



The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship between Work-Life Balance, Continuance Commitment, Task Complexity, and Competence on Perceived Productivity

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Abstract

This study examines the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between work-life balance, continuous commitment, task complexity, and competencies on employees' perceived productivity at the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. This study used the Structural Equation Modelling–Partial Least Squares (SEM–PLS) approach to analyze data from 231 participants. Important components of an effective workplace, such as job satisfaction and perceived productivity, are strongly impacted by work-life balance and continual dedication, according to the results. In contrast, task complexity hurts both job satisfaction and perceived productivity. Meanwhile, competencies positively influence perceived productivity but do not directly affect job satisfaction. In addition, competency-based relationships are not mediated by job satisfaction, although work-life balance, sustained commitment, and task complexity are all related to perceived productivity. Human resource management, which promotes a healthy work-life balance, increases dedication over time, and controls the complexity of jobs, is crucial, according to the study's conclusions. Policies such as flexible working hours, structured training, and clear task distribution can enhance job satisfaction and perceived productivity. These findings are relevant for optimizing the performance of the tourism and creative economy sectors, supporting industry growth, and increasing their contribution to the national economy.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Continuous Commitment, Task Complexity, Competencies, Job Satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Perceived productivity is a crucial variable in human resource management and organizational behavior. This concept reflects employees' subjective evaluation of their performance effectiveness and efficiency [1]. Perceived productivity represents how employees feel productive in their work environment. In an increasingly complex and dynamic work era, a deeper understanding of the factors influencing perceived productivity is essential for organizations to optimize employee performance and well-being. Variables such as work-life balance, continuous commitment, task complexity, and employee competencies have significantly influenced perceived productivity [2]. The urgency of this research lies in the rapid changes within the workplace environment, which demand a better understanding of the factors affecting perceived productivity in a new context. As the importance of employee well-being continues to rise, it is critical to comprehend the mediating role of job satisfaction in order to develop effective interventions [3].

Businesses care about their employees' ability to manage their professional and personal lives well. Therefore, they offer flexible scheduling, supportive environments, and adequate training to achieve this goal [4]. When workers are able to strike a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives, they are more satisfied with their jobs and feel more productive overall [2]. They are always looking for new ways to satisfy their wants in the workforce. Consequently, businesses must hold on to employees who aren't just skilled but also committed to a healthy work-life balance and who see a connection between their values and those of the company.

This era is characterized by increased employee mobility as people are always looking for ways to improve their own lives. As a result, businesses must work harder to hold on to employees who are happy in their jobs and have a strong emotional connection to the company [4]. There is a substantial correlation between continuous commitment, which is defined as the determination to stay with the business even when alternative chances arise, and both job happiness and perceived productivity [2]. Continuous commitment, which reflects employee attachment based on cost-benefit considerations, also potentially influences perceived productivity [5]. A high level of



continuous commitment may affect employees' perceived productivity. Employees with strong, continuous commitment tend to focus more on efficiency and work effectiveness to maintain their organizational position.

Task complexity refers to job characteristics that reflect the difficulty and intricacy of employees' tasks. However, task complexity can be a double-edged sword; it can challenge and stimulate employee development but may also lead to stress and reduced productivity if not properly managed [2]. As a job characteristic that demands certain skills and knowledge, task complexity can affect how employees perceive their productivity [6].

On the other hand, employee competencies are vital in determining how effectively they can perform tasks and achieve productivity targets. Furthermore, employee competencies are also a key factor in determining organizational performance, productivity, and perceived productivity [7]. In today's competitive environment, organizations are highly concerned and take necessary steps to build and maintain their employees' competencies over time. Workers report higher levels of satisfaction and effectiveness when they are able to apply their knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the challenges of their job. However, competencies do not necessarily correlate directly with perceived productivity [7].

Although numerous factors have been found to substantially impact how productive people feel, the interrelationships between these factors still need to be investigated further. A state of harmony between one's professional and home lives is called work-life balance. It has a positive effect on job satisfaction and perceived productivity. Many studies have looked at the correlation between a person's level of continuous commitment and their level of job satisfaction [4] and perceived productivity [5].

Several substantial gaps necessitate additional investigation into the relationship between perceived productivity and work-life balance, ongoing commitment, task complexity, and competencies, even though these factors have been examined in prior research. Most prior studies have tended to focus on the impact of each variable individually on perceived productivity. There remains a lack of studies integrating all four variables, work-life balance, continuous commitment, task complexity, and competencies, into a comprehensive research model. This study integrates these four variables into one comprehensive model. While previous studies have used employee subjects from various industries and domestic and international contexts, this research focuses on government organizations and is conducted in Indonesia in 2024.

This study aims to address the shortcomings of previous research by analyzing the effects of work-related interventions on the relationships between work-life balance, continuous commitment, task complexity, competencies, and perceived efficiency [3]. By understanding these dynamics, organizations are expected to develop more effective strategies to enhance employees' perceived productivity, which may contribute to overall organizational performance. With an emphasis on Indonesian government agencies, this study also intends to investigate shifts in quality of life and perceived productivity.

1.1. Work-Life Balance

A healthy work-life balance includes both paid and unpaid responsibilities, including paid and unpaid work within the family or community, leisure time, and opportunities for personal growth and development. It is a state of having one's personal and professional lives well-balanced. Achieving a healthy work-life balance means being able to balance your personal and professional obligations without letting either one suffer. Having a healthy work-life balance is defined as being content in both one's professional and personal life [16]. The point is not merely to divide up the time equitably, but to ensure that both sections receive top-notch experiences. Employees should find a happy medium between their professional and personal lives so that they don't feel constantly pulled in opposite directions.

1.2. Continuous Commitment

Continuous commitment is one of the components of the three-component organizational commitment model [5]. Continuous commitment is the commitment that arises from employees' perception of their desire to continue contributing to the company, which is associated with certain factors related to a positive employment relationship between employees and the organization. Continuous commitment is employees' attachment to company procedures and protocols that allow them to access routine organizational processes, thereby accelerating the efficiency of daily tasks. This attachment fosters continuous learning through routine adaptation. It is a component of organizational commitment that reflects employees' attachment to the organization due to cost considerations or losses they would incur if they left. Continuous commitment is defined as a commitment based on employees' perceptions of the consequences or losses they would experience if they left the organization, such as the loss of benefits or job stability.

1.3. Task Complexity

Task complexity refers to the level of cognitive demand required to complete a task, including the mental processes necessary for planning, organizing, and processing information related to the task [13]. Task complexity is a task element that can affect worker performance in a workplace often filled with distractions. This complexity involves high levels of information processing and deep cognitive skills needed to complete tasks in a challenging work environment. Task complexity is defined as the level of difficulty and variety present in a task, particularly in contexts involving decision-making. Task complexity is also defined as the degree of difficulty or intricacy in production tasks that affect worker performance and production planning.

1.4. Competencies

A worker's core characteristic is to demonstrate their actual potential through the use of their competencies. Competencies are the understanding and ability of employees to utilize their capabilities and supporting tools in their jobs to enhance employee productivity [15]. Furthermore, potential refers to the ability and skills possessed by employees to effectively carry out work tasks. Competencies are individual capacities related to behavior toward job expectations within organizational parameters that result in success. Competencies are the individual's ability to perform tasks and roles effectively, efficiently, and according to organizational expectations. These competencies include technical skills, individual skills, and the ability to adapt to changes in the work environment.

1.5. Perceived Productivity

An individual's subjective assessment of their efficacy and efficiency on the job is known as perceived productivity. It is characterized as an individual's estimation of their efficacy and efficiency in carrying out job-related duties [16]. Perceived productivity is the extent to

which individuals feel productive in their jobs. Employees' perceptions of productivity while working may be influenced by their level of job satisfaction. Perceived productivity is the perception employees have regarding how well they accomplish their tasks and achieve work objectives [1].

1.6. Job Satisfaction

The term "job satisfaction" describes how happy and fulfilled workers are with their jobs. It is defined as a job characteristic that has been evaluated and clearly explains a positive feeling about a job [12]. How many people enjoy (or despise) their occupations is a measure of job satisfaction. There are two commonly used definitions related to job satisfaction. The first has to do with the satisfaction one gets from evaluating one's work, which is contingent upon appreciating the worth of one's profession; the second has to do with the degree to which one feels good or bad about one's work. Job satisfaction refers to an emotional attitude of interest, enthusiasm, and support for one's work, driven by the fulfillment of internal and external needs during job performance.

2. Research Method

This study employed a questionnaire that was adapted and validated from previous studies to measure six variables: work-life balance 5 indicators, continuous commitment 4 indicators, task complexity 4 indicators, competencies 10 indicators, job satisfaction 4 indicators, and perceived productivity 3 indicators, with a total of 30 indicators measured using a 4-point Likert scale. Employees of Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy were the subjects of the study. Purposive sampling was used to choose samples based on position, length of service (minimum of one year), and participation in the execution of work-life balance policies. The SEM-PLS standards established that a minimum of 180 responses was necessary for the sample to be considered valid. SEM-PLS was employed for data analysis with the aid of SmartPLS software to assess the measurement model's validity and reliability as well as the structural model's path coefficients, t-statistics, and R-squared values. The capacity of SEM-PLS to manage non-normal data, small sample sizes, and support for moderation and mediation analyses led to its selection. The analysis results are expected to provide in-depth insights into the relationships among variables within the context of a public organization in Indonesia.

3. Results and Discussions

In this survey, male respondents accounted for 44% of the total 231 respondents; the majority, 56%, were female. Based on age, most of the responses came from individuals over the age of 40 (50%), followed by those aged 36–40 years (27%), then the 31–35 age group (19%), respondents aged 25–30 years (4%), and there were no respondents in the youngest group (<25 years). Regarding employment status, the majority of respondents were civil servants (93%), followed by government employees under contract (PPPK) (6%), and the remaining respondents were non-civil servants (1%). Meanwhile, senior executive positions only represented 2%, functional positions accounted for 79%, administrators accounted for 3%, and staff/executors comprised 16%. Among these groups, the largest number of respondents held rank level 3 (77%), followed by rank level 4 (19%), and rank level 2 (4%). Regarding education, 8% of respondents held doctoral degrees; most respondents had a bachelor's degree (68%), a master's degree (22%), and 2% had a high school diploma or equivalent. Regarding work experience, most respondents had been employed for over 10 years (70%), followed by those with 6–10 years of service (22%), while only 8% had 1–5 years of experience. Based on these results, most respondents held a bachelor's degree and were experienced employees.

An initial sample value of 0.300, a T-statistic of 3.720, and a p-value of 0.000 show that work-life balance has a substantial positive link with job satisfaction, according to the results of the direct impact study. The relationship between continuous commitment to job satisfaction and statistically significant variables, such as an original sample (O) of 0.267, a T-statistic of $2.659 > 1.96$, and a p-value of $0.008 < 0.05$, is demonstrated by the strong connection. The weak and negative correlation between competences and work satisfaction is supported by a p-value of $0.733 > 0.05$, a T-statistic of $0.341 < 1.96$, and a value of -0.028, indicating that this impact is not significant. A positive correlation between task difficulty and job satisfaction was indicated by the original sample value of 0.296. If the p-value is less than 0.05 and the T-statistic is more than 1.96, then there is a meaningful link. There is a considerable correlation between perceived productivity and job happiness, as shown by a very significant T-statistic of 6.484 and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. There was a previous sample value of 0.386. Perceived productivity is positively correlated with work-life balance (p 0.000, T-statistic 5.041, original sample 0.299). With an initial sample size of 0.191, there is a strong correlation between continuous commitment and perceived productivity. The T-statistic is $2.298 > 1.96$, showing a significant link, and the p-value is $0.022 < 0.05$. Thus, the correlation is relevant. Employees' unwavering dedication helps to explain increased levels of perceived productivity. Competencies in relation to perceived productivity show a highly significant positive correlation with an initial sample size of 0.368. The T-statistic is $4.091 > 1.96$, and the p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$, further indicating the strength of this relationship. With a p-value of 0.000, a T-statistic of 3.707, and an original sample (O) of -0.257, the negative association between task complexity and perceived productivity is validated.

By looking at how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work-life balance and perceived productivity, we find a strong correlation ($p = 0.003$) and a significant relationship ($T = 2.988$). A value of 0.116 was the initial sample size. Using a mediating component of work satisfaction, the results show that ongoing commitment indirectly influences perceived productivity positively; the original sample value was 0.103. Both the p-value and the T-statistic are 0.014 and 2.476, respectively. Using job satisfaction as a mediator, we find a weak negative connection (-0.011) between skills and perceived productivity. This effect does not meet the criteria for statistical significance ($p = 0.730$, $T = 0.345$). A modest positive correlation (original sample value: 0.114) exists between the perceived complexity of a work and job satisfaction, which mediates the relationship between the two. This effect is statistically significant, with a T-statistic of 3.147 and a p-value of 0.002.

Based on the data analysis results, work-life balance positively affects employees' job satisfaction at the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. This finding indicates that work-life balance can reduce stress, increase comfort, and strengthen employee loyalty and motivation toward the organization. Policies such as flexible working hours, a comfortable work environment, team-building activities, and employee welfare programs have proven to support this balance. Consistent with earlier research, this study found that employees reported higher levels of job satisfaction when they had a good work-life balance [4,14]. The significance of proactive measures in fostering a harmonious work environment to increase employee satisfaction and productivity is supported by these findings.

The results of the second hypothesis test demonstrate that the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's staff are very dedicated and persistent. This is due to the fact that the majority of responders are public servants who often remain in their positions until they retire. Government regulations and logical factors such as organizational culture, career opportunities, job security, workplace comfort, and financial benefits bind them. The institution can maintain a commitment to foster a stable workplace, enhance employee welfare, and increase job satisfaction. The institution can improve job satisfaction by applying a continuous commitment approach based on these results. The results are in line with what has been found in the past, which suggests that a sense of stability and security brought about by a constant commitment can increase job satisfaction [4].

The third hypothesis test found that the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's workers are less satisfied with their jobs when tasks are too complicated. High difficulty and task complexity levels adversely affect job satisfaction by increasing job pressure, lowering self-confidence, and causing employee stress. Complex work in the public sector is often not supported by sufficient time, resources, or training, exacerbating its negative effects.

According to the findings of the fourth hypothesis test, competencies do not positively influence employee job satisfaction. This finding suggests that employee competencies are not key to job satisfaction. Employees with more than 10 years of service tend not to perceive a positive relationship because they have achieved stability in their roles. Their competencies are no longer the main driver of job satisfaction, as their responsibilities have become routine and lack challenge. Other factors, such as recognition of contributions, work-life balance, and a conducive work atmosphere, rather than competency development and skill enhancement, influence job satisfaction more. Another factor is non-career-related elements such as promotions, appreciation, and involvement in strategic projects, which influence their job satisfaction more than competencies. The results indicate that a more focused approach is needed to improve job satisfaction among long-serving employees, emphasizing recognition of their experience, job rotation, and involvement in relevant strategic projects. Such involvement and appreciation will enrich their experience and give new meaning to the competencies they already possess, thus creating greater job satisfaction. These findings align with Darmawan et al. (2018), who stated that the competency value system does not significantly affect job satisfaction, and that motivation significantly influences employee performance. However, these results contradict the findings of previous research, which stated that employees with higher competencies tend to have better job satisfaction [7].

Results from the fifth hypothesis test indicate that a healthy work-life balance positively affects how productive people feel they are. According to these findings, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's employees report higher levels of perceived productivity when they are able to strike a healthy work-life balance. Workers are able to concentrate and get a lot done because they have figured out how to combine their professional and personal lives. Researchers have shown that policies like flexible working hours, wellness support, and recognition of personal life roles can create a work environment that positively influences productivity perception. This finding is in line with other studies [3,8, 9].

The results of the sixth hypothesis test indicate that perceived productivity is positively impacted by continual commitment. Financial and social benefits motivate employees to stay employed at the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, which leads to improved perceived productivity. This finding underscores that. Employees with continuous commitment tend to be responsible for delivering optimal outcomes. This result is consistent with the other research, which states that continuous commitment positively influences perceived productivity [11].

Based on the seventh hypothesis testing results, task complexity hurts perceived productivity. This indicates that overly complex tasks reduce employees' perceptions of their productivity. High task complexity can lead to difficulties in understanding and completing work, thereby increasing work pressure and reducing efficiency in achieving targets. Employees feel that the time and energy spent completing the tasks do not result in optimal productivity. Previous investigations have confirmed that perceived productivity is negatively impacted by job complexity, which is supported by this result [6].

Competencies have a favorable effect on perceived productivity, according to the eighth hypothesis. This result indicates that highly competent employees feel more productive in completing their work. Competencies that include technical, analytical, and interpersonal skills make employees more efficient, effective, and confident in the outcomes of their work. This result is in line with the previous research, which found that competencies have a positive effect on perceived productivity [15].

The data analysis of the ninth hypothesis shows that perceived productivity is positively impacted by job satisfaction. Workers at the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy who report high levels of job satisfaction (in all its forms, including environmental factors, interpersonal relationships, recognition, and appreciation) are more likely to put out their best effort and produce the best possible results, according to this study's findings. This finding is in line with other studies that have shown that job satisfaction has a beneficial effect on perceived productivity [18, 19]. The significance of organizational methods in improving job satisfaction through open communication, development opportunities, and acknowledgment is underscored by this research.

Based on the findings of the ninth hypothesis, job satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between perceived productivity and work-life balance. What this means is that when people manage to get a good work-life balance, they are happier and more productive on the job. Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy staff members feel that their employer encourages them to have a good work-life balance, which is associated with greater job satisfaction. Such results are consistent with earlier studies that have shown job satisfaction to be a mediator between organizations' efforts to promote work-life balance and increased productivity [17,18].

Results from the eleventh hypothesis data analysis show that job satisfaction mediates the connection between perceived productivity and continued commitment. The stability and benefits provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy may encourage employees who enjoy their work to put in long hours and remain with the organization. When workers are content in their roles, they are more likely to feel a connection to the company and stay loyal to it. Employees' sense of accomplishment at work is associated with their level of contentment with their work. They are more committed to staying with the company because they feel appreciated, comfortable, and financially and emotionally stable. Employees are more fulfilled and committed to their work when they have a personal and strategic stake in the company's success. Other studies have found that job satisfaction is an important factor in maximizing the effect of continuous commitment on perceived productivity, and this study confirms that [20].

The data analysis supports the twelfth hypothesis, which states that job happiness is a mediator between perceived productivity and task complexity. Task complexity can increase work pressure, but if managed well and balanced with encouragement and recognition, it can also enhance productivity and job happiness. Difficult tasks can increase the sense of achievement and satisfaction, ultimately positively impacting perceived productivity, which is consistent with these results [6].

According to the final finding, the association between competences and perceived productivity among the employees of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy is not mediated by job happiness. This indicates that competencies directly influence perceived productivity without being mediated by job satisfaction. In other words, although employees have high competencies, this does not directly increase their job satisfaction, but still enables them to work productively. Tangible work outcomes influence perceived productivity more, whereas job satisfaction relates to psychological aspects. This may be due to the sample of employees with over ten years of service, who no longer focus on job satisfaction but instead prioritize achieving work outcomes. The rejection of this hypothesis is inconsistent with the other research, which stated that job satisfaction often serves as the primary pathway for maximizing the effect of competencies on perceived productivity [6,13].

4. Conclusion

According to this study, job satisfaction and perceived productivity are significantly impacted by two critical factors: work-life balance and continuous commitment. In contrast, complicated tasks can lower job satisfaction and perceived productivity, which is why institutions should establish more organized work environments to reduce workloads. Competencies may boost how productive people feel, but they have little bearing on how happy they are in their jobs. In addition, the study discovered that competencies, not job happiness, mediated the relationship between perceived productivity and factors including work-life balance, persistent commitment, and task complexity. These findings emphasize the importance of fostering a well-organized, balanced, supportive workplace to enhance employee performance and well-being. Developing policies that support work-life balance, strengthen employee commitment, and manage task complexity should be a top organizational priority.

This study has several limitations that should be considered to understand the scope and relevance of its findings. The first issue is that the results may not apply to other types of businesses due to the sample's exclusive focus on one particular job function. The quantitative method also doesn't provide a thorough investigation of workers' perspectives and experiences, even though it's good for finding patterns and correlations among variables. The results could be enhanced, and new insights could be revealed by a qualitative method that incorporates field observations or interviews. In addition, we can't say for sure what caused what because the study was cross-sectional and only recorded relationships between variables at one moment in time. The validity of the results could be compromised if perception-based scales were used as the instrument for data collection due to their inherent bias. Furthermore, work satisfaction is the only variable that has been considered as a mediator in this study. Also, we don't know much about other factors that could play a big role, such as intrinsic drive or the nature of the workplace. To further support the findings and offer a more comprehensive knowledge of the factors impacting job happiness and perceived productivity, future research should expand its scope, employ a mixed-methods approach, and use a longitudinal methodology.

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