

The Effect Of Work-Life Balance And Workload On Job Satisfaction Mediated By Quality Of Work Life Among Employees Of Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf

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Abstract

Human resources play a strategic role in determining the quality of higher education institutions, particularly as increasing academic demands, administrative workloads, and performance expectations may influence employees' work-life balance, quality of work life, and job satisfaction. Inadequate management of these aspects can lead to decreased motivation, work stress, and lower institutional effectiveness. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of Work-Life Balance (WLB) and workload on job satisfaction, with Quality of Work Life (QWL) serving as a mediating variable among employees at Syekh-Yusuf Islamic University. Conducted in 2025, the research involved 103 participants comprising structural lecturers and administrative staff. Employing a quantitative approach with a descriptive-associative design, data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed through Path Analysis and the Sobel test to assess mediation effects. The findings reveal that WLB exerts a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction, while workload shows no significant impact. Both WLB and workload positively affect QWL, which in turn significantly influences job satisfaction. Moreover, QWL mediates the relationship between WLB and job satisfaction but does not mediate the relationship between workload and job satisfaction. These results highlight the necessity of implementing WLB policies tailored to employees' actual needs and enhancing QWL through supportive work facilities, career development initiatives, and transparent organizational communication. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of fostering adaptive and human-centered human resource management practices within higher education institutions.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Workload, Quality of Work Life, Job Satisfaction, University.

INTRODUCTION

In the increasingly competitive landscape of higher education, human resources (HR) are a critical determinant of institutional success. Unlike tangible assets such as buildings or machinery, HR comprises individuals with unique personalities, emotions, and behaviors that, when effectively managed, can significantly contribute to achieving organizational goals (Dessler, 2015; Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022). In universities, both academic and administrative personnel play pivotal roles in implementing strategic objectives, ensuring service quality, and fostering academic excellence. HR or employee, as one of the components to contribute the effective universities management, has the significant role to maintain the whole activities in universities. However, sustaining high performance requires more than technical competence, it necessitates conditions that promote employee satisfaction, motivation, and well-being. Job satisfaction, in particular, has been widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing productivity, retention, and institutional climate (Asriani et al., 2023).

Job satisfaction in higher education is shaped by multiple organizational and individual factors. Academic staff, such as lecturer in universities, face simultaneous demands to teach, conduct research, publish scholarly work, engage in community service, and fulfill administrative obligations. Administrative staff, such as administrative assistants, payroll clerks, facilities staff, IT staff, public safety, librarians, and other support personnel, on the other hand, must ensure operational continuity while managing resources efficiently. Without proper management, such pressures can lead to stress, burnout, and declining morale. Global data from Pricewaterhouse Coopers International (2024) Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey indicates that while satisfaction levels have risen from 56% in 2023 to 60% in 2024 employees

continue to express unmet needs regarding compensation, career advancement, and work-life balance (WLB).

Against this global backdrop, it is significant to examine how these dynamics manifest within specific institutional context. *Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf (UNIS)*, as the subject research in this study, conducted the internal monitoring and evaluation to gather the data of campus environment and facilities targeting its academic community. The results, drawn from the Quality Assurance Department of UNIS, revealed generally high satisfaction levels among academic staff, particularly in terms of human resource development and the provision of facilities. However, the gaps were found in some aspects, especially in career development, reward systems, and the efficiency and modernization of work systems. Furthermore, for lecturers, the main issues lie in the limited opportunities for promotion, both in structural and non-structural positions, as well as the perception that workloads are not evenly distributed. Surprisingly, it also found in the students' survey results that high workload and imbalance work experienced by the lecturer and administrative staff. Moreover, for some facilities such as air conditioning, toilets, and internet network systems are considered suboptimal in supporting work comfort. In short, gaps remain in areas such as promotion opportunities, workload distribution, and workplace infrastructure, which may affect both performance and engagement.

Another data gathers from 2022 survey that also conducted by the Quality Assurance Department and the Internal Audit Unit revealed that student satisfaction with services at UNIS still at a moderate level across all aspects Tangibles, Responsiveness, Reliability, Assurance, Empathy, and Information Systems. This condition reflects that the quality of services received by students is not yet optimal, which is likely directly related to the performance of lecturers and administrative staff as the service providers. An excessive workload and a disparity between professional and personal life can induce stress and weariness in lecturers and administrative personnel, adversely affecting the quality of services rendered to students. On the other hand, if the QWL is at a good level for example, through a comfortable work environment, adequate facilities, organizational support, and healthy working relationships this can strengthen the ability of lecturers and administrative staff to maintain WLB and increase overall job satisfaction.

Extant literature identifies several factors strongly correlated with job satisfaction, including WLB, workload, and QWL. WLB refers to an individual's ability to balance work and personal life without compromising either domain (Hudson, 2005; Scherer et al., 2023). Empirical evidence demonstrates that higher WLB is associated with increased job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions (Fatmawati & Irbayuni, 2021; Mani et al., 2020; Shabrina & Ratnaningsih, 2019). Nonetheless, some studies, such as (Maharani & Haeba Ramli, 2024), report no significant relationship, suggesting that contextual and methodological differences may shape outcomes. Workload, defined as the total tasks and responsibilities assigned within a specified timeframe (Efendi et al., 2022), has also shown mixed effects on job satisfaction. While excessive workload is often linked to stress and disengagement (Souisa et al., 2025; Kalfaoğlu, 2024), supportive environments and adequate resources can mitigate negative impacts (Herawati et al., 2023; Kaarakainen & Ring, 2024).

QWL offers a broader lens by encompassing job security, work environment, career development opportunities, and organizational support (Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022; Putra et al., 2020). Studies have shown QWL to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction (Ruhana et al., 2019) and, in some cases, a mediating factor between WLB, workload, and satisfaction (Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022). However, findings are inconsistent research in rigid or high-stress work environments has sometimes found QWL insufficient to enhance satisfaction (Zhao, 2025; Lee, 2020). These discrepancies highlight the need for further empirical examination, especially in diverse institutional and cultural contexts.

The state of the art in this study lies in integrating WLB, workload, and QWL into a single analytical framework within the setting of an *Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf (UNIS)*. While prior

studies have examined these variables individually or in partial combinations, few have investigated them simultaneously with QWL as a mediating variable particularly in universities where organizational culture intertwines with religious values. This contextual and methodological focus offers a novel contribution to HR management literature by addressing how these constructs interact in a faith-based educational environment. Moreover, the study responds to calls for sector-specific research in Indonesian higher education, where career structures, cultural expectations, and institutional policies differ from those in commercial or public-sector organizations.

Building upon this contextual novelty, the current research is designed with specific objectives as follows; (1) to analyze the direct effects of WLB and workload on job satisfaction; (2) to examine the influence of WLB and workload on QWL; and (3) to assess the mediating role of QWL in the relationship between WLB, workload, and job satisfaction among employees of Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically by enriching models of job satisfaction and QWL in higher education and practically, by providing evidence-based recommendations for improving employee well-being, optimizing workload distribution, and enhancing institutional performance.

From the explanation, this study proposes seven hypotheses to examine the relationships among Work-Life Balance (WLB), workload, Quality of Work Life (QWL), and job satisfaction. WLB reflects an employee's ability to integrate work and personal life, which is crucial in higher education due to high academic and administrative demands. Previous studies confirm that effective WLB improves job satisfaction by enhancing psychological well-being, commitment, and role control, while imbalance increases stress and emotional exhaustion (Mani et al., 2020; Fatmawati & Irbayuni, 2021; Aruldoss et al., 2021). Organizations that support flexible work practices tend to foster higher satisfaction and loyalty (Bhende et al., 2020; Ogunola, 2022; Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022). Thus, H1 states that WLB significantly affects job satisfaction.

Workload is another critical determinant, as excessive demands increase job stress and decrease motivation, leading to lower job satisfaction (Abbas et al., 2021; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Disproportionate workloads also weaken employees' organizational perceptions (Tarcan et al., 2017). Therefore, H2 proposes that workload significantly affects job satisfaction. WLB and workload are further expected to influence QWL, which represents employees' global perception of work conditions, including autonomy, support, and well-being. Balanced WLB enhances QWL by improving mental health and job comfort (Talip et al., 2020; Leitao, 2019), while work overload reduces perceptions of security and development opportunities (Aprianti & Rani, 2025). Hence, H3 proposes that WLB significantly influences QWL, and H4 states that workload significantly affects QWL.

QWL is also a strong predictor of job satisfaction, as supportive environments enhance recognition, motivation, and organizational attachment (Putra et al., 2020; Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022; Ruhana et al., 2019). Accordingly, H5 suggests that QWL significantly affects job satisfaction. Finally, QWL is expected to mediate the influence of WLB and workload on job satisfaction. Empirical findings indicate that WLB indirectly increases satisfaction through improved QWL via supportive HR practices (Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022), while high QWL can reduce the negative impact of workload by transforming stress into manageable challenges (Bagtasos, 2019; Saleem et al., 2023). Thus, H6 proposes that QWL mediates the relationship between WLB and job satisfaction, and H7 states that QWL mediates the relationship between workload and job satisfaction. This serves as an impetus to investigate the research more deeply. Continuous improvement initiatives will significantly help to create a productive, professional, and highly competitive work environment in higher education.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study falls under the category of explanatory research. According to Arikunto (2019), explanatory research is research that aims to explain the causal relationship between variables and describe how a phenomenon occurs based on existing conditions. Explanatory quantitative research technique was employed in this study to evaluate the causative relationships between WLB, workload, QWL, and job satisfaction (Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022). The study looks at both direct and indirect impacts, with QWL functioning as a mediating component. The dependent variable is job satisfaction; the independent factors are WLB and workload; and the mediating variable is QWL. Each construct is operationalized based on established indicators from prior studies, ensuring construct validity and comparability with previous empirical findings.

The research population comprises all 139 employees at *Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf (UNIS)*, including lecturers holding structural positions and non-academic staff such as administrators, librarians, laboratory staff, technicians, finance/HR personnel, and facilities staff. A purposive sampling technique was applied, focusing on employees actively engaged in their roles during the study period. A sample size of 103 respondents was chosen by applying the Slovin method with a 5% margin of error.

The research model follows a causal path analysis framework, integrating both direct and mediated relationships between variables. Instrument development was based on validated measurement scales: job satisfaction (Putra, 2022; Robbins & Judge, 2018), WLB (Hudson, 2005; McDonald & Bradley, 2005), workload (Koesomowidjojo, 2017; Udriyah, 2018), and QWL (Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2021). Each variable is measured using Likert-scale items, with the questionnaire distributed digitally via Google Forms. Data collection also involved direct observation to provide contextual insights and secondary data for institutional profiling.

The study's analytical approach involved some stages. First, instrument testing was conducted through validity and reliability assessments on a pilot sample ($n = 30$) using Pearson's correlation and Cronbach's alpha, ensuring measurement accuracy and internal consistency. The model's appropriateness was then confirmed using traditional assumption tests, such as heteroskedasticity (Glejser test), multicollinearity (variance inflation factor), and normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov). Following this, path analysis using SPSS v27 was applied to estimate direct and indirect effects, supported by the Sobel test for mediation significance. Hypotheses were evaluated through partial t-tests for individual predictors and determination coefficients (R^2) for model explanatory power.

Implicitly, the hypotheses tested address whether WLB and workload significantly influence job satisfaction directly and through QWL as a mediating factor, and whether QWL itself significantly impacts job satisfaction. This methodological framework ensures the study not only quantifies relationships but also clarifies the mechanisms through which employee well-being variables interact in the context of an Islamic higher education institution.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Respondent Characteristics

This part provide the detailed of research findings in elaborating the characteristics of respondents. Table 1 displays the respondents' demographic profile, which includes gender, age, educational background, working duration, and job category (academic vs. non-academic staff).

The data indicates a balanced distribution of male and female employees, with the majority holding undergraduate degrees and having at least five years of job experience.

Table 1 Respondent Demographic Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	55	53.4
	Female	48	46.6
Age	<30 years	13	12.6
	31–45 years	50	48.5
	>45 years	40	38.8
Education	SMA	13	12.6
	D3	3	2.9
	D4/S1	22	21.4
	S2	48	46.6
	S3	17	16.5
Job Category	Academic	57	55.3
	Non-academic	46	44.7

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

The demographic profile of respondents consists of 103 individuals with diverse characteristics. In terms of gender, the sample is slightly dominated by males, comprising 55 respondents (53.4%), while females account for 48 respondents (46.6%).

Regarding age, the largest proportion falls within the 31–45 years age group, with 50 respondents (48.5%). This is followed by those aged over 45 years, totaling 40 respondents (38.8%), while the youngest group, under 30 years old, consists of 13 respondents (12.6%).

The majority of responders 48 (46.6%) have a master's degree (S2). This is followed by undergraduate degree holders (D4/S1) at 22 respondents (21.4%), doctoral degree holders (S3) at 17 respondents (16.5%), and senior high school graduates (SMA) at 13 respondents (12.6%). The smallest proportion is diploma holders (D3) with only 3 respondents (2.9%).

When viewed from the job category, the academic staff forms the majority, comprising 57 respondents (55.3%), while non-academic staff account for 46 respondents (44.7%).

Overall, the demographic data reflects a respondent group largely composed of male, middle-aged individuals with a high level of education, and slightly more in academic roles compared to non-academic roles.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive data (Table 2) reveal each variable's mean and standard deviation. WLB (mean = 42.25) and QWL (mean = 120.99) are rated positively by respondents, while workload (mean = 45.34) is at a moderate level, suggesting manageable but potentially challenging demands. Job satisfaction (mean = 76.69) is high, reflecting generally positive employee perceptions.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable (N=103)	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Work Life Balance	11	55	42.25	9.900
Workload	27	65	45.34	8.841
Job Satisfaction	31	113	76.69	12.837
Quality Of Work Life	47	175	120.99	21.338

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

The descriptive data analysis illustrates a total of 103 respondents, along with the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) values. Based on Table 2, obtained using descriptive analysis, the WLB variable (X_1) recorded an average score of 42.25 (SD = 9.90) within a range of 11–55. This indicates that most participants feel fairly capable of balancing work demands and personal life, although the SD variation suggests that some feel very balanced while others still struggle.

The Workload variable (X_2) has a mean score of 45.34 (SD = 8.84) within a range of 27–65, indicating a moderate to high level of work demands, especially among structural lecturers who carry dual administrative and academic responsibilities.

The Job Satisfaction variable (Y) recorded an average of 76.69 (SD = 12.84) from a range of 31–113, suggesting that respondents are generally satisfied with their careers, possibly influenced by job stability and academic incentives.

The Quality of Work Life variable (Z) shows the highest mean score of 120.99 (SD = 21.34) within a range of 47–175, indicating that overall, the QWL is considered good, although the SD disparity suggests differences in perception, particularly between structural lecturers and administrative staff.

This descriptive narrative serves as a foundation for analyzing the relationships among variables, particularly how structural positions moderate workload, job satisfaction, and QWL.

Data Analysis Test (Path Analysis) and Statistical Hypothesis Testing

Correlation Coefficient Test

A test that expresses the link between variables and attempts to gauge the strength of that relationship is the correlation coefficient.

The correlation coefficient test results are shown below:

Table 3 Correlation Coefficient Test Results

		Correlations			
		Job Satisfaction	Work Life Balance	Workload	Quality of Work Life
Pearson Correlation	Job Satisfaction	1.000	.185	.228	.678
	Work Life Balance	.185	1.000	.130	.635
	Workload	.228	.130	1.000	.309
	Quality of Work Life	.678	.635	.309	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Job Satisfaction	.	.031	.010	.000
	Work Life Balance	.031	.	.095	.000
	Workload	.010	.095	.	.001
	Quality of Work Life	.000	.000	.001	.
N	Job Satisfaction	103	103	103	103
	Work Life Balance	103	103	103	103
	Workload	103	103	103	103
	Quality of Work Life	103	103	103	103

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

From the results table 3 above, it is known that there are variables that have no effect on the X1 and X2 variables which have a sig value of $0.095 > 0.05$, but the other variables have an influence because the significance value is below 0.05.

Test Coefficient of Determination (R²)

a) Coefficient of Determination (R²) Model 1

Table 4 Model 1 Determination Coefficient Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.749 ^a	0.561	0.548	8.634

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of Work Life, Workload, Work Life Balance

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

Table 4 above shows the findings of the R Square value of 0.561 (56.1%), which indicates that WLB, Workload, and QWL have an impact on Job Satisfaction with a value of 56.1%, while other factors outside the study have an impact on the remaining 43.9%.

b) Coefficient of Determination (R2) Model 2

Table 5 Model 2 Determination Coefficient Results

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.675 ^a	0.455	0.444		15.908

a. Predictors: (Constant), Workload, Work Life Balance

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

Table 5 above shows the findings of the R Square value of 0.455 (45.5%), which indicates that workload and WLB have an impact on QWL with a value of 45.5%, while other factors outside the study have an impact on the remaining 54.5%.

Partial Significance Test (T Test)

The importance of the influence between variables in regression testing is assessed using the following criteria:

- If the t-count is less than the t-table and the significance value exceeds 0.05, the independent variable does not exert a significant impact on the dependent variable.
- If the t-count exceeds the t-table and the significance value is less than 0.05, the independent variable significantly influences the dependent variable.

1. Partial Test (T Test) Model 1

Table 6 Model 1 T Test Results

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	29.487	5.817		5.069	0.000		
	Work Life Balance	-0.493	0.103	-0.413	-4.773	0.000	0.592	1.689
	Workload	-0.014	0.102	-0.010	-0.137	0.892	0.898	1.114
	Quality of Work Life	0.567	0.054	0.943	10.454	0.000	0.545	1.835

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

Table 6 compares the t-count and t-table values. The t-table result is 1.66039, calculated with the formula $df=n-k=103-4 = 99$, with a significance level (a) of 0.05 or 5%. The t test on model 1 yielded the following findings:

- WLB has a negative and substantial impact on employee job satisfaction with a sig value of 0.000 < 0.05, as indicated by the t value < t table (-4.773 < 1.66039).
- The value of t count < t table (-0.137 < 1.66039) indicates that workload has a negative and negligible influence on employee job satisfaction, with a sig value of 0.892 > 0.05.
- QWL on Job Satisfaction t value > t table (10.454 > 1.66039), it can be inferred that QWL significantly and favorably affects employee job satisfaction, with a sig value of 0.000 < 0.05.

2. Partial Test (T Test) Model 2

Table 7 Model 2 T Test Results

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	45.186	9.719		4.649	0.000		
	Work Life Balance	1.199	0.148	0.605	8.128	0.000	0.983	1.017
	Workload	0.554	0.180	0.230	3.084	0.003	0.983	1.017

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Work Life

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

The t-count value and t-table are compared using Table 7. The t-table result is 1.66039, calculated with the formula $df=n-k=103-4 = 99$ with a significance level (α) of 0.05 or 5%. The t test on model 2 yielded the following findings:

- a. WLB has a positive and substantial impact on QWL with a sig value of $0.000 < 0.05$, as indicated by the t value $> t$ table ($8.128 > 1.66039$).
- b. Workload has a positive and substantial impact on QWL, with a sig value of $0.003 < 0.05$, according to the t count $> t$ table ($3.084 > 1.66039$).

Structural Equation

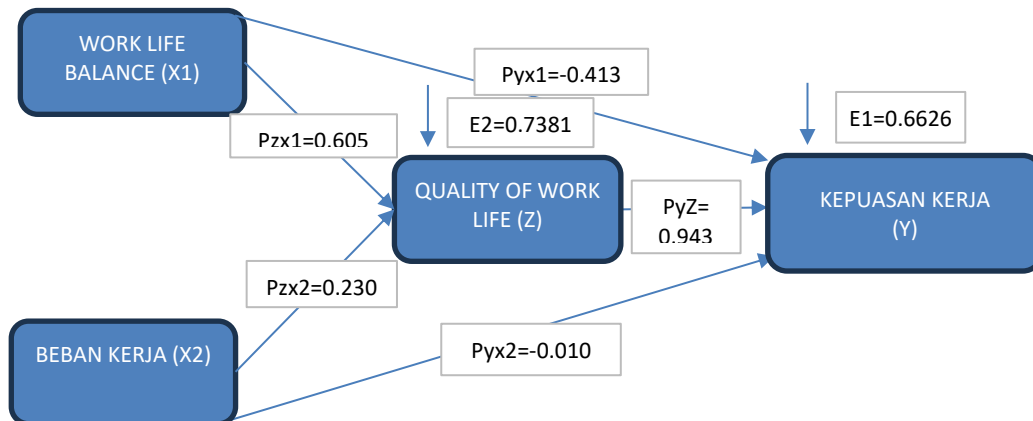
Table 8 Structural Equation Results

Model	Analysis Path (B)	T-Count	T-Tabel	Probability	R ²	Notes
Pyx1	-0.413	-4.773	1.660	0.000	.561	Confirm
Pyx2	-0.010	-0.137	1.660	0.892	.561	Unconfirm
PyZ	0.943	10.454	1.660	0.000	.561	Confirm
Pzx1	0.605	8.128	1.660	0.000	.455	Confirm
Pzx2	0.230	3.084	1.660	0.003	.455	Confirm

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

After testing as in table 8 above on WLB and Workload on Job Satisfaction mediated by QWL, the path analysis structural equation can be seen as follows:

Figure 1 Path Analysis Structural Equation



Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

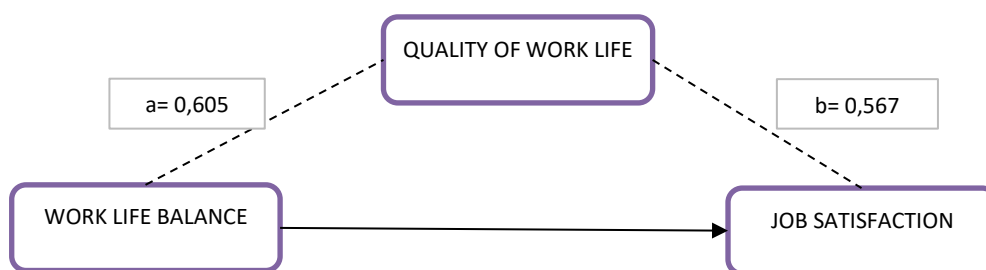
Sobel Test

A Sobel test is conducted under the condition that a mediating variable's indirect influence on both the independent and dependent variables is deemed significant if either the absolute z-value is more than 1.96 or the p-value is less than 0.05 (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The value used in this Sobel test can see the data in table 7 to make it easier for readers to know.

The findings of Sobel testing in this study are provided as follows:

- 1. The indirect effect of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction through Quality of Work Life

The Sobel test was performed to assess the mediating function of the QWL variable in the correlation between WLB and employee job satisfaction. The next section presents the Sobel test calculation that was used to determine the significance of the mediating effect:



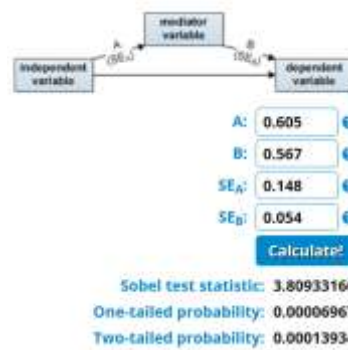


Figure 2 Sobel Test Calculator 1
 Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

Using the danielsoper sobel test calculator, the t value is 3.794, which is greater than the absolute z value of 1.96 and the sig value is 0.0001 < 0.05. This suggests that WLB (X1) has an indirect effect on job satisfaction through QWL.

b) Indirect effect of Workload on Job Satisfaction through Quality of Work Life

The Sobel test is used to test the significance of the mediating role of the QWL variable in the relationship between workload and employee job satisfaction. The Sobel test calculation process that illustrates the indirect effect is presented in the following section:

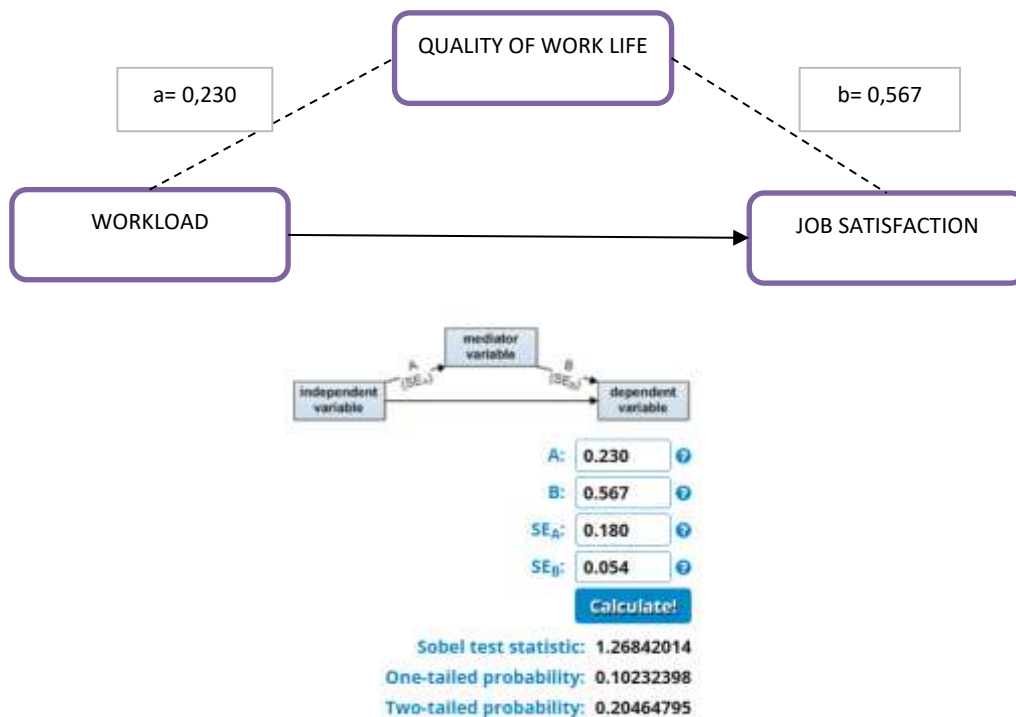


Figure 3 Sobel Test Calculator 2
 Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

The results of the manual calculations and the danielsoper-Sobel test calculator show that there is no indirect effect of workload (X2) on job satisfaction through QWL. The t value is 1.2627, which is smaller than the absolute z value of 1.96, and the sig value is 0.204 > 0.05.

Discussion

This discussion elaborates on the results obtained from the data analysis of 103 employees at *Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf (UNIS)*. The primary focus is on the effect of **WLB** and **Workload** on **Job Satisfaction (JS)**, with **QWL** as a mediating variable. The discussion explains each relationship systematically, supported by theoretical frameworks and prior empirical studies, to reinforce the credibility of the findings and derive recommendations.

The discussion of the influence WLB toward job satisfaction was elaborated. The first notable finding is the significant but negative relationship between WLB and job satisfaction. At first glance, this result appears contradictory to most empirical evidence, which generally associates good work-life balance with higher satisfaction. More employees feel that their lives are balanced between work and personal matters, the lower their job satisfaction becomes. Even though there are policies or programs aimed at promoting work-life balance, what is provided may not match the actual expectation or needs of the employees. It also confirms in this finding. In UNIS context, it may reflect a mismatch between institutional WLB initiatives and the actual needs of employees. For instance, while flexible work arrangements are offered, they may not adequately address the complex demands faced by lecturers holding structural positions, who must balance teaching, research, administrative duties, and community service. In such cases, the presence of formal WLB policies might paradoxically increase expectations for availability outside regular hours, leading to blurred boundaries between work and personal life. This suggests that WLB efforts need to be context-specific rather than standardized. Similar complexities have been observed in studies by (Aruldoss et al., 2021; Bhende et al., 2020; Fatmawati & Irbayuni, 2021), where poorly tailored WLB policies either failed to improve or even reduced job satisfaction.

On the other hand, workload shows a negative but statistically insignificant direct effect on job satisfaction. This outcome implies that high workloads do not necessarily undermine satisfaction when they are accompanied by autonomy, meaningful tasks, and appropriate rewards. This finding interpreted that one possible reason why workload did not have a significant effect on job satisfactions may be related to the high level of professional autonomy. This autonomy allows the lecturers to control their schedule, choose how they work, and set priorities, which can diminish feelings of work pressure despite having heavy workloads. In addition, academic rewards such as publication opportunities, promotions in functional positions, and institutional prestige can serve as buffers against increased workload, making the negative correlation less apparent or statistically insignificant. In short, for many lecturers, the flexibility to manage teaching and research schedules may offset the pressures of heavy workloads. In some cases, challenging assignments can be perceived as professional recognition rather than a burden. This finding is consistent with the perspective of Robbins and Judge (2017) and empirical evidence from Abdullah (2021) and Mussavi (2015), which indicate that workload's impact on satisfaction is highly contingent on the work context and employee perceptions. It reinforces the idea that workload management strategies should focus not only on reducing task volume but also on enhancing employee control and engagement.

In contrast, WLB demonstrates a significant and positive influence on QWL, confirming that employees who perceive a balanced integration of work and personal responsibilities also view their overall work environment more favorably. For lecturers, flexible teaching hours and research leave contribute to reduced stress and improved productivity, while for administrative staff, fair working hours and leave policies support physical and mental well-being. This finding indicated that both academic and administrative staffs experienced the balanced of daily time and routines between personal responsibilities and work activity. It supported by (Casper et al., 2018), the highest time spend with family and personal responsibilities or the balanced time between both of them with working time can contribute to QWL better. Also, these results align with prior studies by (Bhende et al., 2020; Udin et al., 2023; Vinodini, 2021), which highlight WLB as a key driver of QWL improvements across different sectors. An improvement in WLB contributes to reduce burnout levels, lowering absenteeism rates, and enhancing both academic and administrative productivity in which the implication is that any initiative to strengthen QWL should include robust, inclusive, and adaptable WLB policies.

Interestingly, the relationship between workload and QWL is positive and significant, suggesting that a well-managed workload can enhance perceptions of QWL. While high

workload in universities especially for lecturers with structural roles and administrative staffs often viewed as a source of pressure, the findings suggest that challenging workloads, when aligned with employee competencies, supported by adequate resources, and paired with recognition or career development opportunities, can enhance QWL. For structural lecturers, tasks such as managing academic programs or coordinating accreditation processes not only reinforce a sense of responsibility but also signal institutional trust, fostering intrinsic motivation, professional pride, and job satisfaction. Within the framework of motivational stressor theory, workload functions as a positive stressor (eustress) that stimulates engagement and serves as an indicator of institutional recognition, consistent with Prem et al. (2017) who note that challenging stressors improve motivation, achievement, and innovation when within tolerance limits. However, these benefits are contingent upon transparent systems and fair rewards, as seen in administrative roles where operational duties when accompanied by overtime pay, performance incentives, and professional development strengthen motivation, reduce turnover intention, and build loyalty. To sustain this balance, universities should implement task rotation, wellness programs, and stress management training, alongside supportive measures such as research leave and facility access for lecturers, and shift rescheduling or recognition programs for administrative staff. These findings align with (Aprianti & Rani, 2025; Sarapah, 2020; Nisak, 2024), who emphasize that workload can improve performance and QWL if supported by a conducive environment and effective stress management, while (Suparman et al., 2023; Saidykhan & Ceesay, 2020) highlight that without adequate support and recognition, heavy workloads may undermine well-being. Consequently, well-designed workload management strategies setting reasonable thresholds, aligning tasks with competencies, and ensuring fair rewards can transform workload into a catalyst for achievement, engagement, and sustainable job satisfaction.

QWL is a strong predictor of job satisfaction, as higher QWL consistently leads to greater satisfaction for both lecturers with structural roles and administrative staff. For lecturers, adequate research facilities, leadership training, and professional autonomy enhance competence and recognition, while for administrative staff, ergonomic workspaces, fair task rotation, and open communication reduce stress and affirm their value. This finding aligns with Pratama and Srimulyani (2022), who identify QWL as a partial mediator between WLB and job satisfaction, as well as (Ruhana et al., 2019; Putra et al., 2020), who confirm its significant impact on satisfaction and positive work attitudes. Sustaining high QWL requires strategic measures, including transparent performance evaluations, equitable professional development opportunities, and recognition systems such as academic achievement rewards or “Employee of the Month.” By fostering a supportive environment and fair appreciation, institutions can strengthen employee commitment, collaboration, and long-term job satisfaction.

The mediation analysis reveals that QWL significantly and partially mediates the relationship between WLB and job satisfaction, indicating that the positive effect of WLB is maximized when employees also experience a high QWL. This means that flexible work arrangements or other WLB policies alone are insufficient unless they are supported by holistic and supportive working conditions such as fair performance evaluations, adequate research facilities, professional development opportunities, open communication channels, ergonomic workspaces, and transparent reward systems. In practice, this synergy enhances role clarity, emotional stability, engagement, and retention for both lecturers with structural roles and administrative staff. These findings are consistent with (Pratama & Srimulyani, 2022; Ogunola, 2022; Yang, 2021; Jeong, 2024), and others, who confirm that QWL strengthens the indirect effect of WLB on job satisfaction. Therefore, institutions should integrate WLB initiatives with targeted QWL improvements through measurable QWL indicators, facility and career development programs, and sustained policy and budget support, ensuring that WLB translates into optimal and sustainable job satisfaction.

Overall, the findings confirm that QWL is a key driver of job satisfaction, acting both as an independent factor and as a mediator between WLB and satisfaction, but not between workload and satisfaction. The absence of a significant mediation effect in the workload–satisfaction link suggests that perceptions of workload are highly individual, shaped by personal factors such as experience, competence, and intrinsic motivation, and cannot be fully offset by QWL improvements alone. In line with studies by (Arsyad et al., 2020; Grari & Bessouh, 2025; Kim et al., 2023), stress rather than QWL often mediates this relationship, particularly when workload exceeds tolerance thresholds. This underscores the need for adaptive workload management strategies, including early detection systems, task redistribution during peak periods, and supplemental staffing, to stabilize QWL and sustain satisfaction. For WLB policies, this means they must be flexible yet context-sensitive, participatory, and aligned with the distinct needs of academic and administrative staff, while workload should be managed as a balanced challenge rather than an excessive burden to optimize both well-being and performance.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive analysis conducted on a sample of 103 individuals, which included both structural lecturers and educational personnel affiliated with Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf (UNIS), has yielded several critical conclusions that warrant considerable attention. Firstly, it was observed that Work-Life Balance (WLB) exerts a negative and statistically significant influence on Job Satisfaction, indicating that as employees' perceptions of WLB increase, there is a corresponding decline in their levels of job satisfaction; this phenomenon is likely attributable to a dissonance between the current organizational policies and the genuine needs and expectations of the employees themselves. Secondly, the data revealed that the variable of Workload does not possess a statistically significant impact on Job Satisfaction, suggesting that the sheer intensity of the workload assigned to employees does not inherently lead to a decrease in their job satisfaction levels, particularly in instances where there exists a sufficient degree of autonomy and robust organizational support for those individuals. Thirdly, the findings suggest that WLB has a positive and statistically significant effect on Quality of Work Life (QWL), highlighting that a more favorable perception of the balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is associated with a marked enhancement in the quality of work life experienced by employees, thus reinforcing the importance of addressing these dimensions in organizational practices.

Fourth, it is imperative to note that the variable of Workload exhibits a positive and statistically significant effect on the construct of Quality of Work Life (QWL), thereby illustrating that when job demands are effectively managed and balanced, they can serve to enhance individuals' positive perceptions and overall impressions regarding the quality of their workplace environment. Fifth, it becomes evident that QWL exerts a positive and significant impact on Job Satisfaction, as a high level of QWL is capable of enriching one's job satisfaction through various dimensions, including emotional fulfillment, social interactions, and professional growth opportunities that contribute to a more gratifying work experience. Sixth, the concept of Work-Life Balance (WLB) demonstrates a noteworthy indirect influence on Job Satisfaction through the mediating role of QWL, suggesting that QWL partially mediates the beneficial effects of WLB on job satisfaction, thus highlighting the interconnectedness of these constructs in promoting employee well-being. Finally, it is essential to acknowledge that Workload does not exhibit a significant indirect effect on Job Satisfaction when analyzed through the lens of QWL, indicating that enhancements in QWL alone are insufficient to elevate job satisfaction arising from workload perceptions, particularly considering that perceptions of

workload are inherently subjective and context-dependent, varying greatly among individuals based on their unique experiences and circumstances.

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