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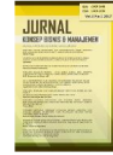
Submission date: 24-Nov-2022 12:18PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1962457613

File name: Manuscript_Vano_VAS_editing_7915.doc (322.5K)

Word count: 5973

Character count: 31448



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Quality of Work Life as a Mediator on the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction

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Submitted: xx-xx-xx; Reviewed: xx-xx-xx; Accepted: xx-xx-xx

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2
Abstract

Work-life Balance (WLB) is an important area of Human Resource Management and is currently a top priority for employees anywhere and in any organization. WLB can affect employee attitudes in a company, such as job satisfaction (JS) and also have an impact on the quality of work-life (QWL). This study aims to test and analyze the significance of the direct and indirect influence of WLB on JS through QWL as a mediator, by taking the object of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun employees. The research approach is quantitative. The primary data used in the study were obtained from a questionnaire on research variables distributed to 115 employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun as a research sample. The sampling technique is probability sampling with proportionate stratified random sampling method. Data analysis using multiple linear regression and path analysis, with the help of SPSS and Sobel Test software. The results of empirical studies show that: 1) WLB can significantly increase job satisfaction; 2) WLB can significantly improve the quality of working life; 3) QWL can significantly increase job satisfaction; 4) QWL partially mediates the effect of WLB on job satisfaction.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life; Work-Life Balance; Job Satisfaction.

How to Cite: xxxxx, Quality of Work Life as a Mediator on the Impact on Job Satisfaction. *Jurnal Konsep Bisnis dan Manajemen*.....



INTRODUCTION

In the era of the Industrial Revolution (I.R.) 4.0, competition in the business world is increasingly highly competitive. Every company management must prepare a surefire strategy to face this competition, so that the managed business can continue to develop or at least survive. One of the strategies that can be practiced is to maximize the potential of human resources (HR) in the company. HR have an important role in carrying out the company's business activities or can be regarded as determining the direction and goals of the company. To achieve a goal desired by the company, it is necessary to have superior, reliable, and capable human resources in solving the tasks given by the company.

Qualified human resources will help the company in achieving a company's goals. Every company must ensure that all its employees have high motivation and work productivity, in order to produce good performance and achieve good goals for the company. To maintain optimal employee performance, employee job satisfaction needs to be considered by the company. By achieving work satisfaction, employees will be encouraged to complete their job tasks with all their abilities. Thus, employee productivity and performance will increase optimally along with the high level of job satisfaction (JS).

The increase in JS within the company is inseparable from the level of ¹² quality of work life (QWL) felt by employees. A high level of QWL can increase JS in terms of ⁵ decision-making and employee opportunities to develop (Putra et al., 2021). QWL ⁵ can be described as the quality of the ³⁰ relationship between employees and the work environment which includes, adequate & fair compensation, rewards & recognition, safe & sound work, opportunities to use & develop the capacity of HR owned, career development opportunities, social integration in employment, WLB, participatory management (Nair & Subash, 2019). The QWL can affect the JS of an employee, since his rights when working are already fulfilled. For example, the fulfillment of the right to welfare, the right to health, and occupational safety, as well as other rights to which he is entitled as an employee. The results of previous research by Nair & Subash (2019); Putra et al. (2021); ¹⁸ shows that the QWL ³⁰ has a significant positive effect on work literature. ¹⁸ That is, the higher the level of QWL, the higher the level of JS. This indicates that the QWL is very important for the company to pay attention to in order to achieve high JS in employees.

In the midst of work from home conditions, the balance between work and life is a critical component. This is due to the absence of a boundary between working hours and the hours during which individuals carry out domestic duties within the family. If certain conditions are met, working from home will be recommended, this happens because working from home can affect satisfaction in working. The study Srimulyani & Budi Hermanto (2022) showed a significant increase in the WLB of lecturers during the work from home period. One of the shapers of the QWL is the achievement of WLB. On the other hand, WLB can also reduce JS. Empirical studies on nurses at Qutor General Hospital show that WLB positively affects the QWL and life satisfaction of nurses (Mohammed El-Demerdash, 2019). WLB is positive and significant impact on JS (Nurhasanah M et al, 2019). The results of empirical studies conducted by Makabe et al. (2015) also showed that WLB status and the impact of work-life imbalance on JS. The study of Alfatihah et al. (2021) by taking a sample of employees working in companies in Indonesia, obtained results that WLB and work motivation affect JS, and WLB can mediate the influence of work motivation on JS.

The results of the study of Efendi et al. (2022) by taking a sample of research by Non-Lecturer Education Personnel at Pertamina University Jakarta, showed that WLB had a significant impact on JS and JS mediating the influence of WLB on the performance of Non-Lecturer Education Personnel. Meanwhile, Aruldoss et al (2020) examined the relationship of QWL with WLB in the cosmopolitan city of India, showing the result that job stress was negatively related to WLB; JS is positively related to WLB; work commitments are positively related to WLB; and there is partial mediation of work stress, JS, and work commitment in the relationship between QWL and WLB.

WLB can be seen from two different sides, namely from the employee side is the choice to manage work and obligations, while from the company's side it is a challenge to realize an organizational culture that supports employees so that employees can focus while working. Therefore, to achieve satisfaction at work, employees must have the ability to manage time in order to achieve the WLB, while for companies, they must pay more attention to the balance between work life and personal life of their employees so that JS is maintained.

Empirical studies on the impact of WLB on JS were conducted on different types of organizations. Fatmawati & Irbayuni (2021) in an empirical study on employees at the

Bhakti Loyal Women's Cooperative Surabaya showed that a well-managed WLB can increase JS; Likewise, good compensation can increase JS. Sitorus et al. (2018) proved that WLB can significantly improve JS. This indicates that JS will increase if employees can achieve an increasing WLB as well.

Based on several empirical studies that have been described, this study explores ¹the role of QWL as a mediator of the influence of WLB on JS during the Covid-19 pandemic, which has not been widely studied by previous researchers. The object of the research taken was employees at one of the companies that violated public transportation, which during the pandemic was also affected by the economy, namely PT Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero) or abbreviated as PT KAI. PT KAI provides services including passenger and freight transportation. PT KAI is headquartered on Perintis Kemerdekaan No. 1 street, Bandung. PT KAI has nine Operating Areas (DAOP), one of which is the VII Madiun Operational Area or abbreviated as Daop 7 Madiun. As a company engaged in rail transportation services, Daop 7 Madiun is required to always provide good service quality for its customers. The existence of good service quality will also increase customer satisfaction and maintain customer retention. Daop 7 Madiun certainly expects JS for each employee to always provide the best service to customers. Similarly, JS can also improve employee commitment and performance. The QWL and WLB program implemented by Daop 7 Madiun as a form of the company's commitment to increasing the JS of its employees, including: the availability of a health clinic (Mediska) that operates for 24 hours to improve health to its employees, a vaccination program that is attended by hundreds of workers and subsidiaries to provide health protection during the Covid-19. From the previous description, it is known that WLB and QWL play an important role in increasing JS in an organization, as well as in employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun, so this research was carried out as an effort to measure the direct and indirect impact of the WLB on JS through QWL on employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun.

JS is an important component in the life satisfaction of every employee, this is because the level of job satisfaction that employees have will form a like and dislike attitude towards work. JS refers to pleasant or unpleasant feelings and emotions associated with employees in assessing their work (Nair & Subash, 2019). JS can be interpreted as an employee's response to how well the work done gives something that is considered important.

QWL can affect the survival of the organization, because QWL is considered to be able to increase employee engagement with the organization in assisting in achieving goals. WLB plays a role in increasing employee motivation at work and employee commitment to work (Alfatihah et al., 2021). QWL program initially emphasized the needs of female employees, then expanded to all employees (Putra et al., 2021). Herrick and Maccoby (<https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/>) there are four basic principles of QWL, namely: a) Security Principles: Working conditions must be safe and there is no fear of economic conditions, where employees do not feel anxious, and are not afraid of losing their jobs. b) The Principle of Equity, implies a fair appreciation of the efforts made by each who works. c) Principle of Individualization: recognizes that each employee is different in terms of attitude, skills, potential, etc., so that each individual should be given the opportunity to develop both from the aspect of his personality and his potential. d) Democratic Principles, implying the right to personal privacy, freedom of speech, and fair treatment. Providing opportunities for employees to participate in the decision-making process can improve QWL.

WLB is a condition that leads to low levels of stress and high levels of well-being felt by employees (Bhende et al., 2020). WLB is very important and should be applied by every individual in the world of work, this is because WLB has benefits, including: increasing productivity, preventing stress, better relationships, having time to do activities outside of work, and others. The higher the WLB a person feels, the more able one is to balance the two roles between work and personal life that must be fulfilled. WLB refers to the actions of individuals in balancing three dimensions, namely life in organizations, life in person, and social life (Sitorus et al., 2018). This means that the idea of WLB has to do with the actions of individuals in balancing three dimensions namely organizational life, personal life, and social life.

JS can be caused by WLB, since WLB includes organizational policies in terms of flexible working hours and benefits that the company provides to employees. The impact of WLB on JS refers to the two-factor theory from Herzberg, where job satisfaction is motivated by several factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can create a WLB. WLB is defined as the ability that a person has in meeting the demands of work, commitment to family, and other responsibilities outside of work. A person's ability to balance roles in work and personal life contributes positively to his work, these

include; increased JS, high organizational commitment (OC), and a low desire to leave the organization (Sitorus et al., 2018). In an empirical study Mani et al. (2020) showed that WLB can increase job satisfaction in service companies in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The higher the WLB, the higher the level of JS with employees. This is supported by the results of previous research by Sitorus et al. (2018); Fatmawati & Irbayuni (2021) which proves that WLB can significantly increase JS. Based on studies and empirical evidence in previous studies, in this study it is hoped that WLB has a significant positive impact on the JS of employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun, so that the first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H1: Achieving WLB in employees can significantly increase JS.

WLB is critical to improving employee QWL. Balance in life and work is a necessity for every employee to create a meaningful and quality life. The reason a person works is to achieve a good level of quality of life (well-being). The achievement of WLB can improve life satisfaction (LS), QWL, general welfare, and reduce work-life conflicts (El-Demerdash, 2019). An employee who feels that he has a high WLB usually tends to have a minimal level of stress, has good work motivation, and has a close relationship with fellow colleagues and superiors. This condition indicates the employee's ability to properly separate work and personal life affairs. There is a significant correlation between work-family conflict and QWL in employees studying part-time job enrichment (Talip et al., 2020). In the study Leitão et al. (2019) WLB is one of the shapers of QWL. In this study, it is hoped that it can provide evidence of the positive influence of WLB on QWL, so that the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Achieving WLB in employees can significantly increase QWL.

JS and QWL employees need to be managed properly so that employees remain passionate in contributing to the growth and effectiveness of the organization (Nair & Subash, 2019). JS is an important component that every employee should have. If the employee's level of job satisfaction is high, then the employee can do his job happily without feeling burdened by the work he does. To improve employee JS, one of the factors that need to be considered by the company is QWL. The implementation of the QWL program can affect the JS of employees in the company. This is in accordance with the two-factor theory from Herzberg, that there are two factors, namely: 1) The satisfiers factor is also called an intrinsic factor, which is a factor related to the perspective that comes from within (job content); 2) Dissatisfiers factor is also called extrinsic factor,

which is a factor related to something around the work environment (job context), which can affect a person's job satisfaction. The better the company in creating programs to improve the QWL, the higher the level of JS in employees. This is supported by the results of previous research by Beki (2018); Nair & Subash (2019); Putra et al. (2021) who proved that the QWL has a significant positive impact on JS. Based on studies and empirical evidence by previous studies, in this study it is expected that the QWL has a significant positive impact on JS, so the third hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: Achieving QWL in employees can significantly increase JS.

WLB from the employee side is a matter of choice in managing work and personal obligations or responsibilities to the family. WLB can also indirectly affect JS which is basically an individual thing, through the QWL that employees feel. QWL is a form of organizational response to employee needs through the mechanism of employee involvement in designing a good work life so as to create pleasant working conditions, support, and increase JS through rewarding, job security, and opportunities for employees to develop. The application of QWL in an enterprise is to increase JS. QWL has a positive and significant effect on the JS (Ruhana et al., 2019; Setyaningrum & Ekhsan, 2021). The better the employee QWL, the more JS will increase. JS is an absolute thing that every employee must achieve at work. To achieve JS, it is necessary for individuals to balance the demands of work and personal life, and with the level of WLB achieved by employees can encourage the high QWL. The level of QWL can impact on JS. A person who works for a supportive and family-friendly organization will be more satisfied with his work. In this study, we tried to conduct an empirical study on the indirect influence of WLB on JS through QWL as mediation, so that the fourth hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H4: QWL mediates the impact of WLB on JS.

The following research model (figure 1) used in the study, in which describing WLB and QWL is predicted to positively impact on JS; and it is also predicted that the QWL mediates the influence of WLB on JS.

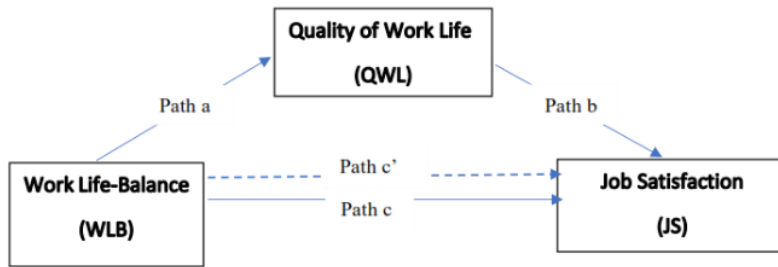


Fig.1. Research Model

The regression equation developed for path analysis (Fig. 1) is as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ll}
 \text{QWL} & = \alpha + \beta \text{ WLB} + e & \text{(path a)} \\
 \text{JS} & = \alpha + \beta \text{ WLB} + e & \text{(path c)} \\
 \text{JS} & = \alpha + \beta \text{ WLB} + \beta \text{ QWL} + e & \text{(path b and path c')}
 \end{array}$$

Description of notation:

a = raw (unstandardized) regression coefficient for the association between WLB (independent variable) and QWL (mediator).

b = raw (unstandardized) coefficient for the association between the mediator (QWL) and the dependent variable (JS); when the WLB is also a predictor of the JS).

c = raw (unstandardized) coefficient for the association from WLB to JS directly

c' = raw (unstandardized) coefficient of WLB to JS by controlling QWL

α = constant

β = raw (unstandardized) coefficient

e = errors

JS = Job satisfaction

QWL = Quality of work life

WLB = Work life balance

RESEARCH METHODS

This empirical study uses a quantitative approach with a type of causality research. This study used questionnaires as a data collection technique. The population in this study was employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun which amounted to 162 people. Determination of the number of samples using the Slovin formula, obtained the number of samples of 115 people. The sampling technique used is proportionate stratified random sampling method based on the field of work or position at PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun.

Measurements of research variables are as follows: 1) WLB measured by indicators: a) time balance; b) involvement balance; c) satisfaction balance; 2) QWL measured by indicators: a) employee participation; b) equitable compensation; c) pride; d) save environment; e) career development; f) conflict resolution; g) communication; 3) JS measured by indicators: a) psychological; b) social; c) physical; d) financial. The measurement scale of the three research variables used a 1-5point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagreeing (1) to strongly agreeing (5). Data analysis techniques include: 1) data quality tests (validity tests and reliability tests); 2) descriptive statistical; 3) classical assumption test; 4) hypothesis test (simple and multiple linear regression analysis, t test, and Sobel test). Data analysis techniques were performed using the SPSS version 22 program and the Sobel test online.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The validity test results on 12 WLB measurement items were declared valid, for the validity test results of 18 items of QWL statements there were 2 invalid statement items, so that the measurement of QWL used 16 valid statement items from 14 items of JS statements there were 2 invalid statement items, so that the measurement of JS used 12 items of statements that were declared valid. Reliability tests were carried out by comparing the values of Cronbach's Alpha (α). Variables are declared reliable if (α) > 0.60. Table 1 shows that the statement items for the variables WLB, QWL, and JS are stated to be reliable.

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Variables	Alpha Count	Critical alpha	Result
WLB	0.818	0.60	Reliable
QWL	0.665	0.60	Reliable
JS	0.641	0.60	Reliable

Source: author's calculation results (2022)

To describe the high and low average of respondents' answers, a measuring scale range of 0.8 was made, which was obtained from the following calculation= $(5-1/5=5/4=0.8)$. The average respondents' responses to the variables WLB, QWL, and JS are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Mean Value of Research Variables

Variables	Mean	Criterion
WLB	4.09	H
QWL	3.96	H
JS	3.90	H

Source: author's calculation results (2022)

Description of notation: H = high; VH= very high

Based on Table 2 shows that the WLB variable is measured from three aspects or indicators: time balance, engagement balance, and satisfaction balance; getting an average score of 4.09 (high). Table 2 shows that the variables of QWL are measured from nine aspects or indicators: employee engagement, balanced compensation, a sense of pride in the organization (workplace company), a sense of security towards work, safety of the work environment, well-being, career development, problem solving, and communication; got an average score of 3.96 (high). In Table 2 it can be seen that the variables of JS are measured from four aspects or indicators: psychological, social, physical, and financial; getting an average score of 3.90 (high).

The results of hypothesis testing are shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Linier Regression Analysis Summary

Path	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t count	P-value	Result
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 Constant	2.318	.344		6.747	.000	
WLB→ JS (path c)	.388	.084	.474	4.637	.000	Significant H1 accepted
2 Constant	2.434	.302		8.058	.000	
WLB→ QWL (path a)	.357	.074	.491	4.853	.000	Significant H2 accepted
3 Constant	1.604	.458		3.504	.001	
QWL→ JS (path b)	.283	.094	.347	3.032	.003	Significant H3 accepted
WLB→ JS (path c')	.293	.129	.260	2.279	.026	Significant

Source: author's calculation results (2022)

The test results shown in Table 3 show that H1, H2, and H3 are accepted. Testing the role of QWL as a mediator of the impact of WLB on JS as well, using the Sobel test. The results of testing with Sobel test are shown in the following table 4:

Table 4. Sobel Test Results

Path	t test	Std. Error	p-value	Result
WLB→QWL→JS	3.336	0.041	0.000	Significant H4 accepted

Source: author's calculation results (2022)

Results of the mediating test with the Sobel test (Table 4) the results were obtained that H4 was accepted. The role of mediation of the QWL in employees of PT KAI (Pesero) Daop 7 Madiun is partial mediation, this is shown in the impact of WLB on JS before and after controlling the QWL, remains significant.

Discussion

The results of the H1 test, ³¹ showed that the effect of WLB on job satisfaction was positive and significant. This indicates that the higher the WLB felt by employees will be able to improve the QWL of employees. These empirical ³⁶ results are in line with the results of previous studies, such as Fatmawati & Irbayuni (2021) which proves the positive and significant impact of WLB on JS. Based on the overall average value, WLB gets a relatively high average value of 4.09. Likewise, the average value of JS has an average value of 3.90 (high category). This indicates that the policies implemented by PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun in striving for employees to feel that the WLB is good, so that employees feel a high WLB, so that it has a dominant impact on increasing JS of employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun. ³²

H2 testing proves that WLB can have ³² a positive and significant impact on the QWL in employees. This indicates that the higher the WLB felt by employees, the higher the QWL felt by employees. In principle, the QWL is the existence of a balance between work and non-employment of the employees. The company's efforts in increasing employee involvement can be in the form of providing opportunities to engage in the decision-making process both in regular meetings and in virtual forums. ²² The results of this study developed the study of Talip et al. (2020) which showed the existence of a significant correlation between the WLB in QWL of employees who study part-time. ¹⁷

¹⁷ The results of the H3 test showed that the QWL has a significant influence on JS. That is, the increase in QWL, will improve JS significantly. ³⁴ These findings are consistent with the findings of several previous studies, such as Bektı (2018); Nair & Subash (2019); Putra et al. (2021) who showed that improving the QWL can increase JS. Based on the overall average value, the QWL got a relatively high average score of 3.96. This indicates that the QWL felt by employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun is in the high category, so that employees feel high JS as well.

H4 testing shows that the QWL plays a partial mediating role in the impact of WLB on JS. This means that the level of WLB that employees have can impact the QWL which can further impact JS, but the WLB felt by employees can also affect employee JS directly. The company's goal of offering family-friendly benefits programs that employees need, through flextime, job sharing and others is as an effort by company management to create a WLB for employees. In this study, it was shown that WLB impact positively significantly the QWL of employees. This shows that companies can implement various WLB initiatives that ³³ can help employees to better balance their work and family responsibilities, get improved welfare and provide organizational benefits such as through the implementation of flexible working hours, telecommuting or job-sharing.

The QWL is seen as a set of employee perceptions regarding a sense of security at work, job satisfaction, as well as conditions for development aimed at improving employee dignity. The basic concept of the QWL is to show ³⁵ the importance of respect for human resources in their environment which is important for the QWL as an effort by management to create a work climate so that the organization technically and humanely leads to a better QWL of employees. WLB was found to partially mediate the influence of QWL on JS (Table 4). In other conditions, JS can be formed directly due to the high WLB of employees (Table 3). This indicates that individuals who are able to manage their careers and personal lives well, will feel more comfortable at work, so that in some individuals can increase JS; however, in some other individuals it is shown that the impact of WLB on JS through the QWL. This makes them more comfortable at work which will ultimately encourage JS. JS is an assessment of the difference between what an employee expects from his job and what the organization gives him back. Job satisfaction is an illustration of how happy employees are with certain components of the work, supervisor, and work environment as a whole.

Referring to Hudson (2005) there are three aspects of WLB, namely time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. Time balance; refers to the equality between the time a person gives for his career and the time given to family or aspects of life other than career, for example an employee in addition to work also needs time for recreation, gathering with friends also provides time for family. Involvement balance; refers to the balance of the psychological involvement of the individual in meeting the demands of roles in work and family, which involves the individual in himself such as the level of stress and involvement of the individual in work and in his personal life.

Satisfaction balance is the level of satisfaction at work and outside of work such as employees having comfort in involvement in their work and in the personal life of employees. These three aspects of WLB are individual, each employee has a different ability to achieve WLB, and based on the results of research on employees of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun, the level of WLB achieved by some employees can directly increase employee job satisfaction as a whole, but in some employees it can indirectly increase JS felt through QWL which is felt.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions obtained from the results of the study are as follows: 1) An increase in WLB can have an impact on increasing JS significantly, meaning that if the WLB felt by employees increases, the more JS felt by employees increases.; 2) The increase in WLB can have an impact on significantly improving the QWL, meaning that if the WLB felt by employees increases, the QWL felt by employees will also increase; 3) Improving the QWL can have an impact on significantly increasing JS, meaning that if the QWL of employees in an organization increases, the more JS felt by employees increases; 4) The QWL acts as a partial mediator of the impact of WLB on JS. This result implies that the company's efforts in realizing WLB need to be strengthened by a QWL program for employees in order to be able to maximize employee job satisfaction. This research emphasizes the importance of WLB aspects and the QWL as determinants of JS, especially for transportation service managers, such as PT KAI (Persero). This research can be an illustration related to aspects of WLB and what QWL needs to be fulfilled and improved for the management of PT KAI (Persero).

There are new findings that can be used as a reference in the development of subsequent research, where in previous studies it is still rarely carried out, namely the impact of WLB on QWL and the role of QWL partial mediation on the influence of WLB on JS. For example, 1) further research could explore the role of work culture as a mediation of the influence of WLB on employee well-being at work (Stankevičienė et al., 2021); 2) Further research can explore the role of QWL in mediating WLB compliance in work engagement (Rebecca et al., 2020). Further research can examine the impact of WLB and job satisfaction on employee performance (Abdirahman et al., 2018); (Thakur & Sharma, 2019); or assessing the impact of QWL on organizational excellence (Dayana &

Nadarajan, 2019), organizational commitment (Risla & Ithress, 2018), and organizational performance (Al-Shawabkeh & Hijjawi, 2018). As a suggestion for further research, it is hoped that it can conduct research using PT KAI (Persero) employees in other operational areas, as a sample that allows researchers to get a larger number, considering that this study only uses a sample of PT KAI (Persero) Daop 7 Madiun employees, so that the research results can be more generalized to PT KAI (Persero).

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