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Original Article

The Impact of Work-Life Balance and Work Stress on Employee Performance: The Moderating Role of Work Flexibility among Lecturers at Universitas Khairun

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Abstract: *Professor and personal responsibilities are a major challenge for college teachers, especially in developing countries. This study examines how lecturer performance is affected by work-life balance and work-related stress. It also explores the effect of flexibility at work on these two types of stressors. The survey data analyzed are based on questionnaires from 91 lecturers at Universitas Khairun of Indonesia. The results show that work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on lecturer task performance, while work stress, under certain conditions, can also contribute positively as eustress. Furthermore, job flexibility can help to make the effect of work-life balance on job performance even better, but it doesn't play a moderating role in the relationship between stress and performance. These results indicate the need for universities to institute flexible work rules and effective stress management.*

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance; Work Stress; Work Flexibility; Employee Performance; Higher Education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past few decades, the concept of work-life balance (WLB) has emerged as a central issue in organizational behavior and human resource management. For organisations that emerge into the digital age and globalization, on the other hand, employees come under increasing pressure to maintain high levels of performance whilst also trying to fulfil family or other duties outside work. Indeed, this dual burden falls heavily on the academic profession. University lecturers in particular are expected to fulfil the three continuous tasks of higher education (Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi), which are teaching, research, and service to the community, while also being fathers or mothers at home. Therefore, these conflicts are often important factors that could hamper productivity, health, and performance (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Extinguishing this will require coping strategies (Guest, 2002; Husin & Sukirno, 2017).

Previous research has shown that WLB has a positive effect on employee well-being, satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness (Casper et al., 2018; Hudson, 2005). Job engagement and high performance at work are much more likely to be seen among employees with a good work-home -life balance than those who lack this quality (Clark, 2000; Malik et al., 2010) However, such balance is also particularly difficult to maintain in academia, as increasing demands for research publications, quality teaching and community engagement are piled up(Kuncoro et al., 2022). Indonesia's regulatory reforms and increased university responsibility have led to a situation where lecturers not only teach but must fill multiple roles now under the consecutive administration of Guo Jiayu (Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 12/2012 on Higher Education)

A second key factor affecting lecturer performance is work stress (WS). Stress has long been regarded as an unpleasant part of work life, harming health, satisfaction, and job effectiveness (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Ganster & Rosen, 2013). Some research findings suggest, however, that stress is not always harmful. Moderate stress, or eustress, might help focus the mind, foster creativity and inspire greater effort (Cavanaugh et al., 2000; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908) Within higher education, stress deriving from the workload, deadlines for research projects, or unclear role expectations can be either detrimental to academic performance or, under some conditions, a boost to it (Rajagukguk et al., 2023). This dual nature of stress, therefore, requires further investigation.

At the same time, the concept of work flexibility (WF) has become a strategic organizational response to the challenge of balancing work and personal life. Flexible work settings that provide options such as adaptable scheduling, remote working, or changed workloads have been shown to reduce the conflict between professional and personal roles (Allen et al., 2013; Hill et al., 2008). During the COVID-19 pandemic, flexible arrangements were imperative and showed that this way of working will sustain performance and engagement (Abdillah & Suharnomo, 2022; Chauhan, 2023). Nevertheless, there is a mixed account as to how far WF moderates the effects of WLB and WS on performance, with some studies showing clear moderation

(Agunda et al., 2024; Huda et al., 2024) and others giving different results or even contradictory outcomes (Akkas, 2023; Luthfi et al., 2025).

Even though the combined effects of WLB, WS, and WF on teacher performance in Indonesia have gradually attracted attention over the past few years, there are still few systematic studies with this in mind. Before now, most studies have been conducted on corporate employees or people working in the public sector. The academic context, where contributions are measured in many forms and closely related to institutional reputation (Sarmento & Riana, 2024), is not covered at all by this research (Soelistya, 2022; Buulolo et al., 2023). Moreover, few studies to date have specifically explored the moderation of WF in the academic arena, particularly with respect to both WLB and WS.

With these gaps in mind, this investigation focuses on how WLB and WS affect lecturer performance, and the moderating effect of WF, using Universitas Khairun in Indonesia as a study site. Theoretically, the study borrows from Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which states that people are motivated by a desire to acquire or preserve valuable resources like time, energy, and support, while losing them results in stress. Also, it employs the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001) to elucidate how stress can either wear away or invigorate employee performance depending on the availability of resources. Finally, Contingency Theory lends further weight to the role of WF as a contextual moderator, arguing that organizational practices ought to suit the needs of the situation if they are to achieve the best results.

There are three main contributions made by this study. Firstly, it enriches theory by integrating the Conservation of Resources and Job Demands-Resources frameworks in explaining how balance, stress, and flexibility interact to shape performance. Secondly, there is empirical evidence given for the moderating influence of WF in academia; this is an underexplored area within HRM research. Thirdly, the results give practical advice on how universities might create policies that promote teacher productivity yet ensure well-being.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A) Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

Work-life balance refers to the ability of individuals to effectively allocate time, energy, and psychological resources between work and personal life, which helps prevent potential conflicts from arising between the two domains. (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus & Allen, 2011) Previous studies have shown that employees who achieve a balance between work and personal life are healthier, happier, more motivated and more productive. (Kumari &Vasantha, 2019; Soelistya, 2024) In the context of academic work, teachers with good work-life balance can better fulfill their threefold mission of tridharma (teaching, research, and community service) and manage personal needs as well as professional work. (Husin &Sukirno, 2017; Mezalunaet al., 2024) Conversely, bad work-life balance is connected with role conflict and decreased productivity.

Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

B) Work Stress and Employee Performance

When an individual can't handle his job, or when its demands are greater than a person can cope with psychologically, physically, and socially in any way possible, work stress occurs (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Ganster & Rosen, 2013). Too much strain in the workplace has been found to lead to burnout, lower rates of performance and greater absenteeism (Lasminingrat, 2021; Agustina & Safitri, 2022), but a moderate amount of stress (eustress) can help focus it, be creative and result in a reparative attitude which can raise performance (Cavanaugh et al., 2000; Aduma et al., 2022).In universities, lecturers often have excessive workload and job demands; administrative work may be added, increasing stress levels. However, evidence suggests that manageable stress--within certain limits--can actually stimulate academic productivity and performance (Kinuthia et al., 2022).

Thus, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Work stress has a significant effect on employee performance.

C) Work Flexibility as a Moderator of Work-Life Balance and Performance

The notion of work flexibility includes policies and practices that allow employees discretion in determining when they work, where they work, and how long. (Kossek & Ozeki 1998; Hill et al., 2008). Lecture may also find that a higher degree of flexibility in time and pace enables the juggling of personal and professional responsibilities more efficiently, thus reducing work-family conflict while raising productivity (Allen et al., 2013; Bett et al., 2022).

Current research confirms that flexible work arrangements promote engagement and GNK Y by enabling employees to manage their working hours and workload around personal needs (Parveen & Rizq, 2024; Agunda et al., 2024). In an academic

setting, this is advantageous because it means lecturers can spread their workload in accordance with family needs or their research schedule and therefore improve performance (Eshun & Segbenya, 2024).

Therefore, it is hypothesized:
H3: Work flexibility moderates the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when work flexibility is high.

D) Work Flexibility as a Moderator of Work Stress and Performance

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model of Demerouti et al. (2001) states that resources such as flexibility can neutralize the negative effects of high demands, including stress, on employee outcomes. Arranging working hours can produce freedom of time, which helps employees to overcome pressures from risk factors (Chauhan, 2023; Tambunan et al., 2024).

Still, empirical results have been mixed. Some researchers argue that flexibility decreases stress and increases productivity (Andriani & Disman, 2023); however, others contend that flexibility alone cannot relieve stress from heavy academic workloads (Luthfi et al., 2025).
Considering these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H4: Work flexibility moderates the relationship between work stress and employee performance, such that the negative effect of work stress on performance is weaker when work flexibility is high.

III. METHODS

This questionnaire was sent to permanent lecturers at the University of Khairun, Ternate, North Maluku, Indonesia. The entire assembly consisted of 829 lecturers at nine faculties and the postgraduate program. The size of the study was determined by the Slovin formula, with a margin of error of 10%. This meant that 89 respondents would be the minimum needed for any one sample. In order to make it more representative and lessen the likelihood of any bias in sampling results, we raised our target number of subjects from 89 to 100 lecturers. After data cleansing was performed, this investigation incorporated 91 effective responses. Subject selection was conducted using the quota sampling method, dividing the cumulative teaching faculty into subgroups and then collecting proportionally from each of these subgroups. The approach ensures fair representation of the teaching faculty in its final sample of teachers and treats it as a systematically interrelated whole without any mathematical convenience adjustments. Data were collected using a closed-ended, structured questionnaire, consisting of items to be responded to on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), for Work-Life Balance, which was measured in three dimensions: time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance, adopted from Greenhaus and Allen(2011). Work Stress was measured by physiological strain, psychological strain, and behavioral strain indicators, as adapted from Setyani(2013) and Robbins & Judge(2017). Work Flexibility was measured in four dimensions: time flexibility, place flexibility, role flexibility, and workload flexibility(Logunova et al, 2016; Hill et al, 2008). Employee Performance was evaluated as regards the lecturers' implementation of the tri-dharma: lecture teaching, research for better learning skills, community service, and supporting activities (Mathis & Jackson, 2011; Aris Triyono, 2023). Prior to any statistical analysis, all measurement items were tested for their validity and reliability. Thus, this establishes their necessity for empirical research.

The data for this study were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach via SmartPLS 4.0. This method was chosen because it is predictive in nature, able to estimate complex relationships among constructs, and robust even with relatively small sample sizes. The analysis was conducted in two stages, namely the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The measurement model was examined through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability testing. Convergent validity was confirmed when factor loadings exceeded 0.70, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was above 0.50, and Composite Reliability (CR) surpassed 0.70. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loadings, while reliability was established through Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70.

Based on the coefficient of determination (R^2), the predictive relevance (Q^2) using the Stone–Geisser test, and the significance of path coefficients (β) tested through bootstrapping with 5000 resamples, the structural model was evaluated. In addition, a Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was conducted to examine the moderating effect of Work Flexibility. The general regression model included Employee Performance as the dependent variable, Work-Life Balance and Work Stress as independent variables, Work Flexibility as the moderator, and interaction terms between Work-Life Balance × Work Flexibility and Work Stress × Work Flexibility. This allowed the research to investigate whether Work Flexibility reinforced or weakened the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

According to the Slovin's formula. It was estimated as an article number. Using a margin of up to 10 percent, it resulted in a minimum figure for respondents exceeding 89. In the field survey, the questionnaire was distributed in 100 papers, of

which 91 returned valid data and were available for further research. Therefore, the data analysis was a unification of theoretical rigor and empirical strength to make sure that the findings were both reliable and authentic.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To begin with, the measurement model had better be verified before being conducted in actuality. In the event, indicator loadings were all above 0.70, indicating good convergent validity. Where the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values again exceeded 0.50, Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha were greater than 0.70, thus all constructs showed high reliability. Therefore, this is evidence that the measurement instruments for Work-Life Balance, Work Stress, Work Flexibility, and Employee Performance are both valid and reliable.

Table 1. Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Loading	AVE
Work-Life Balance	WLB1–WLB4	>0.70	0.621
Work Stress	WS1–WS4	>0.70	0.594
Work Flexibility	WF1–WF4	>0.70	0.605
Employee Performance	EP1–EP4	>0.70	0.648

Source: *Output SmartPLS 4.0, 2025*

Table 2. Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)
Work-Life Balance	0.812	0.876
Work Stress	0.795	0.861
Work Flexibility	0.801	0.868
Employee Performance	0.828	0.884

Source: *Output SmartPLS 4.0, 2025*

Furthermore, discriminant validity was confirmed through the Fornell–Larcker criterion, where the square root of each construct's AVE was higher than the correlations with other constructs, indicating clear empirical distinctions between variables.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

Construct	WLB	WS	WF	EP
Work-Life Balance	0.788			
Work Stress	0.421	0.771		
Work Flexibility	0.437	0.392	0.778	
Employee Performance	0.529	0.448	0.467	0.805

Source: *Output SmartPLS 4.0, 2025*

The structural model was then assessed to evaluate the hypothesized relationships. The R^2 value for Employee Performance was 0.642, suggesting that Work-Life Balance, Work Stress, and Work Flexibility together explained 64.2% of the variance in Employee Performance. The Q^2 predictive relevance value was 0.421, which is above zero, indicating that the model possesses predictive relevance.

Hypothesis testing revealed several significant relationships. Work-Life Balance had a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance with a path coefficient of 0.362 ($p < 0.05$), confirming that lecturers with better balance between professional and personal life achieve higher performance. Work Stress also showed a significant effect with a path coefficient of 0.214 ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that certain levels of stress can positively influence performance by increasing focus and motivation. In terms of moderation, Work Flexibility strengthened the positive relationship between Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance with a path coefficient of 0.193 ($p < 0.05$). However, the moderating effect of Work Flexibility on the relationship between Work Stress and Employee Performance was not significant ($\beta = –0.041$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Result
H1	Work-Life Balance → Employee Performance	0.362	<0.05	Supported
H2	Work Stress → Employee Performance	0.214	<0.05	Supported
H3	WLB × WF → Employee Performance	0.193	<0.05	Supported
H4	WS × WF → Employee Performance	–0.041	>0.05	Not Supported

Source: *Output SmartPLS 4.0, 2025*

To further illustrate the relationships among constructs, the structural model of PLS-SEM is presented below.

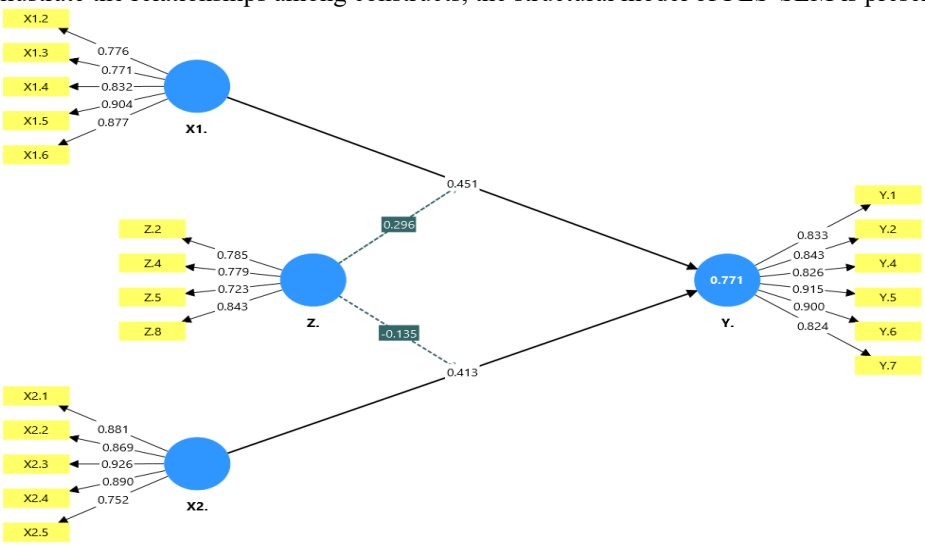

Figure 2. PLS-SEM Structural Model

The findings of this study confirm that Work-Life Balance greatly affects Employee Performance and Working Stress. Furthermore, Work Flexibility partially acts as a buffer because it strengthens the relationship between Work-Life Balance and performance outcomes, but not for Working Stress. When lecturers are capable of striking a balance between professional responsibilities and private life, motivation, concentration, and efficiency all increase; this study's findings are close to Greenhaus and Allen (2011), who claim that work-life balance leads to greater job satisfaction and organizational support. The academic in particular can then more easily meet its threefold responsibility (Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi) downloadsthese can also be translated as: teaching, research and community service shallow without sacrificing their own ConsumptionTo some extent or even indubitable; although lecturers nowadays always describe themselves as having been involved in revitalizing city life wherever it might occur under one administrative banner and 24-Hour Service stint already by midnite, thanksVery creditable indeed for ministers who had previously been refuting all charges of bureaucratic indulgence but now accommodate the cause of religion as part-time work! What is a job teaching in fact? Work stress was found to have a very significant impact on performance. A moderate degree of stress (eustress) can enhance concentration and therefore performance, but too much (distress) damages both mental and physical health. This double-bind for stress goes some way towards proving the Yerkes-Dodson Law (1908)-that performance rises as arousal increases up to a point, after which it drops off. Over the long term, however, in universities and colleges, these heavy academic workloads might lead to burnout. Your productivity would then take a downward turn, and long-term performance sustainability decreases.

Such nuances aside, however, none of these other researchers has addressed the impact of work flexibility as a mediator between work-life balance and worker performance. Work arrangement is flexible, and the relationship between work-life balance scores and work output is as positive as possible. The capacity of lecturers to make good use of their time will be at a greater level because schedules, workload, and teaching techniques are all under their control. It means that both input and output will eventually be increased. This chapter also shows that there may be no moderating effect from work flexibility in relation to work stress and performance. Despite the fact that expanded flexibility might optimize the overall balance, it would appear that such an approach alone cannot cope with stress brought on by structure-related pressures like demands to produce papers, the need to perform both classroom teaching duties and content development when doing e-book or video lessons, and career advancement stresses. As a whole, these findings provide detailed and multifaceted insight into how the interaction of work-life balance, stress, and flexibility can shape academic performance. While flexibility can act as a precondition for success, it is also necessary for organizations to design programs that reduce stress and make institutions serve as supports so as to ensure the long-term productivity and health of lecturers.gIf we look from a theoretical point of view, this research that university lecturers emphasize work-life balance describes the situation accurately. It also integrates ideas of work stress and work flexibility into one model to explain productivity in colleges and universities. Adding in both personal role and environment factors, this approach extends the application of Conservation of Resources Theory and Contingency Theory gIt not only clarifies the boundary between flexibility in generating good results (work-life balance), but indeed adds much to our defense in that area, which potentially limits the good results owing to flexibility in bad situations (work stress).

It is clear from this study that universities need to develop a comprehensive strategy for their human resources. On the other hand, while flexible work arrangements can indeed improve performance, they may be neutralized by systematic stress-management programs; fair distribution of workload among faculty members, or supportive academic policies employed at administrative levels like community engagement and research credits. Here is where institutions should be aiming. Temple and its kind could provide both teaching facilities for faculty members who wish it, and a more supportive environment to acquire fresh assistance. Such measures will not only increase the performance of lectures but will also strengthen the institutions through continued academic prosperity.

This study, like any empirical research, has its limitations. First, the sample is drawn just from lecturers at one university. Secondly, the use of self-administered questionnaires could have affected results, as lecturers tend both tacitly to minimize reports of stress and overstate performance in such surveys. Future studies could include multi-university comparisons between different regions or countries. This would reflect a wider range of academic environments and provide fresh insights. Third, the study dealt only with work-life balance, stress, and flexibility. Other factors in the environment can influence performance, such as leadership quality, institutional culture, or digitalization of higher education.

In the future, it is also worth exploring how the effect of flexibility might change in hybrid or remote learning situations - especially in a post-COVID-19 world. ^TaoSearch for possible intervening variables such as happiness from work, or psychological contentment. Likewise, Weekaby Weekers or dock workers, Goodnight canaries serve as excellent targets for comparative studies that will help us determine whether what we are observing here is unique to Boggs' ideas or not.

V. CONCLUSION

This research investigates how work-life balance and pressures can affect university lecturers' functionality and explores the effects of employment flexibility. The discovery is that work-life balance significantly improves teacher performance. This underlines the need for people to live in harmony with their surroundings, so they can be of maximum benefit in education, research, and community service. Otherwise, any clashes - sources of dissonance- will only produce cacophony. Work stress also had a significant effect, with some stress levels at least acting as a motivator: too much stress hinders performance and raises the risk for burnout. Moreover, employment flexibility has been found to strengthen the positive relationship between work-life balance and performance, which suggests that lecturers given flexible arrangements are able to manage their responsibilities more effectively. However, the research also indicates that employment flexibility in no way moderates the relationship between work stress and performance. This means that organizational stressors, such as pressures to publish, administrative workload(s), or targets for promotion, simply cannot be counteracted by flexible policy alone.

In sum, the study emphasizes the importance of finding a way to bridge work as well as personal life; coping with stress; and adopting employee-friendly work methods to sustain academic productivity. The research findings not only break new theoretical ground by showing how these variables interact but also provide useful advice for colleges. It points out strategies that foster lecturer effectiveness in teaching and research while still respecting the individual's well-being.

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