

The Role of Spiritual Leadership as a Moderating Variable on The Influence Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance at PT PLN Persero Semarang Area

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Abstract. *This study aims to analyze the influence of work-life balance on employee performance and examine the role of spiritual leadership as a moderating variable in this relationship at PT PLN (Persero) Semarang Area. This research was motivated by a research gap related to inconsistencies in previous research findings regarding the influence of work-life balance on performance and the role of leadership as a moderating variable. This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory approach. The study population was all 376 employees of PT PLN (Persero) Semarang Area, with a sample of 100 respondents selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis used Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The results showed that work-life balance had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Furthermore, spiritual leadership was shown to act as a moderating variable in the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. These findings support Social Exchange Theory, which states that organizational support in creating work-life balance will encourage improved performance as a form of positive reciprocity from employees. Practically, the results of this study provide implications for management in optimizing work-life balance policies and developing spiritual leadership practices to sustainably improve employee performance.*

Keywords: *Balance; Employee; Leadership; Performance.*

1. Introduction

Human resources are a strategic asset for organizations in achieving goals and maintaining competitiveness, both in the private sector and state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Organizational success is largely determined by optimal employee performance, as performance reflects the level of employee effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities (Mangkunegara, 2017).

Human resource performance is the quality and quantity of work performed by employees in carrying out their duties in accordance with their assigned responsibilities. Success requires good attitudes, psychological skills, and work behaviors. Human resource performance

reflects the level of risk involved in implementing a program, activity, or policy to achieve the organization's goals, objectives, vision, and mission, as outlined in the organization's strategic planning. A decentralized and responsible development process will create a just and prosperous society (Hasrizal & Donard Games, 2023).

The first factor thought to be able to improve employee performance is work-life balance. Work-life balance is a state in which a person can manage their time effectively and achieve a balance between work and family.

personal life, thus supporting a healthy and productive life (Lumunon et al., 2019). Work-life balance is an individual's ability to align work, family, and personal interests so that they do not clash, creating a comfortable work environment and supporting optimal performance (Muliawati and Friant, 2020). A consistent relationship has been found: the better the work-life balance, the higher the employee's performance. This is because a balance between work and personal life demands improves focus, reduces stress, and makes employees more satisfied and productive in carrying out their duties.

Work-life balance has a significant impact on performance. Research in the public and private sectors has shown that work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, with the better the work-life balance, the higher the performance (Sari et al., 2023). Similar findings were also demonstrated in research (Ulhaq & Suratman, 2025), which found that work-life balance had a significant positive effect on performance, while role imbalance actually decreased employee performance.

Spiritual leadership can moderate the influence of work-life balance on employee performance. According to Nasri et al. (2018), leadership is the direct and indirect behavior of influencing those being led and directing them toward organizational goals. Leadership influences how work is performed and plays a role.

directly impacts the success or failure of an organization. Leaders who provide direction and support will increase employee motivation and productivity, ultimately resulting in better performance. Leaders who employ an effective leadership style, whether in communication, decision-making, or motivation, will encourage employees to work more optimally, with greater discipline, and greater productivity.

Leadership is the behavioral and attitudinal patterns of leaders influencing, directing, and motivating subordinates to achieve organizational goals. Previous research has shown that leadership directly impacts employee performance (Katili et al., 2021). Furthermore, leadership also acts as a contextual factor that can strengthen or weaken the relationship between work-life balance and performance. Supportive and participatory leadership can create a conducive work climate, thus optimizing the positive impact of work-life balance on performance. Several studies have shown that leadership acts as a moderating variable in the relationship between psychological factors and performance. Research in local government agencies indicates that leadership can moderate the influence of job satisfaction

on employee performance, although it does not always directly moderate work-life balance (Putra & Indrawijaya, 2024). This indicates inconsistencies in research findings regarding the role of leadership as a moderating variable, thus requiring further study.

PT PLN (Persero) is a state-owned company engaged in the provision of electricity services in Indonesia, one of which is PT PLN (Persero) Semarang area. PT PLN (Persero) as an electricity agent is tasked with building business activities related to electricity, which aims to improve the welfare of the community and encourage economic growth. The high demands of public services, performance targets, and large operational responsibilities require PLN employees to have optimal performance. In these conditions, the implementation of work life balance becomes an important issue, especially to maintain employee productivity and welfare. On the other hand, the role of leadership in the PT PLN (Persero) Semarang Area environment greatly determines how work life balance policies and practices are implemented and felt by employees.

This research was conducted due to a research gap problem, one phenomenon can be seen from the results of research conducted by Arfandi and Muhammad Kasran (2023); Parengki Susanto et al. (2022); Muhammad Hafizh Dhiya Ulhaq and Andriyastuti Suratman (2025); Muhammad Aslam (2015); Shin Yeh Low and Darwin Joseph Rajanayagam (2025); Sun, Xiaoli (2024); and Fariz Mahadhika Putra and Sigit Indrawijaya (2024) showing that work-life balance partially impacts employee performance. However, different findings can be shown from the results of research by Putiri Bhuana Katili, W. Wibowo, and Maruf Akbar (2021) and Rifki Adetiyas, Hendri Sucipto, and Andi Yulianto (2024) that work-life balance does not have a significant effect on employee performance.

Research gap Another finding can be seen from the research findings conducted by Muhammad Aslam (2015), which showed that leadership moderates the influence of work-life balance on employee performance. However, different findings can be seen from research results by Shin Yeh Low and Darwin Joseph Rajanayagam (2025) and Fariz Mahadhika Putra and Sigit Indrawijaya (2024), which show that leadership is unable to moderate the influence of work-life balance on employee performance.

Novelty This research focuses on developing a conceptual and empirical approach to explain the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance by positioning spiritual leadership as a moderating variable within an organizational context. Unlike previous studies that generally only examine the direct influence of work-life balance on performance or position leadership as an independent or mediating variable, this study confirms that the influence of work-life balance on employee performance is not automatic, but rather conditional and strongly influenced by the leadership implemented by the leader. Furthermore, this study aims to address the inconsistency of previous research findings regarding the role of leadership as a moderating variable by testing it in the context of PT PLN (Persero) Semarang Area, which has special characteristics in the form of high operational demands, tight performance targets, and strategic public service responsibilities.

Using a Structural Equation Modeling approach based on Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS), this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions in strengthening Social Exchange Theory as well as practical contributions to human resource management in the BUMN environment, especially in designing effective work-life balance policies supported by appropriate leadership.

2. Research Methods

The type of research is explanatory research, namely research that observes the influence between determining variables that test the proposed hypothesis and the description contains a description but focuses on the relationship between variables, namely work-life balance and employee performance with spiritual leadership as a moderating variable. In research, data plays a crucial role, serving as a tool for proving hypotheses and achieving research objectives. Good research requires understanding what types of data are needed and how to identify, collect, and process them. The data used in this study are primary and secondary data. Primary data is data that comes directly from the source, namely the respondents being observed. Data from respondents is essential to understanding their responses regarding competency, intrinsic motivation, and human resource performance. The primary data in this study were obtained from questionnaires completed by respondents.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Research result

1) Respondent Description

Respondent identity description refers to information that identifies and describes the characteristics of the individual or group being researched. Respondent identity encompasses various elements that help classify and understand who is responding to the questionnaire. The respondents' identities in the research at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area, based on gender, age, length of service, and most recent education, are explained below.

a. Respondent Description Based on Gender

Considering gender can provide important insights into differences or similarities in experiences, needs, and expectations among employees at work. The gender-based identity of respondents who are employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area can be seen in Table 4.1 below:

Table Respondent Description Based on Gender

No.	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Man	51	51.0%
2.	Woman	49	49.0%
Total		100	100%

Source: Processed primary data, 2026

Based on table, it can be seen that the majority of employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area are male, amounting to 51 people (51%), while the respondents are female, amounting to 49 people (49%). This result indicates that although men are slightly more dominant, the percentage of women also shows an almost equal proportion. This indicates that the company has a relatively proportional workforce structure between men and women, so there is no significant gender inequality. This balanced composition can also support the creation of an inclusive work environment and allow company policies, including those related to work-life balance and performance improvement, to be applied fairly to all employees regardless of gender.

b. Respondent Description Based on Age

Respondent age, in the context of human resource research, provides relevant information for understanding employee demographic profiles and can provide insights into various aspects of human resource management. Of the 100 respondents who were employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area, the age group is shown in Table 4.2 below:

Table Respondent Description Based on Age

No.	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1.	< 30 years	35	35%
2.	30 – 40 years	40	40%
3.	41 – 50 years old	24	24%
4.	> 50 years	1	1.3%
Total		100	100%

Source: Processed primary data, 2026

Based on Table, it can be seen that the majority of respondents who are employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area are under 30 years old, as many as 35 respondents (35%). This indicates that the composition of employees is dominated by the young age group. This condition indicates that the company has a relatively productive, energetic workforce, and is in the optimal working age phase. Employees under 30 years old generally have high work enthusiasm, good adaptability to change, and are more open to innovation and new technologies. Thus, this dominance of young age can be a positive potential for the company in supporting performance improvement and achieving organizational goals.

c. Respondent Description Based on Length of Service

Respondent tenure in the context of human resource research refers to the length of time an employee has spent in an organization or in a specific field of work. A grouping of 100 respondents who are employees at PT. PLN Persero Area Semarang based on length of service as an employee can be seen in table below:

Table Respondent Description Based on Length of Service

No.	Years of service	Frequency	Percentage
1.	< 5 years	50	50%
2.	5.1 - 10 years	13	13%

3.	10.1 - 15 years	11	11%
4.	15.1 - 20 years	15	15%
5.	> 20 years	11	11%
Total		100	100%

Source: Processed primary data, 2026

Based on Table, it can be seen that the majority of employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area have been employees for less than 5 years, as many as 50 people (50%). This indicates that the majority of employees are relatively new to the organization. This condition may indicate a fairly active regeneration or recruitment process in recent years. Employees with a relatively short tenure are generally in the adaptation and competency development stage, so the company needs to provide support in the form of training, coaching, and strengthening work culture so that performance can continue to improve and loyalty to the organization can be optimally built.

d. Respondent Description Based on Last Education

Respondents' highest education is information regarding the level of education attained by employees or individuals who are the subjects of human resources research. This data can provide

Valuable insights regarding employee abilities, skills, and potential can influence various human resource management decisions. The grouping of 100 respondents who are employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area based on their last education can be seen in Table below:

Table Respondent Description Based on Last Education

No.	Last education	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Graduated from high school	23	23%
2.	Diploma Graduate	20	20%
3.	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	52	52%
4.	Graduated from Postgraduate Program (S2)	5	5%
Total		100	100%

Source: Processed primary data, 2026

Based on table, it can be seen that the majority of employees at PT. PLN Persero Semarang Area have a Bachelor's degree (S1) as many as 52 respondents (52%), respondents with a Diploma and High School degree each as many as 23 people (23%), and the remaining respondents have a Postgraduate degree (S2) as many as 5 people (5%). This indicates that the majority of the workforce in the company has a relatively high level of education. This condition can be a supporting factor in improving the quality of performance, because employees with a bachelor's degree educational background generally have more adequate knowledge, analytical abilities, and professional skills. In addition, the dominance of S1 education also reflects that the company tends to recruit human resources who have good academic competencies to support the achievement of organizational goals.

2) Description of Research Variables

This study used a questionnaire to determine the effect of work-life balance on employee performance, with spiritual leadership as a moderating variable. The scoring scale used was a 5-point Likert scale.

Based on the results of the answers to the questionnaire distributed to respondents regarding the variables studied. The categories of respondents' answers are based on respondents' responses where the answer categories can be obtained as follows:

Scale range (interval) = (highest score – lowest score) / 5 = (5– 1) / 5 = 0.8

From determining the scale range above, it can be categorized as follows:

- Interval 1 – 1.8 is considered very bad
- The interval 1.81 – 2.6 is considered bad
- The interval 2.61 – 3.4 is considered sufficient
- The interval 3.41 – 4.2 is considered good
- The interval 4.21 – 5.0 is classified as very good

The structural model or inner model is evaluated by looking at the percentage of explained variance, namely by looking at the R² for the dependent latent construct using the Stone-Geisser Q Square test measures and also looking at the structural path coefficients. The stability of the estimates is tested with t-statistics through a bootstrapping procedure.

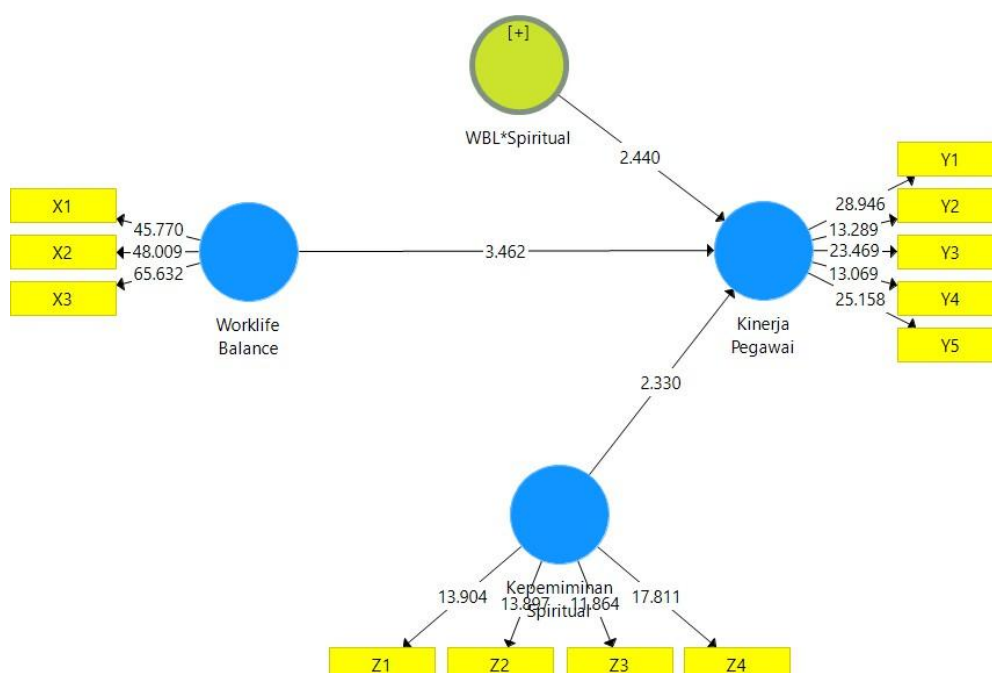


Figure Structural Model

a. Model Fit (Goodness of Fit Model)

The NFI value, ranging from 0 to 1, is derived from a comparison between the hypothesized model and a specific independent model. A model has a high fit if the value is close to 1. The model fit results from the study can be seen in the following table:

Table Model Fit Values

Description	Saturated Model	Estimated Model	Threshold
SRMR	0.066	0.063	< 0.08
NFI	0.954	0.959	> 0.90

Source: Data processing with SmartPLS, 2026

From the table above, it can be seen that SRMR has fulfilled the criteria, the value of this category must be below 0.080 and the NFI value is $0.954 > 0.90$. indicates that the research model is considered fit or appropriate as a research model.

b. PLS R-Squares

The PLS R-Squares results represent the amount of variance of the construct explained by the model. The following shows the results of the R-Squares calculation:

Table R-Square Value

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Employee Performance	0.674	0.672

Source: Data processing with SmartPLS, 2026

This study uses variables influenced by other variables, namely employee performance variables influenced by work-life balance and spiritual leadership as moderating variables. Table shows the R-square value for the employee performance variable is 0.674. This result indicates that 67.4% of the employee performance variable is influenced by Work-life balance and spiritual leadership as moderating variables.

1) Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

The basis for hypothesis testing in this study is the value contained in the output result for inner weight. The estimated output results for testing the structural model can be seen in the following table:

Table Results for Inner Weights

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values

Worklife Balance > Employee Performance	0.320	0.328	0.092	3,462	0.001
LeadershipSpiritual > Employee Performance	0.232	0.237	0.099	2,330	0.020
WBL*Spiritual > Employee Performance	0.213	0.197	0.087	2,440	0.015

Source: Data processing with SmartPLS, 2026

The results of the bootstrapping test in this study from the PLS analysis are as follows:

a. Hypothesis Testing 1: Work life balance has a significant effect on employee performance

The influence of work-life balance on employee performance shows a path coefficient value of 0.213 with a t-statistic value of 2.440. This value is greater than the t-table $df=nk = 100-2 = 98$, which is 1.6606, which means Hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Based on these results, it can be interpreted that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, in accordance with the first hypothesis where work-life balance can be a driving factor for employee performance.

b. Hypothesis Testing 2: Work life balance has a significant effect on employee performance with spiritual leadership as a moderating variable.

The influence of work life balance on employee performance with spiritual leadership as a moderating variable shows The path coefficient value is 0.213 with a t-statistic value of 2.440. This value is greater than the t-table $df = nk = 100-2 = 98$ which is 1.6606 which means Hypothesis 2 is accepted. Based on these results, it can be interpreted that Work life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with spiritual leadership as a Moderating Variable, in accordance with the second hypothesis where Work life balance is able to be a driving factor for employee performance with spiritual leadership as a Moderating Variable.

3.2. Discussion

From the results of data processing, it can be concluded that the results of hypothesis testing can be summarized in the following table:

Table Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Statement	T count	p-value	Information
H1	Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance	3,462	0.000	H1 accepted
H2	Work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on employee performance with spiritual leadership as a moderating variable	2,440	0.015	H2 accepted

1) The Influence of Work Life Balance on Employee Performance

The first hypothesis of the study shows that there is an influence between work-life balance and employee performance. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of research by Arfandi and Muhammad Kasran (2023); Parengki Susanto et al. (2022); Muhammad Hafizh Dhiya Ulhaq and Andriyastuti Suratman (2025); Muhammad Aslam (2015); Shin Yeh Low and Darwin Joseph Rajanayagam (2025); Sun, Xiaoli (2024); and Fariz Mahadhika Putra and Sigit Indrawijaya (2024) showed that work-life balance partially impacts employee performance. Thus, the first research hypothesis (H1), namely work-life balance affects employee performance, is accepted.

The positive and significant effect shows that the better the implementation of work-life balance perceived by employees, the higher the level of performance produced. This means that when employees are able to balance work demands with personal life optimally, they tend to work with more focus, productivity, and have higher motivation in achieving organizational targets. This balance helps reduce work stress, increase job satisfaction, and strengthen commitment to the company. Thus, work-life balance is one of the important factors that can encourage continuous improvement in employee performance at PT. PLN Persero Area Semarang.

The results of the study show that leadership efforts are needed to optimize work-life balance by paying attention to indicators, namely the ability of employees to divide their time in a balanced manner between work and personal life, optimal engagement in work without neglecting personal life, and the level of satisfaction with the balance between work and personal life. Attention to these indicators is important to prevent employees from experiencing role conflict between work demands and personal needs, so that the balance created can support increased motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

The most important indicator of work-life balance that needs to be maintained is employee satisfaction with the balance between work and personal life. This indicates that the majority of employees perceive a supportive environment for managing work and personal life harmoniously. This satisfaction is crucial for companies because it can increase employee motivation, loyalty, and commitment to work. Therefore, companies need to maintain policies and work environments that support this balance to ensure optimal employee performance.

Meanwhile, the lowest indicator related to work-life balance that needs to be optimized is employees' ability to balance their time between work and personal life. While still in the good category, the relatively low score indicates that some employees are not yet fully capable of managing their time optimally. Therefore, companies need to consider the following steps: steps such as proportional workload management, flexible working hours, and adequate managerial support so that employees can achieve a better balance between work demands and personal life.

2) The Influence of Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance with Spiritual Leadership as a Moderating Variable

The second hypothesis of the study indicates that work-life balance influences employee performance, with spiritual leadership as a moderating variable. These results align with the findings of Muhammad Aslam (2015), who found that leadership moderates the effect of work-life balance on employee performance. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2), namely that leadership moderates the effect of work-life balance on employee performance, is accepted.

This significant influence means that spiritual leadership plays a role in strengthening or influencing the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. This means that the presence of spiritual leadership in an organization also determines how much work-life balance influences performance improvement. When leaders are able to implement spiritual values, such as providing meaning to work, demonstrating concern, and building a sense of community, the positive impact of work-life balance on employee performance will be even more optimal. Thus, spiritual leadership plays a role not only in directly, but also becomes an important factor that strengthens the effectiveness of work-life balance in improving employee performance.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, several research results were obtained, including: The test results show that Work Life Balance has a path coefficient of 0.320 with a t-statistic value of 3.462 and a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05). This indicates that the better the balance between work life and personal life perceived by employees, the higher the resulting performance. Work Life Balance has been proven to be an important factor in increasing employee productivity, motivation, and work target achievement at PT PLN (Persero) Semarang Area. The interaction test results show a coefficient of -0.209 with a t-statistic of 2.440 and a p-value of 0.015 (<0.05), indicating significance. Thus, spiritual leadership acts as a moderating variable in the relationship between Work-Life Balance and employee performance. This means that the presence of spiritual leadership in an organization also determines the strength or weakness of Work-Life Balance's influence on improving employee performance. The R-Square value of 0.674 shows that 67.4% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by Work Life Balance and its interaction with spiritual leadership, while the remaining 32.6% is influenced by other variables outside the research model.

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