

The Influence of Work-Life Balance and Emotional Intelligence on Employee Engagement through Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable in the Textile Industry

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Abstract

This research explores the role of work-life balance and emotional intelligence in shaping employee engagement, while also considering the mediating function of job satisfaction. Adopting a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 147 production employees in an Indonesian textile company. The analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the support of SmartPLS 4 software. The findings reveal that both work-life balance and emotional intelligence contribute significantly to enhancing job satisfaction and employee engagement. Furthermore, job satisfaction is found to partially mediate the relationship between these variables, indicating that improvements in work-life balance and emotional intelligence can indirectly strengthen employee engagement through increased satisfaction. These results underline the importance of organizational efforts to promote a healthier balance between professional and personal life, alongside the development of employees' emotional capabilities. Such initiatives can foster more positive work attitudes and higher engagement levels. Future research is encouraged to incorporate additional organizational and psychological variables, as well as to examine these relationships across diverse industry settings.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, global changes have transformed work patterns in the manufacturing sector, particularly within the labor-intensive textile industry. Digitalization and intensified global competition have compelled companies to enhance efficiency and productivity. This escalation in work intensity frequently increases both the physical and psychological demands placed on employees. Consequently, work-life balance has emerged as a strategic concern for organizational sustainability. An imbalance in work-life dynamics can diminish employee satisfaction and engagement. Additionally, the capacity to manage emotions is a critical factor in coping with occupational stress. Despite its significance, the relationship among work-life balance, emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and employee engagement remains underexplored in the manufacturing sector.

Observations in textile companies reveal fluctuations in employee attendance and increased overtime, which indicate elevated work pressure. Persistent high work intensity and rapid production schedules may lead to emotional exhaustion and reduced motivation. Such conditions can foster presenteeism, where employees are physically present but not fully engaged. Declining job satisfaction often leads to weakened loyalty and organizational commitment. Employees with limited emotional management skills are more susceptible to work-related stress. These circumstances underscore the need to integrate psychological factors and work-life balance into models of employee engagement. Accordingly, an empirical investigation is required to comprehensively elucidate the relationships among these variables.

Recent studies show that work-life balance positively impacts job satisfaction and employee engagement. Azkiya et al., (2025), found that good work-life balance leads to greater dedication and enthusiasm at work. Atlennur & Arianto (2024), also confirmed that work-life balance strongly affects satisfaction and engagement. Kinanti & Hermiati (2023), noted that organizational culture shapes the strength of this relationship. However, most of this research has focused on the service and education sectors. Labor-intensive manufacturing industries have received less attention, making it harder to apply these findings to workplaces with high production demands.

Several studies have found that emotional intelligence also positively affects job satisfaction and engagement. Kumakauw et al (2024), showed that combining work-life balance and emotional intelligence improves job satisfaction. Nurjanah & Indawati (2021), found that emotional intelligence strongly influences engagement, and Verma & Gujral (2024) reported similar results in an international study. However, Setiadi et al. (2024), employee engagement is not always significantly impacted by emotional intelligence. These mixed results show that there are still some inconsistencies in the research. In addition, job satisfaction has rarely been tested as a mediating factor within a single, integrated model. Because of this, more research is needed in the textile industry.

While previous studies have explored the relationships among work-life balance, emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and employee engagement, important conceptual and empirical gaps remain. Many studies treat job satisfaction as either an independent or dependent variable, often overlooking its potential mediating role. In addition, inconsistent findings on emotional intelligence indicate the influence of unexplored contextual factors. Manufacturing environments, especially those with high physical demands and production targets, differ significantly from the service sector. However, there is limited empirical research testing an integrated model in the textile industry. Few studies have combined these psychological variables within a comprehensive analytical framework. As a result, further research is needed to address these gaps in manufacturing organizations.

Based on this gap, this study examines how work-life balance and emotional intelligence affect employee engagement, and the extent to which job satisfaction mediates these relationships. The research tests a structural model integrating these variables within a single analytical framework, focusing on the textile industry, which is characterized by high work pressure and rotating shifts. This study is unique in its simultaneous analysis of job satisfaction's mediating role between work-life balance and engagement, as well as between work-life balance and emotional intelligence. The findings are expected to contribute empirically to human resource management literature in manufacturing and inform sustainable organizational policies to enhance employee well-being and engagement.

METHODS

This study examined how work-life balance and emotional intelligence impact employee engagement using a quantitative, explanatory method, taking job satisfaction into account as a mediating component. 229 workers from PT Indonesia Synthetics Textile Mills (ISTEM), primarily in the production sector, were the subject of the study. The sample comprised 147 respondents using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Purposive sampling was used, selecting employees who had worked for at least 1 year and agreed to participate.

A standardized questionnaire was administered directly to participants in order to collect data. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale that went from strongly disagree to strongly agree. For each of the following variables work-life balance, emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and employee engagement the questionnaire was developed using theoretical indicators. Before analysis, the instrument was checked for validity and reliability to make sure the measurements were accurate and consistent.

Tabel 1. Operational Definition and Indicators of Variables

No	Variable	Definition	Indicators
1	Work-Life Balance	Work-life balance describes a person's ability to "move harmoniously" between professional and personal roles, through organizational support and personal ability to manage time, energy, and emotions.	1. Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) 2. Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) 3. Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE)
2	Emotional Intelligence	The ability to observe, assess, and express emotions accurately, such as understanding the meaning of emotions, and regulating emotions to support intellectual and emotional growth.	1. Self-awareness 2. Self-control 3. Self-motivation 4. Empathy 5. Social skills
3	Employee Engagement	Employee engagement reflects the extent to which individuals feel connected to their work, demonstrating high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and commitment.	1. Vigor 2. Dedication 3. Absorption
4	Job Satisfaction	Job satisfaction is a combination of an individual's perceptions, emotions, and beliefs about various aspects of their work.	1. The job 2. Salary 3. Supervision 4. Coworkers

To test the proposed relationships, this study employed PLS-SEM using SmartPLS 4 as the analytical platform. The analysis unfolded across two sequential phases. The first phase centered on the measurement model, where each construct was scrutinized against established benchmarks namely convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability to confirm that the measures performed as intended. Once the measurement model was deemed satisfactory, attention shifted to the structural model in the second phase. Here, bootstrapping was applied to assess whether the hypothesized path coefficients reached statistical significance, while the coefficient of determination (R^2) served as the primary gauge of how well the model explained variance in the outcome variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The classification of respondent characteristics obtained from the research results is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. respondent characteristics

No	gender	Frequency	Presentase
1	Female	35	24%
2	Male	112	76%
Total		147	100%

Source: Processed Data, 2026

According to Table 2 above, the characteristics of the respondents show that 147 individuals made up the study's sample. The majority of respondents were male, namely 112 people (76%) of the total 147 respondents. Meanwhile, 35 respondents were female (24%).

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The results confirm that all constructs meet the required validity and reliability standards. Convergent validity is supported by AVE values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50,

with values ranging between 0.573 and 0.590. In terms of reliability, the constructs demonstrate strong internal consistency, as reflected in Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70 (0.875-0.918). Similarly, the composite reliability values also exceed the acceptable level, falling within the range of 0.876 to 0.913. Overall, these findings indicate that the measurement model is both valid and reliable.

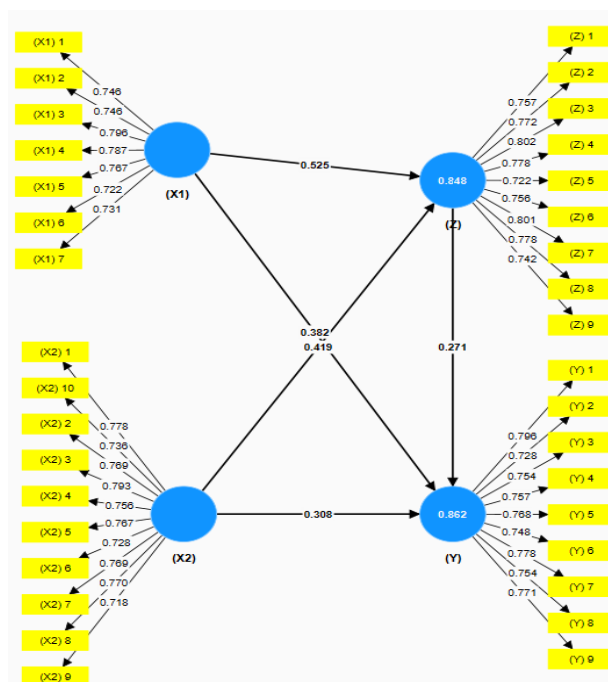


Figure 1 Result Outer Loading

Table 3. Reliability Results

Variable	composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	AVE
Work-Life Balance (X1)	0.876	0.875	0.573
Emotional Intelligence (X2)	0.918	0.918	0.576
Keterlibatan Karyawan (Y)	0.910	0.909	0.580
Kepuasan Kerja (Z)	0.913	0.913	0.590

Source: Output SmartPLS 4

Structural Model (Inner Model)

The structural model demonstrates strong explanatory capacity, as reflected in the R-square values. Job satisfaction shows an R² of 0.848, indicating that work-life balance and emotional intelligence jointly account for a substantial proportion of its variance. Meanwhile, employee engagement records an R² value of 0.862, suggesting that its variation can be largely explained by work-life balance, emotional intelligence, and job satisfaction as an intervening variable. These findings highlight the robustness of the model in capturing the relationships among the studied variables.

Table 4. Determination Coefficient (R²)

Variable	R-Square	Interpretation
Keterlibatan Karyawan (Y)	0.862	Strong
Kepuasan kerja (Z)	0.848	Strong

Source: Output SmartPLS 4

Hypothesis Testing Results

Direct Effects

Below are the results of the SEM-PLS direct effect analysis:

Table 5 Direct Effect Results

Variable	Original sample (O)	T-statistics	P-values	Result
Work-Life Balance -> Keterlibatan Karyawan	0.382	3.449	0.001	Significant Positive
Work-Life Balance -> Kepuasan Kerja	0.525	5.258	0.000	Significant Positive
Emotional Intelligence -> Keterlibatan Karyawan	0.308	2.964	0.003	Significant Positive
Emotional Intelligence -> Kepuasan Kerja	0.419	4.070	0.000	Significant Positive
Kepuasan Kerja -> Keterlibatan Karyawan	0.271	2.383	0.017	Significant Positive

Source: Output SmartPLS 4

Indirect Effects (Mediation)

The mediation analysis shows that job satisfaction acts as a link between work-life balance, emotional intelligence, and employee engagement.

Table 6 Indirect Effect Results

Variable	Original sample (O)	T-statistics	P-values	Result
Work-Life Balance -> Kepuasan Kerja -> Keterlibatan Karyawan	0.142	2.081	0.038	Significant Positive
Emotional Intelligence -> Kepuasan Kerja -> Keterlibatan Karyawan	0.113	2.089	0.037	Significant Positive

Source: Output SmartPLS 4

An overview of the results:

1. Employee engagement is positively and significantly impacted by work-life balance.
2. Work-life balance positively and significantly influences job satisfaction.
3. Emotional intelligence positively and significantly affects employee engagement.
4. Job Satisfaction is positively and significantly impacted by emotional intelligence.
5. Employee engagement is positively and significantly impacted by job satisfaction.
6. The impact of emotional intelligence and work-life balance on employee engagement is mediated by job satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

a. The Effect of Work-Life Balance (X1) on Employee Engagement (Y)

A healthier equilibrium between professional and personal demands proves to be a meaningful driver of how engaged employees feel at work. This positive association is statistically robust, supported by a t-statistic of 3.449 and a p-value of 0.001 both comfortably satisfying the required benchmarks. The data thus lend credible empirical weight to the hypothesized

relationship, affirming that employees who successfully manage the boundaries between work and personal life are correspondingly more invested and active in their professional roles.

The results of this study are consistent with prior research emphasizing the role of work-life balance in enhancing employee engagement. Previous studies have demonstrated that maintaining a balance between professional and personal responsibilities can strengthen employees' motivation and commitment to their organization Atlennur & Arianto (2024). Similarly, Azkiya et al. (2025), found that higher perceptions of work-life balance are associated with increased levels of employee engagement. Taken together, these findings reinforce the argument that work-life balance is a key factor in fostering stronger employee involvement in the workplace.

Additional evidence from previous research further supports the importance of work-life balance in organizational outcomes. Kinnary & Tanuwijaya (2022), found that employees who are able to effectively manage both personal and professional responsibilities tend to experience better psychological well-being, which in turn contributes to higher levels of work involvement and retention. This perspective complements the findings of the current study, suggesting that work-life balance not only enhances engagement directly but also reinforces it through improved employee wellbeing.

b. The Effect of Emotional Intelligence (X2) on Employee Engagement (Y)

Emotional intelligence stands out as another significant contributor to employee engagement in this study. With a path coefficient of 0.308, a t-statistic of 2.964, and a p-value of 0.003, the evidence firmly supports a positive and statistically reliable association between the two. The hypothesis is thereby confirmed, and the practical implication is equally clear employees who possess a stronger ability to perceive, interpret, and govern their own emotions tend to bring greater energy and dedication to their work.

This result matches earlier studies that highlight the important the contribution of emotional intelligence to increasing worker engagement. According to Verma & Gujral (2024), workers who possess high emotional intelligence are adept at handling their emotions, adapt to their work environment, and build positive relationships, which increases engagement. Additionally, Kumar et al. (2025), found that emotional intelligence significantly and favourably affects productivity and engagement. According to Shafa et al. (2022), those who have good emotional control are more likely to stick around motivated and build good work relationships, which supports higher engagement.

These results imply that enhancing employee engagement is mostly dependent on emotional intelligence. Organizations should focus on developing employees' emotional intelligence through programs such as soft skills training, improved communication, and leadership development to foster a positive, collaborative work environment.

c. The Effect of Work-Life Balance (X1) on Job Satisfaction (Z)

PT Indonesia Synthetics Textile Mills employees show a notably strong link between managing personal and professional demands and their overall workplace contentment. Statistical analysis confirms this connection, with a path coefficient of 0.525, a t-statistic of 5.258 (above the 1.96 threshold), and a p-value of 0.000 all pointing to a highly reliable result. In practical terms, workers who successfully navigate the boundary between their careers and private lives report greater fulfillment in their roles. This outcome is consistent with the broader body of research highlighting how balance between work and personal time plays a key role in driving employee satisfaction.

Previous research by Atlennur & Arianto (2024), highlights the significant role of work-life balance in enhancing job satisfaction. A balanced distribution of time and energy between professional and personal responsibilities allows employees to maintain better psychological well-being, which in turn strengthens their motivation and commitment to the organization. As a result,

employees who are able to effectively manage these demands tend to experience greater comfort and satisfaction in their work.

d. The Effect of Emotional Intelligence (X2) on Job Satisfaction (Z)

Emotional intelligence also emerges as a meaningful predictor of how satisfied employees feel in their work environment. The strength of this association is reflected in a path coefficient of 0.419, supported by a t-statistic of 4.070 surpassing the 1.96 benchmark and a p-value of 0.000, all of which confirm the reliability of this result. Employees who demonstrate a stronger capacity to identify, manage, and channel their emotions appear to derive greater satisfaction from their jobs. This pattern echoes findings from earlier studies, which similarly point to emotional intelligence as a key driver of constructive workplace attitudes.

For example, Nurjanah & Indawati (2021), found that emotional intelligence positively and significantly affects job satisfaction, especially in environments that require intensive social interaction. Similarly, According to Verma & Gujral (2024), workers with high emotional intelligence are more satisfied with their jobs because they manage stress better and have stronger working connections. Hapsah et al. (2025), also emphasized that emotional intelligence influences job satisfaction through emotional regulation and empathy in the workplace. Overall, these findings indicate that employee emotional intelligence substantially contributes to job satisfaction, even in manufacturing sectors with high demands and routine tasks.

e. The Effect of Job Satisfaction (Z) on Employee Engagement (Y)

Prior research has long suggested that satisfaction at work fuels deeper employee engagement, and the present findings support this view. A path coefficient of 0.271, accompanied by a t-statistic of 2.383 and a p-value of 0.017, collectively indicate a statistically significant and positive association between the two variables. Employees reporting greater contentment in their roles correspondingly exhibit heightened dedication and active participation hallmarks of a genuinely engaged workforce.

Endri (2021), established that job satisfaction acts as a significant mediating force between work motivation and engagement, with satisfied employees consistently demonstrating stronger involvement in their professional responsibilities. Complementing this, Hartika et al. (2023), argued through a narrative literature review that employees who feel genuinely satisfied in their roles tend to develop a deeper sense of loyalty, which in turn sustains their commitment to organizational goals over time. Taken together, these studies affirm that cultivating job satisfaction is not merely a welfare objective it is a strategic foundation for building a workforce that remains consistently engaged and dedicated.

f. The Effect of Work-Life Balance (X1) on Employee Engagement (Y) through Job Satisfaction (Z)

Job satisfaction appears to function as a bridge linking work-life balance to employee engagement, rather than the two being directly connected. Supporting this mediating role, the indirect effect yields a path coefficient of 0.142, a t-statistic of 2.081, and a p-value of 0.038 all meeting the threshold for statistical significance. Taken together, these figures suggest that when employees achieve a healthier equilibrium between work and personal life, the resulting boost in job satisfaction subsequently translates into deeper engagement with their roles, underscoring how positive day-to-day work experiences can amplify overall workforce involvement.

These results are in line with those of Atlennur & Arianto (2024), who discovered that the association between work-life balance and employee engagement is mediated by job satisfaction. Employees' attitudes towards their work are improved and engagement is directly impacted by striking a balance between work and personal life. Thus, putting in place sensible work-life balance regulations can be a calculated move to boost employee engagement and job satisfaction over time.

g. The Effect of Emotional Intelligence (X2) on Employee Engagement (Y) through Job Satisfaction (Z)

Beyond its direct influence, emotional intelligence also shapes employee engagement through an indirect pathway one that runs through job satisfaction. This mediating effect holds up statistically, with a t-statistic of 2.089 and a p-value of 0.037, both clearing the required thresholds for significance. Rather than operating through a single channel, emotional intelligence thus contributes to engagement on two fronts: immediately, and by first nurturing a more fulfilling work experience. Employees who are adept at navigating their own emotions tend to cultivate a more positive relationship with their work, and it is this sense of satisfaction that ultimately deepens their commitment and involvement.

The findings of this study are supported by prior research highlighting the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee engagement. Nurjanah & Indawati (2021), demonstrated that this mechanism is particularly evident among younger employees, where emotional intelligence contributes to stronger engagement through increased job satisfaction. Similarly, Hapsah et al. (2025), found that job satisfaction strengthens this relationship in the healthcare sector. These results suggest that the mediating role of job satisfaction is not limited to a specific context, but rather represents a consistent pattern across different groups and work environments.

However, contradictory findings have been reported by a number of other research. According to research by Setiadi et al. (2024), employee engagement is not always directly and significantly impacted by emotional intelligence. These variations imply that when other psychological factors, such as job happiness, operate as mediators, the impact of emotional intelligence on employee engagement may not always be direct and may even be more noticeable.

CONCLUSION

According to the study, emotional intelligence and work-life balance both positively and significantly impact employee engagement, both directly and through job satisfaction. Employees have greater emotional well-being when they are able to manage their personal and professional life, mentally, and behaviorally engaged. In the same way, emotional intelligence boosts engagement by helping people understand and manage their emotions well.

The findings highlight the important role of emotional intelligence and work-life balance in shaping job satisfaction and employee engagement. Employees who are able to manage their emotions effectively and maintain a balance between their personal and professional responsibilities tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. This positive evaluation of their work then contributes to stronger engagement, reflected in greater involvement and commitment to organizational goals.

Overall, the results suggest that emotional intelligence and work-life balance influence employee engagement both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. This indicates that these factors function as key psychological resources that support a more positive work environment and encourage sustained employee engagement.

Based on these results, organizations should improve HR practices that help employees balance work and personal life, such as offering flexible hours, fair workloads, and sufficient time to rest. They should also provide training to build emotional intelligence, such as teaching emotional management, communication, and stress management skills. These steps are likely to boost job satisfaction and, in turn, employee engagement.

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