



The Influence of Self-Efficacy and Work–Life Balance on Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Self-Efficacy, Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction

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This study aims to examine the effects of self-efficacy and work–life balance on employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating variable. A quantitative research design employing a survey method was adopted. Data were collected using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire from 209 employees and analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) using SmartPLS. The findings demonstrate that self-efficacy and work–life balance have positive and significant effects on job satisfaction. In addition, job satisfaction positively and significantly influences employee performance. The mediation analysis further confirms that job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationships between self-efficacy, work–life balance, and employee performance, indicating that employees with greater confidence in their abilities and a healthier balance between work and personal life tend to experience higher job satisfaction, which subsequently enhances their performance. These findings highlight the importance of fostering employees' psychological resources and promoting supportive work environments to strengthen organizational outcomes. The study contributes to the human resource management literature by providing empirical evidence on the mechanism linking individual and organizational factors to employee performance and offers practical implications for designing effective strategies to improve employee well-being, satisfaction, and sustainable organizational performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Human resources have become one of the most valuable strategic assets in sustaining organizational competitiveness, particularly in labor-intensive industries where operational continuity depends heavily on employee performance. As organizations face increasing technological advancement,

operational complexity, and market uncertainty, maintaining high levels of employee performance has become essential for achieving productivity, service quality, and long-term sustainability (Adzimah, 2024; Mohlas, 2025; Nadhifah, 2026; Najiburohman, 2025). Employee performance is not determined solely by technical competence but is also influenced by psychological resources and employees' ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities. Previous studies have demonstrated that organizations investing in employees' psychological well-being generally experience higher productivity, stronger organizational commitment, and lower turnover intentions. Consequently, understanding the mechanisms that improve employee performance is not only important from an organizational perspective but also contributes to broader societal goals by promoting employee well-being, sustainable employment, and organizational resilience. Therefore, identifying the factors that strengthen employee performance remains a significant concern in contemporary human resource management research.

Despite continuous efforts to improve organizational performance, many organizations continue to struggle with maintaining consistent employee productivity in increasingly demanding work environments. Employees frequently encounter high workloads, strict performance targets, extended working hours, rotating shift systems, and work-related stress that negatively affect both psychological well-being and job outcomes (Albustomi, 2025; Fitriani, 2025; Holidi, 2025). Such conditions often reduce employees' confidence in performing challenging tasks while simultaneously disrupting the balance between work responsibilities and personal life. These issues may eventually decrease job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall employee performance. Human resource practitioners therefore face the challenge of developing strategies that not only improve employees' competencies but also strengthen their psychological resilience and work-life balance. Without understanding how these factors interact, organizations may fail to design effective human resource policies capable of sustaining high performance. Accordingly, investigating the combined influence of psychological and work-related factors has become increasingly important for both researchers and practitioners.

Organizations operating in high-risk, service-oriented industries face particularly demanding operational conditions that intensify these challenges. Employees are expected to maintain service quality, operational accuracy, workplace safety, and productivity despite working under considerable time pressure and rotating shift schedules. Such environments require employees to possess strong self-efficacy in completing complex tasks while maintaining a healthy work-life balance to prevent psychological exhaustion and declining motivation. When these conditions are not adequately supported, employees may experience reduced job satisfaction, ultimately affecting their performance

and organizational effectiveness. These operational realities indicate that employee performance cannot be explained solely by technical capability or organizational policies but should also be viewed from psychological and behavioral perspectives. Consequently, organizations characterized by high operational demands provide an important context for examining how self-efficacy, work-life balance, and job satisfaction interact to influence employee performance.

Previous studies have consistently identified self-efficacy as an important determinant of employee performance because individuals with stronger confidence in their abilities generally demonstrate higher persistence, motivation, and problem-solving capability. Research has also shown that self-efficacy positively influences job satisfaction by enabling employees to cope more effectively with workplace challenges. Similarly, studies investigating work-life balance have concluded that employees who successfully balance occupational and personal responsibilities tend to experience greater psychological well-being, stronger organizational commitment, higher job satisfaction, and improved performance. Furthermore, job satisfaction has frequently been recognized as one of the strongest predictors of employee performance because satisfied employees are more motivated to achieve organizational goals. Although these findings collectively support the importance of psychological and work-related factors, most investigations have examined these variables independently rather than simultaneously within an integrated theoretical framework that explains their interconnected relationships.

Several important research gaps remain unresolved within the existing literature. First, previous studies have predominantly investigated the direct effects of either self-efficacy or work-life balance on employee performance, providing limited understanding of their combined influence. Second, empirical evidence examining job satisfaction as a mediating mechanism between these variables remains relatively scarce. Third, prior research has largely focused on manufacturing, education, healthcare, technology, and public-sector organizations, while evidence from operationally intensive service industries remains limited. Finally, previous findings regarding the relationship between self-efficacy and job satisfaction have produced inconsistent results, suggesting that contextual organizational characteristics may influence these relationships. These limitations indicate the need for further empirical investigation that simultaneously examines psychological resources, work-life balance, and job satisfaction within a single structural model to provide a more comprehensive explanation of employee performance.

This study addresses these limitations by developing an integrated model that simultaneously examines self-efficacy and work-life balance as antecedents of employee performance while positioning job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize direct relationships,

this research investigates the psychological mechanism through which individual beliefs and work-life balance contribute to improved performance. Furthermore, the study extends the current human resource management literature by providing empirical evidence from an operational environment characterized by high work demands, complex service processes, and shift-based work systems. The integration of Social Cognitive Theory, Job Demands–Resources Theory, and Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory offers a more comprehensive theoretical perspective for explaining employee performance. Consequently, this study contributes both theoretically and practically by expanding understanding of the pathways linking psychological resources, workplace conditions, and organizational outcomes.

Based on the identified research gaps, this study investigates whether self-efficacy and work-life balance significantly influence employee performance through the mediating role of job satisfaction. It is proposed that employees with stronger confidence in their capabilities and better work-life balance are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction, which subsequently enhances their performance. Therefore, job satisfaction is expected to function as a psychological mechanism that strengthens the relationship between individual and organizational factors and employee performance. The findings are expected to contribute to human resource management theory by providing empirical validation of an integrated mediation model while offering practical recommendations for organizations seeking to improve employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Ultimately, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how psychological and work-related factors jointly influence employee performance in demanding organizational environments.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey research design to examine the causal relationships among self-efficacy, work–life balance, job satisfaction, and employee performance. A quantitative survey was selected because it enables researchers to measure latent constructs objectively, test hypotheses, and analyze causal relationships using statistical techniques based on numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research adopted an explanatory research paradigm, aiming to explain the direct and indirect effects of self-efficacy and work–life balance on employee performance through the mediating role of job satisfaction. The study was conducted in a company operating in the coal port service industry, which was selected because its operational environment is characterized by high work intensity, shift-based schedules, strict safety standards, and continuous productivity demands. These organizational characteristics provide an appropriate context for investigating how psychological resources and work–life balance influence employee

performance. The target population consisted of 209 employees. Since the population size was relatively small and fully accessible, a census sampling technique was employed, allowing all employees to participate as research respondents (Sugiyono, 2023).

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed directly to all respondents. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement items were adapted from well-established instruments reported in previous studies to ensure content validity. Self-efficacy was measured based on Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory, work-life balance was assessed using Hayman's (2005) multidimensional framework, job satisfaction was measured according to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, while employee performance was evaluated using indicators developed by Çalışkan (2022). Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model was assessed through convergent validity, discriminant validity, Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha to ensure that the constructs demonstrated satisfactory validity and reliability.

The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS version 4.0. SEM-PLS was selected because it is appropriate for predictive research, enables simultaneous estimation of multiple relationships among latent variables, and effectively evaluates mediation models without requiring strict multivariate normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2022). The analysis followed a two-stage procedure consisting of measurement model evaluation (outer model) and structural model evaluation (inner model). The outer model assessment included factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha, whereas the inner model assessment involved the evaluation of the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), path coefficients, bootstrapping, t-statistics, p-values, and mediation effects. Microsoft Excel 2021 was utilized for initial data coding and preprocessing before conducting the statistical analysis in SmartPLS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondent Characteristics

A total of 209 questionnaires were distributed and all were returned with complete responses, resulting in a response rate of 100%. The respondents represented employees working across various operational and administrative divisions, providing comprehensive information regarding the variables examined in this study. The complete participation of the target population ensured that the collected data adequately represented the organizational context and eliminated sampling bias associated with partial responses.

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated to determine the reliability and validity of the constructs before testing the structural relationships. As presented in Table 1, all constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.929 to 0.945, while Composite Reliability values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.637 to 0.680, indicating that each construct explained more than 50% of the variance of its indicators.

Furthermore, all indicator outer loadings were above the recommended value of 0.70, confirming adequate indicator reliability and convergent validity. These results indicate that all measurement items appropriately represented their respective latent constructs and were therefore suitable for structural model evaluation.

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. Five direct hypotheses were examined to determine the relationships among self-efficacy, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee performance.

Following the evaluation of the measurement model, the structural model was analyzed using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4. Figure 1 illustrates the estimated structural model, including the standardized outer loadings and path coefficients among the latent constructs.

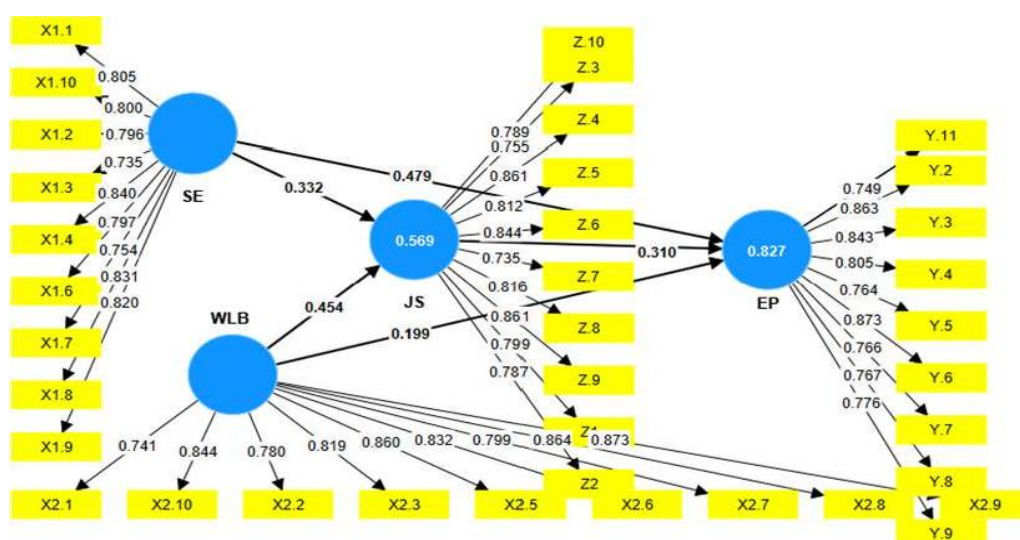


Figure 1. Structural Model Estimated Using SmartPLS 4

As illustrated in Figure 1, all indicators exhibited standardized loading values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that each indicator adequately represented its corresponding latent construct. The structural paths also revealed positive relationships among the study variables, suggesting that higher levels of self-efficacy and work–life balance were associated with higher job satisfaction and employee performance. These relationships were subsequently confirmed through the bootstrapping significance test.

The results revealed that self-efficacy exerted a positive and significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.479$, $t = 7.149$, $p < 0.001$). Likewise, self-efficacy significantly enhanced job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.332$, $t = 3.208$, $p = 0.001$). Work–life balance also demonstrated a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.199$, $t = 2.927$, $p = 0.003$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.454$, $t = 4.494$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, job satisfaction positively influenced employee performance ($\beta = 0.310$, $t = 4.745$, $p < 0.001$). Since all t-statistics exceeded 1.96 and all p-values were below 0.05, every proposed direct hypothesis was supported.

Mediation Analysis

The indirect effects were examined to evaluate whether job satisfaction mediated the relationships between the independent variables and employee performance. The findings indicated that job satisfaction significantly mediated the effect of self-efficacy on employee performance ($\beta = 0.103$, $t = 2.502$, $p = 0.012$). Similarly, the indirect effect of work–life balance on employee performance through job satisfaction was also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.141$, $t = 3.205$, $p = 0.001$).

Because the corresponding direct effects remained statistically significant after the inclusion of the mediator, job satisfaction was identified as a partial mediator in both structural relationships. These findings suggest that self-efficacy and work–life balance improve employee performance both directly and indirectly through enhanced job satisfaction.

Model Predictive Power

The explanatory capability of the proposed model was assessed using the Stone–Geisser predictive relevance (Q^2) values. The Q^2 values for employee performance (0.529) and job satisfaction (0.355) were both greater than zero, indicating that the structural model possessed satisfactory predictive relevance.

To further examine predictive performance, the PLS-Predict procedure was conducted. Positive Q^2 Predict values were obtained for employee performance (0.779) and job satisfaction (0.548). These results demonstrate that

the proposed model has good predictive capability and is able to accurately predict the endogenous constructs included in the study.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on both employee performance and job satisfaction. These results are consistent with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997), which argues that individuals with strong confidence in their capabilities are more likely to demonstrate persistence, resilience, and effective problem-solving behaviors when facing challenging tasks. Employees who believe in their abilities tend to perform their duties more efficiently and experience greater satisfaction because they perceive themselves as capable of achieving organizational goals. The present findings support previous studies by Muhtar et al. (2025), Diana et al. (2025), Kamila et al. (2024), and Nasrulloh (2021), which reported that self-efficacy positively influences employee performance. Likewise, the positive relationship between self-efficacy and job satisfaction corroborates the findings of Rahmatullah (2025), although it contrasts with Harefa and Winadi (2025), who reported an insignificant relationship. These inconsistencies suggest that organizational characteristics, work environments, and industry contexts may influence the strength of this relationship. Theoretically, this study reinforces Social Cognitive Theory by confirming that self-efficacy functions as both a direct predictor of employee performance and an antecedent of job satisfaction. Practically, the findings imply that organizations should strengthen employees' confidence through continuous training, competency development, mentoring, and constructive performance feedback to improve both satisfaction and performance.

The study further reveals that work–life balance positively and significantly influences employee performance and job satisfaction. These findings are in line with the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory, which emphasizes that organizational resources capable of reducing work demands contribute to improved employee well-being and higher work performance. Employees who successfully maintain a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life are more likely to experience lower stress levels, better psychological health, and stronger motivation to accomplish organizational objectives. The results are consistent with previous studies by Luh and Antari (2025), Pangestu et al. (2025), and Studies (2024), all of which reported that work–life balance enhances both job satisfaction and employee performance. Compared with earlier research, the present study extends existing knowledge

by providing empirical evidence from a highly demanding service industry characterized by shift-based operations and elevated operational risks. From a theoretical perspective, these findings strengthen the applicability of the JD–R Theory in explaining employee behavior under challenging working conditions. From a managerial perspective, the results indicate that organizations should implement flexible work arrangements, fair scheduling systems, employee wellness initiatives, and supportive organizational policies to maintain employees' work–life balance and sustain high levels of organizational performance.

Another important finding is that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This result supports Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which proposes that employees who experience greater satisfaction with their work are more motivated to perform effectively and achieve higher productivity. Employees who perceive their work environment positively are likely to demonstrate stronger organizational commitment, greater enthusiasm, and higher levels of responsibility in completing assigned tasks. These findings are consistent with previous empirical studies conducted by Nasrulloh (2021), Dan (2025), and other researchers who identified job satisfaction as one of the strongest determinants of employee performance. The current study therefore confirms that job satisfaction remains an essential psychological factor explaining employee behavioral outcomes across different organizational contexts. Theoretically, this finding extends Herzberg's framework by demonstrating its relevance in contemporary organizational settings characterized by high operational complexity. Practically, organizations should prioritize initiatives that enhance employee satisfaction, including fair compensation systems, career development opportunities, supportive leadership, recognition programs, and positive workplace relationships to maximize employee performance.

The mediation analysis provides additional evidence that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationships between self-efficacy, work–life balance, and employee performance. These findings indicate that employees with stronger confidence in their abilities and healthier work–life balance not only perform better directly but also achieve higher performance because these factors increase their level of job satisfaction. This result is consistent with studies conducted by Rahmatullah (2025), Alvionita (2023), David et al. (2025), and Pangestu et al. (2025), which identified job satisfaction as a critical psychological mechanism linking organizational factors with employee outcomes. However, unlike many previous studies that investigated only one antecedent variable, this research simultaneously integrates self-efficacy and work–life balance into a single mediation model. Consequently, the study provides a more comprehensive explanation of how psychological resources and workplace conditions jointly

influence employee performance. This integrated perspective represents an important theoretical contribution to the human resource management literature by clarifying the mechanism through which individual and organizational factors interact to produce favorable performance outcomes.

Overall, this study contributes to the advancement of human resource management research by developing and empirically validating an integrated model that combines Social Cognitive Theory, Job Demands–Resources Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to explain employee performance. The findings demonstrate that employee performance is influenced not only by individual psychological capability but also by work environment conditions and employees' emotional responses toward their jobs. The integration of these theoretical perspectives offers a more comprehensive understanding of employee behavior than previous studies that examined these variables independently. Furthermore, this study enriches the literature by providing empirical evidence from a high-demand, service-oriented operational context that has received relatively limited scholarly attention. From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that organizations seeking sustainable performance improvement should adopt integrated human resource strategies that simultaneously strengthen employee self-efficacy, promote work–life balance, and enhance job satisfaction. Such strategies are expected to improve employee well-being, increase organizational commitment, and ultimately create sustainable competitive advantages through superior workforce performance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that self-efficacy and work–life balance positively and significantly influence employee performance, both directly and indirectly through the mediating role of job satisfaction. The findings highlight that improving employees' confidence in their capabilities and fostering a healthy balance between work and personal life are essential for enhancing job satisfaction, which subsequently leads to higher employee performance. These results provide an important insight that sustainable organizational performance is achieved not only through employees' individual competencies but also through the interaction between psychological resources, supportive working conditions, and positive work attitudes. Theoretically, this study contributes to the human resource management literature by integrating Social Cognitive Theory, Job Demands–Resources Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory into a comprehensive mediation model, thereby offering a broader explanation of the mechanisms linking self-efficacy, work–life balance, job satisfaction, and employee performance within a single framework. Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted within a single organization and employed a cross-sectional design, which may limit the generalizability of the findings and preclude causal inference over time. Future

research is therefore encouraged to involve multiple organizations and industries, adopt longitudinal or mixed-method approaches, and incorporate additional variables such as organizational commitment, leadership style, organizational support, or employee engagement to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee performance.

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