et al., 1997). The perception of work-life balance among female employees significantly declines in the presence of work-family conflict (Ogomegbunam, 2023; Wijaya & Suwandana, 2022). This correlation is particularly evident among female employees who often face increased pressures to effectively manage work and family responsibilities (Shouman et al., 2022; Bocean et al., 2023).

Recent studies have confirmed this negative association across various cultural and organizational contexts (Li et al., 2022; Abdullah et al., 2022). When professional responsibilities clash with familial obligations, or vice versa, employees perceive their work-life balance as insufficient, leading to increased stress and reduced well-being (Gragano et al., 2020; Mensah & Adjei, 2020). The relationship is bidirectional, with both family-to-work conflict and work-to-family conflict undermining perceptions of work-life balance (Boakye et al., 2023; Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2023).

H4: Work-family conflict detrimentally affects work-life balance considerably.

Occupational Stress and Work-Life Balance

Occupational stress directly undermines work-life balance by causing negative spillover effects from the professional domain to personal life (Michel et al., 2011; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Female employees enduring heightened workplace stress sometimes struggle to cognitively and emotionally detach from their work obligations, thereby impeding their capacity to engage fully in personal and familial pursuits (Duan & Deng, 2022; Udin, 2023). The spillover effect reduces their ability to achieve work-life balance, so creating a harmful cycle of increased stress and decreased equilibrium (Kim, 2014; Talukder & Galang, 2021).

Empirical evidence confirms this negative link, demonstrating that people with high workplace stress levels often perceive a worse work-life balance (Vernia & Senen, 2022; Irfan et al., 2023). The correlation is particularly pronounced among female employees who may experience increased stress due to gender role expectations and work-family interface challenges (Katili et al., 2021; Isa & Indrayati, 2023). Elevated work-related stress hinders employees' capacity to allocate adequate time and energy to personal life domains, resulting in a perceived imbalance (Ogomegbunam, 2023; Wijaya & Suwandana, 2022).

H5: Occupational stress negatively affects work-life balance.

The Intermediary Function of Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance serves as a mediating variable in the relationships between work-family conflict, workplace stress, and employee performance, as elucidated by the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Spillover Theory processes (Hobfoll, 2011; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). The work-family conflict and job stress experienced by female employees significantly affect their work-life balance, which then impacts their performance outcomes (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024; Inegbedion, 2024).

The mediating effect occurs through a resource conservation mechanism, where work-family conflict and work-related stress deplete employees' resources, resulting in an insufficient work-life balance, which ultimately leads to reduced performance (Duan & Deng, 2022; Udin, 2023). However, when individuals effectively maintain work-life balance during conflict and stress, their performance results are better protected (Kim, 2014; Talukder & Galang, 2021). This suggests that work-life balance interventions may alleviate the negative effects of work-family conflict and work-related stress on performance outcomes (Vernia & Senen, 2022; Irfan et al., 2023).

H6: Work-life balance mediates the relationship between work-family conflict and employee performance.

H7: Job-life balance functions as a mediator in the correlation between job stress and employee performance.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework outlines the relationships among the study variables, based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Spillover theory. Job-family conflict and job stress serve as independent variables that directly influence employee performance (dependent variable) and indirectly affect performance through work-life balance (mediating variable). The framework demonstrates that work-family conflict and job stress adversely affect performance, with these effects being partially alleviated by work-life balance. This indicates that improving work-life balance could mitigate the negative effects of workplace stressors on performance results for female employees in the public sector.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among work-family conflict, workplace stress, work-life balance, and employee performance among female employees. The quantitative method was employed to enable statistical examination of postulated connections and to provide empirical evidence for the theoretical framework (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Population and Sample

The research population consisted of all female employees at the Regional Office of the Directorate General of Taxes in Central Jakarta, totaling 688 individuals. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula: $n = N/(1+Ne^2)$, where N signifies the population size (688) and e indicates the error tolerance (10%). The computation yielded a minimal sample size of 88 respondents ($n = 688/(1+688 \times 0.1^2) = 88$). The sample size is considered adequate for SEM-PLS analysis, as it exceeds the minimum requirement of ten times the maximum number of structural paths directed at any construct in the model (Hair et al., 2017; Ringle et al., 2020).

Data Collection

Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to female employees using purposive sampling technique. The questionnaire consisted of validated scales adapted from previous research to measure work-family conflict (Netemeyer et al., 1996), work stress (Cohen et al., 1983), work-life balance (Hayman, 2005), and employee performance (Koopmans et al., 2014). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was translated into Indonesian and pre-tested with 30 respondents to ensure clarity and cultural appropriateness.

Data Analysis

Data analysis utilizing the Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach, leveraging SmartPLS 4.0 software (Ringle et al., 2022). SEM-PLS was selected as the suitable analytical method because of its ability to simultaneously assess numerous interactions, handle complex models with mediating variables, and its suitability for exploratory research with very small sample sizes (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2019). The inquiry utilized a two-phase methodology: first, the measurement model was evaluated for reliability and validity; second, the structural model was analyzed to assess the claimed relationships and mediating effects.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Assessment

The evaluation of the measurement model exhibited satisfactory reliability and validity metrics for all constructs. Cronbach's alpha scores ranged from 0.842 to 0.918, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Composite reliability scores ranged from 0.885 to 0.935, confirming internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2017). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values varied between 0.612 and 0.748, surpassing the minimum requirement of 0.50, hence indicating adequate convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was confirmed by the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios, with all values exceeding the specified thresholds (Henseler et al., 2015).

Structural Model Results

The structural model analysis revealed significant correlations supporting most theories. The conflict between work and family significantly negatively affected employee performance ($\beta = -0.324$, $t = 4.127$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. This finding aligns with recent studies suggesting that female employees experience a significant drop in job performance when faced with conflicts between work and family responsibilities (Huang et al., 2024; Abdou et al., 2024). The negative link arises from resource depletion, as competing demands from work and family deplete employees' cognitive and emotional resources, leading to insufficient ability for optimal job performance (Chen et al., 2022; Corrente et al., 2024).

Work-related stress shown a significant negative effect on employee performance ($\beta = -0.289$, $t = 3.856$, $p < 0.001$), hence confirming H2. This result corresponds with contemporary research demonstrating that occupational stress adversely affects employee performance through many mechanisms, including reduced concentration, decreased motivation, and compromised decision-making abilities (Elshaer et al., 2024; Szcześniak et al., 2024). Female public sector professionals may experience considerable negative consequences from work-related stress due to heightened performance expectations combined with inadequate resources and support systems (Bärtl et al., 2024; Bradley et al., 2023).

The work-life balance shown a significant positive effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.445$, $t = 5.923$, $p < 0.001$), hence supporting H3. This discovery highlights the importance of work-life balance as a crucial factor in enhancing performance outcomes for female employees (Duan & Deng, 2022; Udin, 2023). Employees who effectively manage the demands of their professional and personal lives have higher energy levels, experience lower stress, and demonstrate increased commitment to their work responsibilities (Kim, 2014; Talukder & Galang, 2021).

The relationships between antecedent variables and work-life balance were significant. Work-family conflict shown a significant negative effect on work-life balance ($\beta = -0.412$, $t = 5.234$, $p < 0.001$), hence supporting H4. This link illustrates that when individuals face conflict between work and family obligations, their ability to achieve balance between both domains is significantly impaired (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024; Inegbedion, 2024). Similarly, work stress shown a significant negative effect on work-life balance ($\beta = -0.367$, $t = 4.789$, $p < 0.001$), hence confirming H5. Increased work-related stress produces spillover effects that interfere with employees' home life, hindering the achievement of a favorable balance between professional and personal spheres (Vernia & Senen, 2022; Irfan et al., 2023).

Mediation Analysis

The mediation study revealed significant indirect effects, validating the hypothesized mediating role of work-life balance. Work-life balance significantly mediated the relationship between work-family conflict and employee performance ($\beta = -0.184$, $t = 3.421$, $p < 0.001$), hence confirming H6. The mediation was partial, indicating that work-family conflict affects employee performance both directly and indirectly through work-life balance (Katili et al., 2021; Isa & Indrayati, 2023). This research demonstrates that work-family conflict adversely impacts performance, partially mediated by its effect on work-life balance.

The job-life balance strongly mediated the relationship between job stress and employee performance ($\beta = -0.163$, $t = 3.187$, $p < 0.01$), hence supporting H7. Partial mediation indicates that job stress influences performance through many pathways, with work-life balance serving as a crucial mechanism (Ogomegbunam, 2023; Wijaya & Suwandana, 2022). The mediating effects highlight the importance of work-life balance as a protective factor that may mitigate the negative effects of workplace stress on performance outcomes.

Discussion of Findings

The results provide strong empirical support for the theoretical framework and contribute to the growing literature on work-family interactions and employee performance. The significant negative effects of work-family conflict and occupational stress on employee performance

demonstrate that female employees in the Indonesian public sector face substantial challenges in reconciling the competing demands of work and family obligations (Shouman et al., 2022; Bocean et al., 2023). These findings correspond with the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which asserts that resource depletion from competing demands leads to reduced performance outcomes (Li et al., 2022; Abdullah et al., 2022).

The positive influence of work-life balance on employee performance underscores the need of aiding individuals in achieving equilibrium between their professional and personal domains (Gragnano et al., 2020; Mensah & Adjei, 2020). This study suggests that companies investing in work-life balance initiatives should expect improved performance from their female employees (Boakye et al., 2023; Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2023). The results demonstrate that work-life balance is a crucial factor through which workplace demands influence performance, highlighting the need for comprehensive methods to tackle work-family interface issues.

The mediating effects of work-life balance offer substantial insights for both theoretical and practical applications. These findings validate the spillover theory by demonstrating how negative workplace experiences impact work-life balance, therefore affecting performance (Michel et al., 2011; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). The mediation effects suggest that organizations can augment employee performance by implementing strategies that enhance work-life balance, even in the face of significant work-family conflict and occupational stress (Frone et al., 1997; Allen et al., 2000).

The context of the Indonesian public sector amplifies the importance of these findings. Women in this sector often have unique challenges, including bureaucratic constraints, heightened performance expectations, and limited flexibility in work arrangements (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2017). This study demonstrates that the identified issues negatively affect employee performance, however interventions aimed at work-life balance can mitigate these bad effects (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015).

5. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Limitations

Conclusions

This study provides substantial data regarding the complex relationships between work-family conflict, workplace stress, work-life balance, and employee performance among female employees in the Indonesian public sector. The findings demonstrate that work-family conflict and job stress negatively affect employee performance, but work-life balance positively influences performance outcomes (Udin et al., 2023; Candra et al., 2023). Work-life balance serves as a partial mediator in the relationships between work-family conflict, work stress, and employee performance, indicating that initiatives to improve work-life balance may mitigate the negative impacts of workplace stressors (Ahmad & Raja, 2021; Bocean et al., 2023).

This study provides empirical support for the Conservation of Resources (COR) hypothesis and Spillover hypothesis in explaining work-family dynamics among female employees in Indonesia (Pehlivanoğlu et al., 2022; Berglund et al., 2020). The findings demonstrate that resource depletion from work-family conflict and work-related stress leads to reduced performance; however, work-life balance can serve as a resource conservation strategy that maintains performance levels (Qureshi et al., 2019; Agha et al., 2017). The report provides valuable data for companies seeking to improve female employee performance through comprehensive work-life balance initiatives..

Recommendations

The research findings propose several recommendations for the Regional Office of the Directorate General of Taxes in Central Jakarta and similar public sector organizations. Organizations ought to implement comprehensive work-life balance policies that address the specific needs of female employees (Shouman et al., 2022; Umma & Zahana, 2020). These policies

must cover flexible work arrangements, family-oriented benefits, and support systems that aid employees in effectively combining professional and familial responsibilities.

Organizations ought to implement stress management programs that aid employees in developing coping mechanisms for managing work-related stressors (Lunau et al., 2019; Gragnano et al., 2020). These programs must include stress reduction strategies, employee assistance programs, and workplace wellness initiatives that address both the physical and psychological aspects of professional stress (Delecta, 2011; Mas-Machuca et al., 2016). Third, leadership development programs should emphasize supportive supervision that recognizes and addresses the work-family interface difficulties encountered by female employees (Hsu et al., 2019; Khateeb, 2021).

Limitations

This study has specific limitations that must be acknowledged and addressed in future research. The cross-sectional method limits the ability to determine causal relationships between variables, while longitudinal studies provide more substantial evidence for the asserted linkages (Abdullah et al., 2022; Wijaya & Suwandana, 2022). The research focused solely on female employees in one organization within the Indonesian public sector, hence limiting the generalizability of the results to other contexts and populations (Mensah & Adjei, 2020; Otuya & Andeyo, 2020).

The research employed self-reported metrics, which may be susceptible to common method bias and social desirability influences (Susanto et al., 2022; Thilagavathy & Geetha, 2023). Future research should incorporate varied data sources and objective performance indicators to improve the validity of findings. The study did not examine potential moderating variables, such as organizational support, supervisor support, or individual differences, that could influence the correlations among the study variables (Boakye et al., 2023; Cheung et al., 2023). Future study should examine these additional factors to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of work-family dynamics and employee performance outcomes.

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