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When Balance Sparks Initiative: Exploring Engagement and Proactive Work Behavior among Employees at Credit Union Semarong Head Office in Sosok

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Abstract: *This study examines the influence of work–life balance (WLB) on proactive work behavior (PWB) mediated by employee engagement (EE) among employees at Credit Union Semarong Head Office in Indonesia. Using a quantitative, descriptive-correlation design, data were collected from 49 employees using a structured questionnaire based on validated scales. Data analysis was conducted via Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. Results indicate that WLB significantly enhances both EE and PWB, with EE partially mediating the relationship between WLB and PWB. These findings demonstrate that balanced employees possess higher motivation and engagement, which stimulate proactive behaviors. The conclusion affirms the importance of fostering work–life balance and engagement to build resilient, proactive workforces in resource-constrained organizations. This study provides practical and theoretical insights for organizational leaders seeking to promote adaptive and innovative employee conduct.*

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of work–life balance (WLB) has gained increasing attention within organizational behavior research, especially in the context of the post-pandemic era where flexible working arrangements have become more prevalent. Studies suggest that WLB not only enhances employee well-being but also influences work-related behaviors such as proactive work behavior (PWB), which is crucial for organizational resilience and innovation. Despite the growing recognition of WLB as a vital organizational resource, there remains a limited understanding of how it translates into proactive actions beyond formal roles, particularly in resource-constrained settings like community-based organizations in Indonesia.

The core issue lies in the inconclusive evidence regarding the direct impact of WLB on PWB, compounded by a lack of clarity on the underlying mechanisms that facilitate this relationship. While existing literature acknowledges that WLB fosters positive attitudes and engagement, it is less clear whether engagement acts as a mediating variable that can explain how balance catalyzes proactive behavior. Furthermore, most previous

research has focused on Western or corporate settings, with fewer studies exploring this dynamic within Indonesian organizations, which often operate under unique cultural and resource limitations. Addressing this gap is critical for both theoretical and practical reasons, as understanding the mediating role of employee engagement could inform strategies to cultivate a proactive workforce in developing countries.

This study aims to examine how WLB influences proactive work behavior through the mediating role of employee engagement, specifically within the context of Credit Union Semarong's head office in Indonesia. Employing a quantitative approach guided by the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) and Conservation of Resources (COR) models, this research seeks to contribute to the existing literature by explicitly testing the mediating mechanism and extending the application of the JD-R framework to resource-limited organizational contexts. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for organizational leaders to foster a supportive environment that enhances employee motivation and proactive conduct, ultimately promoting organizational resilience and innovation in the Indonesian banking sector. This research also provides novel empirical evidence by integrating WLB, engagement, and proactive behavior within a comprehensive theoretical model, addressing notable gaps in both local and global organizational behavior literature.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative, descriptive-correlation approach to explore the relationships among work–life balance (WLB), employee engagement (EE), and proactive work behavior (PWB). Guided by the paradigms of positivism, this design enables the examination of causal and mediating effects among the variables within a structured framework [Cresswell, 2022]. This approach is aligned with prior studies that utilize structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques to analyze complex causal models in organizational behavior research [Sugiyono, 2021; Emzir, 2020].

The primary data collection instrument is a structured questionnaire adapted from validated scales in previous research, ensuring content and construct validity [Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Parker & Collins, 2010]. The questionnaires measure constructs such as WLB, EE, and PWB using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" [Sudaryono, 2020]. The data will be analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the SmartPLS software, which is suitable for small sample sizes and complex models, including mediation effects [Hair et al., 2019].

The population of this study consists of all employees at the Credit Union Semarong Head Office in Sosok, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Given the small number of employees, a census sampling method is employed, meaning all employees are invited to participate in the study to ensure comprehensive coverage and minimize sampling bias [Sugiyono, 2021; Creswell, 2022]. Data collection procedures involve distributing self-administered questionnaires directly to employees with the cooperation of management, ensuring voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality throughout the process [Emzir, 2020].

Regarding data analysis, the first step involves testing the measurement model based on criteria such as indicator reliability, internal consistency (which includes Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted), and discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio) [Hair et al., 2019; Sugiyono, 2021]. The second step evaluates the structural model by assessing the path

coefficients, effect sizes, R-square values, predictive relevance (Q^2), and the significance of direct and indirect effects using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples [Creswell, 2022]. This comprehensive analysis ensures the accuracy and robustness of hypotheses testing, especially in understanding the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between work–life balance and proactive work behavior.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Evaluation

Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model was examined to ensure construct reliability and validity. The results, summarized in Table 1, indicate that all constructs meet the recommended thresholds.

Table 1. Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Description
Work–Life Balance (WLB)	**0.834**	**0.879**	**0.548**	**Reliable and valid**
Employee Engagement (EE)	**0.890**	**0.911**	**0.531**	**Reliable and valid**
Proactive Work Behavior (PWB)	**0.868**	**0.898**	**0.558**	**Reliable and valid**

All Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.70, demonstrating internal consistency. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct is above 0.50, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. Indicator loadings ranged from 0.663 to 0.801, all significant at $p < 0.001$, confirming indicator reliability.

To verify discriminant validity, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was examined (Table 2). The square roots of the AVE values (bolded) are greater than inter-construct correlations, confirming that each construct is empirically distinct.

Table 2. Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	WLB	EE	PWB
Work–Life Balance (WLB)	**0.740**	0.486	0.708
Employee Engagement (EE)	0.486	**0.729**	0.639
Proactive Work Behavior (PWB)	0.708	0.639	**0.747**

Overall, these findings demonstrate that the indicators used in this study are valid, reliable, and appropriate for structural model estimation.

Structural Model Evaluation

The explanatory power of the model was assessed through R^2 and f^2 values, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. R-Square and Effect Size (f^2)

Endogenous Variable	R^2	f^2 (WLB)	f^2 (EE)	Interpretation
Employee Engagement	0.236	0.296	—	Moderate explanatory power
Proactive Work Behavior	0.615	0.309	0.538	Substantial explanatory power

Work–life balance explains 23.6% of the variance in employee engagement, while WLB and EE together account for 61.5% of the variance in proactive work behavior. These results indicate that the model possesses adequate explanatory capacity (Hair et al., 2019).

Hypotheses Testing

Bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) was performed to assess the significance of both direct and indirect effects. The results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	*t*-value	*p*-value	Decision
H1: WLB → EE	0.486	4.954	0.000	Supported
H2: WLB → PWB	0.521	5.520	0.000	Supported
H3: EE → PWB	0.386	3.909	0.000	Supported
H4: WLB → EE → PWB (Indirect)	0.188	3.019	0.003	Supported (Partial mediation)

All paths are significant at $p < 0.01$, confirming that work–life balance positively influences both engagement and proactive behavior, and that engagement partially mediates this relationship. To visually summarize the results, Figure 2 presents the final structural model derived from SmartPLS analysis, including the standardized path coefficients and explained variance (R^2) for each endogenous construct. The diagram clearly illustrates the significant direct and indirect relationships among work–life balance, employee engagement, and proactive work behavior, confirming the robustness of the proposed mediation framework.

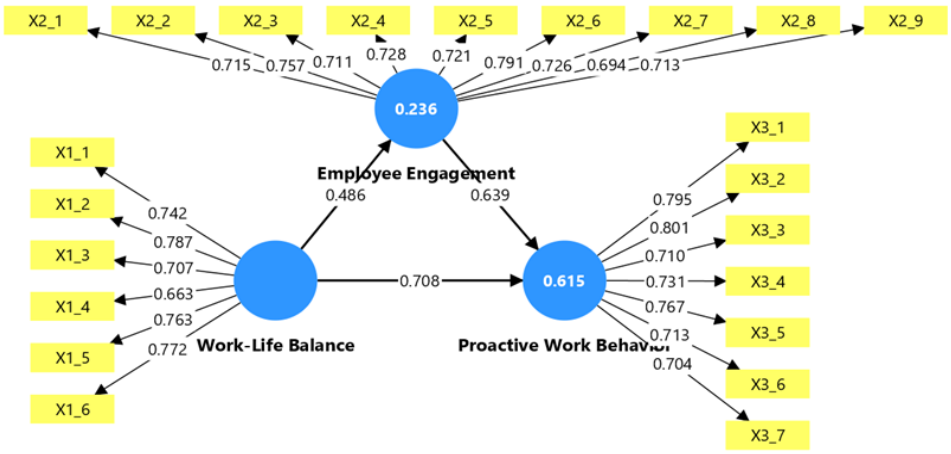

Figure 2. Structural Model with Standardized Path Coefficients (SmartPLS Output)

Discussion

The results demonstrate that **work–life balance is a strong predictor of both engagement and proactive work behavior**, providing empirical support for the motivational process outlined in the **Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model** (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and **Conservation of Resources (COR) theory** (Hobfoll, 1989).

First, the significant relationship between WLB and EE (β = 0.486, $p < 0.001$) underscores the role of balance as a vital job resource. Employees who perceive that their organization enables them to maintain equilibrium between professional and personal domains experience higher levels of energy and commitment. This finding reinforces prior evidence by Haar et al. (2014) and Casper et al. (2018), suggesting that WLB fosters engagement by reducing strain and enhancing psychological resources.

Second, the direct effect of WLB on PWB (β = 0.521, $p < 0.001$) reveals that employees with stronger balance tend to initiate constructive changes and act proactively. Balanced employees possess the emotional bandwidth and cognitive flexibility required to engage in future-oriented behaviors, supporting the COR premise that individuals who conserve personal resources can invest them in discretionary work efforts.

Third, the link between EE and PWB (β = 0.386, $p < 0.001$) aligns with prior findings that engagement drives extra-role and innovative actions (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011; Kim & Park, 2020). Engaged employees demonstrate vigor, dedication, and absorption—attributes that naturally translate into initiative-taking and problem-solving behaviors.

Finally, the mediation analysis confirms that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between WLB and PWB (β = 0.188, $p = 0.003$). This implies that while balance directly enhances proactivity, it also indirectly promotes it through heightened engagement. Hence, work–life balance operates not only as a protective mechanism against exhaustion but also as a motivational force that stimulates proactive conduct.

Collectively, these results bridge existing theoretical gaps by empirically linking work–life interface, engagement, and proactive behavior within a single integrated framework. They further extend the JD-R model by demonstrating how a personal resource such as balance energizes motivational states that culminate in proactive outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings reveal that work–life balance (WLB) significantly enhances both employee engagement and proactive work behavior among employees at Credit Union Semarong. The results confirm that balanced employees experience higher energy and commitment, which motivates them to take initiative and act proactively, consistent with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) and Conservation of Resources (COR) models. Employee engagement was found to partially mediate the relationship between WLB and proactive work behavior, demonstrating that WLB stimulates proactive actions both directly and indirectly through heightened engagement. This integrated framework bridges theoretical gaps and offers empirical support for fostering work–life harmony as a strategic organizational resource to enhance adaptability and innovation. The robust measurement and structural models uphold the validity and reliability of the constructs, providing a sound basis for these conclusions.

Despite these strengths, the study's limitations include its relatively small sample size and cross-sectional design, which restrict the generalizability of the findings and the ability to infer causality. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and larger, more diverse samples to verify the temporal dynamics of these relationships and explore moderating factors such as leadership style or organizational culture. Practically, organizations are encouraged to implement flexible work policies, family-supportive programs, and initiatives that cultivate engagement to promote proactive behaviors. Creating psychologically safe environments and recognizing employee contributions may further sustain motivation and innovation. By prioritizing work–life balance and engagement, organizations—especially those in resource-constrained settings—can develop more resilient and proactive workforces that contribute beyond formal role expectations. These insights pave the way for ongoing research and practical strategies aimed at maximizing employee potential and organizational success.

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