

Work-Life Balance, Work Engagement, and Organizational Commitment in Relation to Civil Servants' Performance: A Structural Equation Modeling Study in Indonesian Local Government

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationships between work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment with the performance of civil servants (ASN) in Pasuruan City, Indonesia, addressing inconsistent findings in prior literature regarding the direct relationship of work-life balance and work engagement with performance. A quantitative correlational design was employed with 366 civil servants selected through random sampling from eight local-government agencies. Data were collected using validated Likert-type instruments and analyzed with covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) using AMOS, in which work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment were specified as three correlated exogenous variables simultaneously predicting employee performance. The structural model exhibited good fit ($\chi^2 = 285.006$, $df = 269$, $p = .240$; CFI = .998; TLI = .998; RMSEA = .013). Organizational commitment showed a positive and highly significant relationship with performance ($\beta = 1.504$, $CR = 11.941$, $p < .001$), whereas work-life balance ($\beta = .136$, $p = .053$) and work engagement ($\beta = -.047$, $p = .754$) did not. Supplementary analysis indicated that work-life balance and work engagement each covaried significantly with organizational commitment ($p < .001$), while the covariance between work-life balance and work engagement was non-significant ($p = .146$). And organizational commitment with employee performance simultaneously in a single integrated structural model among Indonesian local-government civil servants, providing empirical evidence that organizational commitment – rather than work-life balance or work engagement – is the most proximal correlate of performance in this bureaucratic context.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources remain a decisive factor in organizational success, including in public-sector institutions. The performance of civil servants (ASN) directly shapes the effectiveness and efficiency of public service delivery, as civil servants constitute the front line of bureaucracy in addressing citizens' needs. The Indonesian central government has reinforced this priority through Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (PermenPANRB) No. 19/2025 on the Merit System, which explicitly mandates satisfaction and engagement surveys as formal indicators of merit-system implementation. This policy signals that work engagement has moved from an academic construct in industrial-organizational psychology into a formal component of national civil-service management, heightening the practical urgency of understanding how such psychological variables actually contribute to performance.

At the local level, underperformance among civil servants remains a salient problem. The Professionalism Index of Pasuruan City's ASN (IP ASN) reached only 64.22 in 2023 – categorized as low and below the national average for district/city-level agencies of 73.30. Comparable patterns have been documented elsewhere in Indonesia (e.g., Asahan Regency recorded an IP ASN of 61.89 in 2022, also below the national target). Such recurring gaps indicate a structural challenge rather than an isolated local anomaly, prompting Pasuruan's local government leadership to explicitly call for improved performance, integrity, and competence among its civil servants.

Beyond professionalism scores, two additional phenomena motivate this study. First, despite national policy evaluations suggesting that flexible-work arrangements do not erode government performance, several recent studies report that work-life imbalance remains a source of psychological strain among Indonesian civil servants, including associations between perceived workload and burnout, and between work-life balance and burnout among married female civil servants. Second, organizational commitment has gained renewed policy relevance following a 2023 circular from the Minister of PANRB that bases performance evaluation on organizational not solely individual achievement, implicitly underscoring the importance of individual-organization alignment, the conceptual core of organizational commitment.

Classical theory predicts that work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment each relate positively to employee performance. Prior studies have reported positive associations between work-life balance and performance in public-sector and government settings (Suleman et al., 2020; Shahzad et al., 2021), between organizational commitment and performance in the Pakistani public sector (Tariq et al., 2022), and between work engagement and performance through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021). These findings constitute the theoretical baseline that all three variables should relate directly and positively to performance.

However, recent empirical evidence increasingly contradicts this baseline, particularly for work-life balance and work engagement. Sutanto, Sigiois, and Wijaya (2024), for instance, found that work-life balance did not significantly predict employee performance, with its effect emerging only through employee engagement and job satisfaction. Udin (2023) similarly reported a weak direct effect of work-life balance on performance, with affective commitment and job satisfaction serving as the primary pathways. A parallel pattern has emerged for work engagement: Rifai and Nurherawati (2024) found no significant direct effect of work engagement on performance, while Saimin et al. (2024), studying ASN at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, found that work engagement functioned more strongly as a mediating than a direct predictor of performance. Radziwill and Benton (2024) and Radziwill (2024) went further, coining the term "engagement-performance paradox" to describe the phenomenon whereby high work engagement does not consistently translate into higher performance or productivity. This inconsistency between classical theoretical expectation and recent empirical evidence constitutes the central research gap motivating the present study: whether work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment each retain a statistically meaningful direct relationship with performance once tested simultaneously within a single integrated structural model, rather than in isolation.

Most prior studies have tested these constructs either in isolation or in pairs, and studies specifically involving Indonesian civil servants have typically examined only one or two predictors at a time (e.g., Saimin et al., 2024, on Ministry of Religious Affairs personnel; studies on district-level ASN performance). Few, if any, studies have simultaneously tested the relationships of work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment with performance within one integrated covariance-based structural equation model (CB-SEM) using a relatively large civil-servant sample drawn from multiple local-government agencies. The present study addresses this gap by testing an integrated model among 366 ASN across eight local-government agencies in Pasuruan City, contributing new empirical evidence on the relative strength of three theoretically central but empirically inconsistent correlates of civil-servant performance. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the relationship of work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment with employee performance among ASN in Pasuruan City.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the pattern of behaviors and actions employees enact that are relevant to organizational goals, emphasizing behavior under the employee's control rather than behavioral outcomes alone (Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, de Vet, & van der Beek, 2014). Koopmans et al. (2014) conceptualize performance through three dimensions: (a) task performance (proficiency in performing core, substantive job duties); (b) contextual performance (behavior that supports the organizational, social, and

psychological environment in which core tasks are performed); and (c) counterproductive work behavior (behavior that is detrimental to organizational well-being. This tridimensional framework underlies the performance measure used in the present study).

Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

Work-life balance (WLB) denotes the extent to which individuals manage to balance work and non-work demands while minimizing interference and maximizing mutual enrichment between the two domains (Fisher, Bulger, & Smith, 2009). Fisher et al. (2009) decompose Work-life balance into two broad dimensions: Demands is captured through Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) and Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) and Resources is captured through Work Enhancement of Personal Life (WEPL) and Personal Life Enhancement of Work (PLEW).

Theoretically, the relationship between Work-life balance and performance can be explained through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, in which adequate personal resources including a healthy work-life balance is buffer the effects of high job demands, thereby expanding employees' psychological capacity to display task performance and contextual performance while suppressing counterproductive work behavior (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021). Employees with healthier work-life balance tend to report higher energy, lower stress, and stronger work commitment, and prior studies have found that work-life balance relates positively to performance in the public and government sectors (Suleman et al., 2020; Shahzad et al., 2021).

Nonetheless, several recent studies suggest this relationship is not always direct. Sutanto et al. (2024) and Udin (2023) found that the direct effect of Work-life balance on performance tends to be weak, becoming meaningful only when mediated by psychological variables such as job satisfaction or affective commitment, indicating that Work-life balance may function more as a precondition for a healthy internal state than as a direct driver of measurable work behavior. Building on classical theory while acknowledging this empirical nuance, the present study proposes:

H1: There is a relationship between work-life balance and employee performance among ASN in Pasuruan City.

Work Engagement and Employee Performance

Work engagement (WE) is a positive, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Vigor reflects high levels of energy and mental resilience while working; dedication reflects a sense of enthusiasm, pride, and significance attached to one's work; and absorption reflects being fully concentrated and engrossed in one's work. Within the JD-R framework, engaged employees are theorized to be more productive, creative, and energetic in completing assigned tasks (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021).

However, a growing body of recent research challenges the assumption of a straightforward, linear WE–performance relationship. Rifai and Nurherawati (2024) found no significant effect of work engagement on employee performance, while Bouckenoghe et al. (2022) reported a curvilinear is rather than linear relationship between work engagement and job performance. Radziwill and Benton (2024) and Radziwill (2024) introduced the term "engagement-performance paradox" to capture instances where high engagement fails to translate into superior performance, and Saimin et al. (2024) found that, among ASN at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, work engagement functioned more strongly as a mediator than as a direct predictor of performance. These findings suggest that engagement is being conceptually oriented toward the relationship between an employee and their job rather than the organization as a whole (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010) may not translate automatically into the standardized behavioral outcomes that organizational performance appraisal systems require. Accordingly:

H2: There is a relationship between work engagement and employee performance among ASN in Pasuruan City.

Organizational Commitment and Employee Performance

Organizational commitment is defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with, and involvement in, a particular organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), comprising three components: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a strong desire to maintain organizational membership. Allen and Meyer (1990) further characterize organizational commitment as a psychological state that shapes an employee's decision to remain with or leave an organization.

Theoretically, the commitment–performance relationship can be explained through Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000): employees with high commitment have internalized organizational goals and values as extensions of their own self-concept, such that resulting work behavior reflects authentic self-expression rather than mere external compliance. The three components of organizational commitment correspond closely to the three dimensions of performance proposed by Koopmans et al. (2014) is acceptance of organizational values fosters task performance, willingness to exert effort fosters contextual performance, and the desire to remain fosters lower counterproductive work behavior. Empirically, organizational commitment has consistently shown positive and significant relationships with employee performance across diverse public- and private-sector contexts (Rifandani, Armanu, & Hapsari, 2023; Pangathousands & Satria, 2024; Tanjung et al., 2024; Rachman & Sumartik, 2024; Firdaus & Anisah, 2024; Safa'Atturrizky & Ekhsan, 2024), although a small number of studies (e.g., Zahfarina, Periansya, & Indriasari, 2023, on Palembang City government) found that the partial effect of commitment on managerial

performance was non-significant once structural-administrative variables were controlled. Building on the preponderance of this evidence:

H3: There is a relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance among ASN in Pasuruan City.

Conceptual Framework

Building on the theoretical and empirical review above, this study models work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment as three correlated exogenous variables, each hypothesized to relate independently to employee performance as the single endogenous variable (Figure 1). Unlike several prior studies that modeled organizational commitment as a mediator between work-life balance / Work engagement and performance, the present model treats all three predictors as conceptually parallel correlates of performance, consistent with the simultaneous, integrative aim of this study. Covariances among the three exogenous variables are estimated as part of the structural model and reported descriptively, but are not themselves the object of directional hypotheses.

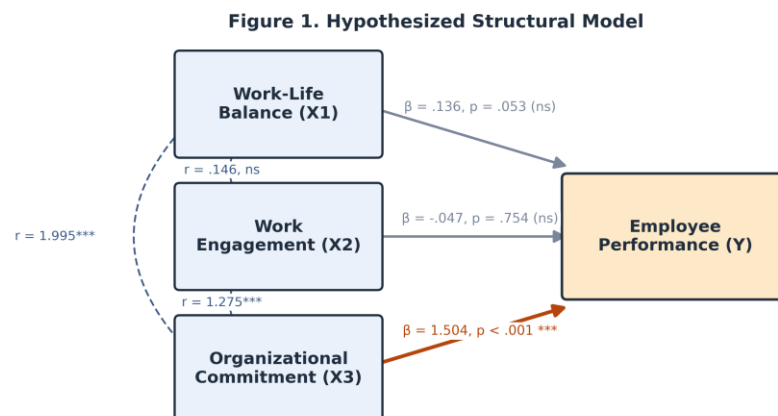


Figure 1. Hypothesized structural model. Solid arrows denote hypothesized structural paths (H1-H3); Dashed double-headed arrows denote estimated covariances among exogenous variables (not hypothesized). Coefficients are unstandardized estimates from the final model.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational design (Martono, 2010; Sugiyono, 2006) to examine the relationships between work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment with employee performance, without manipulating any variable.

Population and Sample

The population comprised all civil servants (ASN) working in Pasuruan City local government. A random sampling technique was used, in which every member of the population had an equal probability of selection (Arikunto, 2013). The final sample consisted of 366 ASN.

Measures

All variables were measured using five point Likert-type instruments (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, reverse-scored for unfavorable items), each developed from an established theoretical blueprint and refined through item-discrimination analysis (corrected item-total correlation, cut-off $\geq .30$) on a try-out sample of 56 ASN prior to the main data collection. Employee performance was measured using a scale developed from Koopmans et al.'s (2014) three-dimensional framework (21 initial items, 13 retained, $\alpha = .899$). Work-life balance was measured using a scale developed from Fisher et al.'s (2009) Demands-Resources framework (17 initial items, 16 retained, $\alpha = .952$). Work engagement was measured using a scale developed from Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) vigor-dedication-absorption framework (19 initial items, 14 retained, $\alpha = .904$). Organizational commitment was measured using a scale developed from Mowday et al.'s (1979) three-component framework (21 initial items, 16 retained, $\alpha = .909$). Table 1 summarizes the measurement properties of each instrument.

Table 1. Summary of Measurement Instruments

Variable	Theoretical basis	Initial items	Retained items	Cronbach's α	CFA loading range	AVE/CR
Employee performance (Y)	Koopmans et al. (2014)	21	13	.899	.737–.904	.736 / .943
Work-life balance (X1)	Fisher et al. (2009)	17	16	.952	.778–.930	.788 / .937
Work commitment (X2)	Schaufeli et al. (2002)	19	14	.904	.607–.899	.604 / .913
Organizational commitment (X3)	Mowday et al. (1979)	21	16	.909	.671–.912	.663 / .940

Note. EHTA = Average Variance Extracted; CR = Construct Reliability. All loadings and AVE/CR values exceeded the recommended thresholds of .50 (loading), .50 (AVE), and .70 (CR) (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) with AMOS. Prior to structural-model estimation, a series of assumption tests was conducted: univariate and multivariate normality (critical ratio of skewness/kurtosis within ± 2.58 ; multivariate CR = 1.827), multivariate outlier detection using Mahalanobis distance ($p1 > .001$ for all 366 cases; largest $d^2 = 45.896$), and multicollinearity diagnostics (Tolerance $> .10$ and VIF < 10 for all predictors, with the lowest Tolerance = .262 and highest VIF = 3.811 for organizational commitment). Construct validity was assessed via confirmatory factor analysis (standardized loadings $\geq .50$), and construct reliability via Average Variance Extracted (AVE $\geq .50$) and Construct Reliability (CR $\geq .70$) (Hair et al., 2019). Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices – χ^2/df , GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, NFI, and RMSEA – following recommended cut-off values (Hair et al., 2019; Ghozali, 2021). Structural paths were considered statistically significant at Critical Ratio (CR) ≥ 1.96 and $p \leq .05$ (Ghozali, 2021).

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Of the 366 respondents, 199 (54.37%) were female and 167 (45.63%) were male. Most respondents were aged 25–35 years (34.97%) or 35–45 years (30.33%). In terms of employment status, 204 (55.74%) held civil-servant (PNS) status and 162 (44.26%) held government-employee-with-work-agreement (PPPK) status. The largest proportions of respondents had 5–10 years (26.78%) or 15–20 years (25.96%) of tenure. Most respondents were married (74.59%) and had children (67.49%). By agency, the largest contingents came from Dispendikbud (28.42%), RSUD (20.77%), and DLHKP (15.57%).

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the four study variables based on the full sample (N = 366).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics (N = 366)

Variable	Min	Max	Red	SD
Work-life balance	16	80	48.91	15.802
Work commitment	14	69	42.92	13.138
Employee performance	13	65	39.93	13.313
Organizational commitment	16	80	49.07	15.652

Measurement Model

All 25 indicator loadings on their respective latent variables were positive and statistically significant ($p < .001$), with four loadings fixed at 1.00 as reference indicators (WLB4, WE7, KO8, and KP1) for model identification (see Table 1 for standardized loading ranges and AVE/CR). These results confirm that the measurement model for all four latent variables met established criteria for convergent validity and construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019), supporting the use of the observed indicators as valid measures of their respective constructs in the subsequent structural model.

Model Fit

The hypothesized structural model was estimated with 56 free parameters against 325 distinct sample moments, yielding 269 degrees of freedom. Table 3 summarizes the resulting goodness-of-fit indices against their recommended cut-off values.

Table 3. Structural Model Goodness-of-Fit Indices

Index	Results	Cut-off value	Evaluation
χ^2 (df = 269)	285.006	Lower is better	Good fit
Probability (p)	.240	$\geq .05$	Good fit
CMIN/DF	1.060	$\leq 2:00-3:00$ p.m.	Good fit
GFI	.942	$\geq .90$	Good fit
AGFI	.930	$\geq .90$	Good fit
CFI	.998	$\geq .90$	Good fit
TLI	.998	$\geq .90$	Good fit
NFI	.967	$\geq .90$	Good fit
RMSEA	.013	$\leq .08$	Good fit
RMR	.179	$\leq .05$	Marginal

With the exception of RMR, all indices met or substantially exceeded recommended thresholds, and the non-significant χ^2 test ($p = .240$) further indicated no meaningful discrepancy between the hypothesized model and the observed covariance structure. Following Ferdinand's (2014) guideline that a SEM model need not satisfy every fit index provided it satisfies a representative subset across categories, the model deemed acceptable for structural-path interpretation.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 4 presents the unstandardized structural-path estimates for the three hypothesized relationships with employee performance.

Table 4. Structural Path Estimates and Hypothesis Test Results

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p	Decision
H1: WLB → Performance	.136	.070	1.939	.053	Not supported
H2: WE → Performance	-.047	.150	-.313	.754	Not supported
H3: Commitment → Performance	1.504	.126	11.941	<.001	Supported

The relationship between work-life balance and performance approached but did not reach conventional significance ($\beta = .136$, $CR = 1.939$, $p = .053$); H1 was therefore not supported, although the result sits precisely at the significance boundary. The relationship between work engagement and performance was clearly non-significant and slightly negative in direction ($\beta = -.047$, $CR = -.313$, p

= .754); H2 was not supported. By contrast, organizational commitment showed a strong, positive, and highly significant relationship with performance ($\beta = 1.504$, CR = 11.941, $p < .001$); H3 was supported. Among the three predictors examined, organizational commitment was therefore the only variable to exhibit a statistically robust relationship with employee performance, and its estimated coefficient was substantially larger than those of the other two predictors.

Covariance among Exogenous Variables

Because work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment were modeled as correlated exogenous variables rather than as a directional causal chain, AMOS additionally estimated the covariance between each pair of predictors. These estimates are descriptive rather than hypothesis-confirmatory but offer useful context for interpreting the pattern of results (Table 5).

Table 5. Covariances among Exogenous Variables

Covariance	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p	Evaluation
WLB ↔ WE	.146	.100	1.453	.146	Not significant
WE ↔ Commitment	1.275	.138	9.203	<.001	Significant
WLB ↔ Commitment	1.995	.235	8.490	<.001	Significant

Both work-life balance and work engagement covaried positively and significantly with organizational commitment, whereas the covariance between work-life balance and work engagement themselves was non-significant. This pattern — two non-significant direct predictors of performance (WLB, WE) that are each strongly associated with the one significant predictor (organizational commitment) — is addressed further in the Discussion.

DISCUSSION

Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

The non-significant relationship between work-life balance and performance ($\beta = .136$, $p = .053$) indicates that, when tested as a stand-alone path, a healthy balance between work and personal life among Pasuruan City's ASN was not strongly reflected in measurable improvements in task performance, contextual performance, or counterproductive work behavior. This finding aligns with Fisher et al.'s (2009) conceptualization of work-life balance as primarily describing an individual's internal psychological equilibrium rather than directly prescribing organizationally defined work behavior. Consistent with this interpretation, Sutanto et al. (2024) found that work-life balance did not significantly predict employee performance unless channeled through employee engagement or job satisfaction, and Udin (2023) likewise reported a weak direct work-life balance performance link, with affective commitment and job satisfaction serving as the dominant pathways. Large-scale evidence from Bloom, Han, and Liang (2024), who found that hybrid-work flexibility improved retention without commensurately improving performance, and from Medina-Garrido, Biedma-Ferrer, and Ramos-Rodriguez (2023), who found that work-family balance policy related to job performance only indirectly through

employee well-being, further reinforces this pattern across very different organizational contexts.

From a Job Demands-Resources perspective, personal resources such as work-life balance may need to be channeled through a more stable motivational orientation such as organizational commitment before they translate into standardized, appraisable work behavior, particularly in rule-bound bureaucratic settings where performance is heavily shaped by normative and institutional obligation rather than personal well-being alone. The probability value obtained here ($p = .053$) sits precisely at the conventional significance threshold; Given the cross-sectional, self-report nature of the data, this result should be interpreted with appropriate caution rather than as conclusive evidence of a null relationship.

Work Engagement and Employee Performance

Work engagement likewise showed no significant relationship with performance, with a coefficient close to zero and slightly negative in direction ($\beta = -.047$, $p = .754$). This finding is consistent with Rifai and Nurherawati (2024), who found no significant work engagement performance effect using multiple regression, and with Bouckennooghe et al.'s (2022) report of a curvilinear rather than linear association between the two constructs. It also lends further empirical support to the "engagement-performance paradox" articulated by Radziwill and Benton (2024) and Radziwill (2024), and parallels Saimin et al.'s (2024) finding, among Ministry of Religious Affairs ASN, that engagement functions more strongly as a mediator than as a direct predictor of performance.

A plausible theoretical explanation lies in the distinction Schaufeli and Bakker (2010) draw between work engagement (job-focused) and employee engagement (organization-focused): vigor, dedication, and absorption directed at the immediate content of one's tasks do not necessarily align with the broader, formally appraised performance targets that an organization sets. Absorption in particular may carry an ambivalent effect, as employees deeply immersed in tasks they personally find engaging may, in a rule-bound bureaucratic environment, simultaneously under-attend to routine administrative duties central to formal task- and contextual-performance ratings. The fluctuating, state-like nature of engagement may also be poorly suited to predicting performance appraisals that are typically aggregated over an annual cycle, in contrast to the more stable, trait-like character of organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment and Employee Performance

In marked contrast, organizational commitment exhibited the strongest and most statistically robust relationship with performance among the three predictors examined ($\beta = 1.504$, $CR = 11.941$, $p < .001$), consistent with Mowday et al.'s (1979) conceptualization of commitment as encompassing active engagement and a genuine desire to contribute meaningfully to the organization, rather than passive loyalty alone. This finding aligns closely with a substantial body of cross-sector evidence (Rifandani et al., 2023; Pangathousands & Satrya, 2024; Tanjung et al., 2024; Rachman & Sumartik, 2024; Firdaus & Anisah, 2024; Safa'Atturrizky & Ekhsan, 2024), although it diverges from Zahfarina et al. (2023), who found a non-significant partial effect of commitment on managerial

performance once structural-administrative controls (e.g., budget participation) were introduced a discrepancy plausibly attributable to differences in the level of analysis (individual versus managerial/unit performance) and in the set of control variables employed.

Through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), the strength of this relationship suggests that highly committed ASN have internalized organizational goals to the point that compliant, rule-following behavior is replaced by authentic, self-endorsed effort, simultaneously promoting task performance, contextual performance, and reduced counterproductive behavior. Within the relatively permanent, security-anchored structure of Indonesian civil service where exit options are comparatively constrained commitment may further crystallize into a strong sense of normative and affective obligation toward the state, consistent with Allen and Meyer's (1990) account of organizational commitment as a determinant of the decision to remain. This combination of theoretical mechanism and contextual reinforcement plausibly explains why organizational commitment emerged as a substantially stronger correlate of performance than either work-life balance or work engagement in this bureaucratic setting.

Covariance among Predictors: Theoretical Implications

The significant covariances of both work-life balance and work engagement with organizational commitment – contrasted with the non-significant relationship between work-life balance and work engagement themselves – offer a theoretically coherent, if necessarily tentative, picture of the psychological landscape underlying ASN performance. The work-life balance commitment association is consistent with social exchange theory: when organizations support employees' work-life balance (e.g., through flexible scheduling or reduced excessive workload), employees may reciprocate through stronger identification with, and loyalty to, the organization (Saputra & Gorda, 2024; Asti & Nasution, 2025; Putri & Hadi, 2024). The work engagement commitment association is consistent with Schaufeli and Bakker's (2010) observation that work-focused engagement can "spill over" into broader organizational identification, and aligns with prior findings linking employee engagement to organizational commitment across diverse cultural contexts (Wirotama, 2023; Arulsenthilkumar & Punitha, 2024).

It is important to emphasize that these covariances are correlational, not causal, and were not the object of directional hypotheses in the present model; the structural model did not specify paths from work-life balance or work engagement to organizational commitment, only a covariance among the three exogenous variables. Nevertheless, the overall pattern two predictors unrelated to performance directly, yet each substantially associated with the one predictor that is strongly related to performance is consistent with the possibility that organizational commitment functions as a more proximal psychological mechanism through which work-life balance and work engagement may ultimately relate to performance. This possibility, however, requires dedicated mediation modeling in future research (see Section 5.6) and should not be inferred from the covariance evidence alone.

Practical Implications

These findings suggest that Pasuruan City's local government should treat organizational commitment as the central lever for improving civil-servant performance, while continuing to invest in work-life balance and work engagement initiatives as complementary rather than primary levers. Concretely, leadership may strengthen commitment through transparent decision-making, consistent recognition of long-term loyalty and contribution, and active involvement of ASN in shaping institutional vision and mission. Because work-life balance and work engagement policies (e.g., flexible scheduling, job enrichment, competency development, recognition programs) were found to covary significantly with commitment, such initiatives remain worth sustaining, but their performance dividends are likely to be realized primarily through their contribution to organizational commitment rather than through a direct effect on performance.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference, including regarding the descriptive covariance patterns reported in Section 4.6. Second, all variables were measured via self-report, raising the possibility of common method variance. Third, the probability value for the work-life balance performance path ($p = .053$) lies very close to the conventional significance threshold, such that a larger sample or refined measurement precision could plausibly shift this result. Fourth, the sample was confined to ASN across eight agencies in a single city, which may limit generalizability to other regions or institutional contexts. Future research should consider longitudinal or multi-wave designs to establish temporal precedence among the variables; explicitly test organizational commitment as a mediator of the work-life balance performance and work engagement performance relationships, building on the covariance pattern reported here; apply more stringent discriminant-validity testing between work engagement and organizational commitment given their relatively strong covariance; extend the model to other local-government contexts with differing institutional cultures; and incorporate demographic variables (e.g., tenure, employment status, work unit) as controls or moderators.

CONCLUSION

This study tested an integrated structural model of the relationships between work-life balance, work engagement, and organizational commitment with employee performance among 366 ASN across eight local-government agencies in Pasuruan City, Indonesia. The model demonstrated good overall fit. Of the three hypothesized relationships, only organizational commitment showed a statistically significant and substantively strong relationship with performance; work-life balance and work engagement did not. Supplementary analysis further revealed that both work-life balance and work engagement covaried significantly with organizational commitment, while not covarying significantly with each other. These results indicate that, within this bureaucratic context, organizational commitment rather than work-life balance or work

engagement is the most proximal and consistent psychological correlate of civil-servant performance, and they motivate future mediation research to clarify the mechanism connecting work-life balance and work engagement to performance through organizational commitment.

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