

**THE EFFECT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON PERFORMANCE
THROUGH THE MEDIATING ROLES OF JOB SATISFACTION AND
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AMONG PAID VOLUNTEERS**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of Work-Life Balance on the performance of paid volunteers, with Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement serving as mediating variables. Using structural equation modeling, the analysis confirms that Work-Life Balance significantly enhances performance both directly and indirectly. Involvement Balance was identified as the strongest contributor to the Work-Life Balance construct, indicating the importance of proportional engagement between volunteering roles and personal responsibilities. Job Satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship, with Satisfaction with the Job noted as the most influential indicator. Employee Engagement also acted as a significant mediator, where Dedication showed the strongest loading and Absorption represented the most prominent experiential dimension. These findings highlight the role of balance, emotional attachment, and satisfaction in shaping volunteer performance. The study provides empirical evidence relevant to the management of paid volunteers in event-based organizational settings and emphasizes the need for supportive practices that maintain Work-Life Balance to optimize performance.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, Performance, Paid Volunteer

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the global labor market has shifted from conventional employment structures toward flexible arrangements commonly identified as the gig economy. This system is characterized by short-term, task-based engagements without permanent employment relationships (Ramadani et al., 2024; Tan et al., 2021). The expansion of the gig economy has been observed not only in advanced economies but also in developing contexts, including Indonesia, where digital-based informal workers increasingly participate in sectors such as transportation, delivery services, and event organizing. This transformation has generated competitive pressure on formal workers as flexible labor offers speed, technological adaptability, and cost efficiency without being embedded in traditional employment systems.

The accelerated growth of the gig economy has also led to the emergence of new forms of labor participation, including paid volunteering. Paid volunteers participate in event-related activities while receiving compensation in the form of allowances, accommodation, or non-monetary incentives. This model reflects a convergence between economic motives and altruistic intentions, shaped not only by social responsibility but also by factors such as self-

development, task flexibility, and the need to maintain work–life balance (Gruber & Deschênes, 2024; Mousa et al., 2020). In Indonesia, this phenomenon is prominent in community-based event organizations, concerts, and public gatherings that recruit paid volunteers without conferring formal employment status.

The increasing preference for flexible work among younger cohorts is driven by limited job opportunities relative to labor supply. Paid volunteers accept non-permanent roles in exchange for compensation and experience. However, this flexibility introduces managerial challenges such as the absence of formal evaluation systems, unclear career progression, and weak organizational attachment. Ambiguity in role expectations reduces satisfaction and commitment, which may subsequently decrease individual performance (Bang et al., 2023; Sinclair et al., 2023). As a result, paid volunteers represent a hybrid workforce positioned between professional expectations and informal participation norms.

Internal data from *hai.volunteer* (2025) indicate that the platform engaged 86,600 active paid volunteers and facilitated 72 events in the first half of 2025 alone. This number is expected to increase beyond the 150 events conducted in 2024 due to the typical escalation of event activities in the latter half of the year. The rapid increase in participation highlights the need to analyze determinants of sustained involvement and performance effectiveness among paid volunteers, particularly since compensation structures do not follow formal employment standards yet still require clear expectations and accountability.

Despite high participation rates, performance-related issues remain evident. Internal reports document considerable occurrences of unannounced absence, late attendance, difficulties in handling time-sensitive tasks, and inconsistent adherence to assigned functions. Coordinative inefficiencies were also frequently identified, indicating that performance challenges extend beyond individual factors and relate to structural and role-based issues within volunteer management systems. These indicators imply the importance of integrating both individual and organizational variables when examining performance antecedents.

Three constructs consistently identified as predictors of performance among nontraditional workers are work–life balance (WLB), job satisfaction, and employee engagement (Subarto & Solihin, 2025; Sutanto et al., 2024; Azka et al., 2025). WLB affects how individuals allocate time and energy across work and personal domains, especially since many paid volunteers simultaneously manage academic or part-time commitments (Lukman et al., 2023). Job satisfaction is determined by factors beyond compensation, including clarity of roles, interpersonal relations, and perceived organizational support (Bang et al., 2023). Recent evidence shows that high job satisfaction strengthens loyalty, increases commitment, improves contribution quality, and reduces stress and counterproductive behavior among paid volunteers (Marpurdianto et al., 2025). Employee engagement reflects psychological involvement characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Saks & Gruman, 2023; Schaufeli, 2021), and employees with high engagement typically demonstrate strong enthusiasm, high loyalty, and deep organizational pride (Rahmawati et al., 2025).

Preliminary indications from *hai.volunteer* suggest that although many paid volunteers report satisfaction with their roles, their performance remains inconsistent. Engagement levels also appear limited, with reduced enthusiasm observed when task demands exceed expectations or

when schedules interfere with personal obligations. These patterns indicate that satisfaction alone may be insufficient to support performance, highlighting engagement as a relevant mediating mechanism. Social Exchange Theory provides a theoretical basis for explaining how work–life balance, job satisfaction, and employee engagement interact to influence performance, particularly within labor arrangements shaped by reciprocal expectations between individuals and organizations (Rochim et al., 2025).

Prior literature reports mixed findings concerning the direct effect of WLB on performance. While several studies affirm a positive association within formal employment contexts, others demonstrate insignificant or context-dependent outcomes (Kolo et al., 2024; Sutanto et al., 2025). These inconsistencies underscore the possibility that WLB exhibits distinct dynamics in temporary and rotational labor structures, such as paid volunteering. Furthermore, previous studies rarely incorporate performance indicators relevant to event-based volunteer work, including punctuality, task compliance, crisis response, and coordination. This gap limits empirical understanding of how WLB, satisfaction, and engagement collectively shape operational outcomes in volunteer-based gig environments.

Given the expansion of paid volunteering and the lack of structured performance systems (Muñoz-Llerena et al., 2025), evaluating these relationships is essential. Hai.volunteer represents a pertinent context where high activity levels coincide with persistent performance challenges. Without empirical investigation into how WLB, satisfaction, and engagement influence performance, event organizers risk experiencing recurring operational disruptions such as no-shows, late arrivals, and coordination deficiencies. Therefore, this study aims to examine the mediating role of job satisfaction and employee engagement in the relationship between WLB and performance among paid volunteers in event-based gig work settings.

2.0 METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative design based on the assumption that the investigated phenomena are observable, measurable, and structured within causal relationships. A deductive approach was applied, where theoretical propositions guided the development of hypotheses, followed by empirical verification using field data (Sugiyono, 2020). The aim of the research is to examine the causal effects of work–life balance on paid volunteer performance, with job satisfaction and employee engagement operating as mediating variables. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to active paid volunteers in the hai.volunteer community and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

Operational definitions were established for all variables to ensure clarity and measurement consistency. Work–life balance was conceptualized as the individual’s ability to allocate time, psychological involvement, and satisfaction across work and personal domains (Marques & Berry, 2021). Indicators for work–life balance, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and performance followed Subarto and Solihin (2025). Job satisfaction was defined as a positive evaluation of one’s roles and experiences (Chi et al., 2023), while employee engagement captured the individual’s level of vigor, dedication, and absorption. Paid volunteer performance reflected task accomplishment relative to expected standards.

All constructs were measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The research was conducted within the hai.volunteer community, a digital platform operating primarily through Instagram that coordinates paid volunteers for various social, cultural, educational, and entertainment events across Java. Data collection took place from June to September 2025.

The population consisted of all active paid volunteers in 2025. Because the population size fluctuates with event schedules, sampling was required. The study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is appropriate for complex latent-variable models and relatively small sample sizes. Sample size followed the guideline of Hair et al. (2022), requiring five to ten observations per indicator. With 15 indicators in the study, the minimum required sample was 150 respondents. Convenience sampling was used due to the dynamic nature of the volunteer population and the accessibility of respondents (Uma Sekaran, 2020).

3.0 RESULTS

A total of 150 paid volunteers from the hai.volunteer community participated in this study through an online questionnaire. Most respondents were aged 21–25 years (68%), reflecting the dominance of young adults typically engaged in digital-based volunteer activities. Regarding education, the majority held a Bachelor’s degree (70%), indicating that the community is largely composed of highly educated young volunteers.

In terms of marital status, 88% of respondents were unmarried, consistent with the demographic patterns of youth volunteerism that tend to involve individuals with greater time flexibility. Gender distribution showed that 72% of participants were female, suggesting higher female engagement in digital paid volunteering activities.

3.1 Measurement Model Evaluation

All indicators demonstrated factor loadings above 0.70, indicating satisfactory convergent validity for Work-Life Balance, Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Performance. This confirms that each indicator consistently represents its respective latent variable. Cross-loading results also show that each indicator loads higher on its intended construct than on others, supporting discriminant validity.

Table 1. Outer Loading and Cross Loading

	Employee Engagement	Performance	Job Satisfaction	Work-Life Balance
EE1	0.776	0.571	0.471	0.349
EE2	0.814	0.549	0.595	0.538
EE3	0.865	0.598	0.501	0.510
P1	0.612	0.778	0.529	0.482
P2	0.514	0.818	0.594	0.536
P3	0.537	0.739	0.404	0.406

P4	0.555	0.840	0.573	0.525
JS1	0.501	0.587	0.814	0.682
JS2	0.443	0.531	0.809	0.706
JS3	0.335	0.304	0.794	0.352
JS4	0.401	0.344	0.795	0.341
JS5	0.603	0.528	0.829	0.460
WLB1	0.358	0.398	0.483	0.736
WLB2	0.554	0.531	0.646	0.885
WLB3	0.490	0.573	0.683	0.850

The AVE values for all constructs exceeded the 0.50 threshold (WLB = 0.683; JS = 0.511; EE = 0.671; Performance = 0.632), indicating adequate convergent validity. Composite reliability values ranged between 0.837 and 0.872, meeting the requirement for internal consistency.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability

	AVE	Composite Reliability
Performance (Y)	0.632	0.872
Employee Engagement (Z2)	0.671	0.859
Job Satisfaction (Z1)	0.511	0.837
Work-Life Balance (X)	0.683	0.865

3.2 Structural Model Evaluation

The R-Square results indicate that Work-Life Balance explains 33% of Employee Engagement, while Work-Life Balance and Employee Engagement jointly explain 62.2% of Job Satisfaction. Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction together explain 57.8% of Performance, indicating a moderate explanatory power.

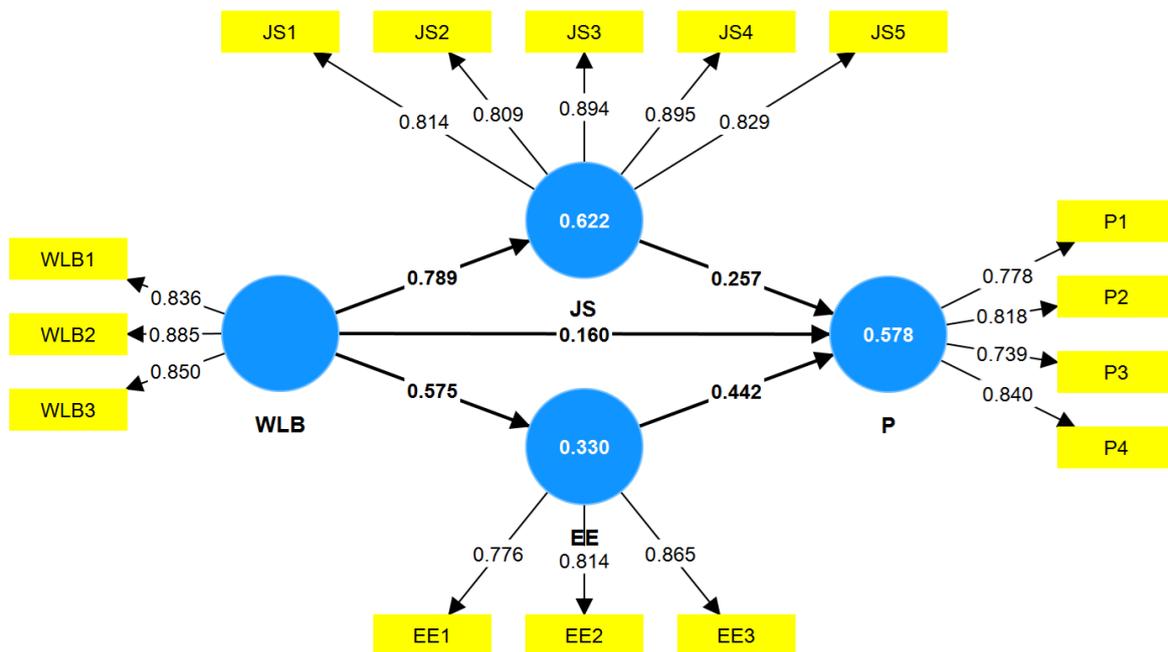


Figure 1. Outer Model

The Q-Square values demonstrate predictive relevance for Employee Engagement (0.225), Job Satisfaction (0.273), and Performance (0.377). Work-Life Balance shows Q-Square = 0.000, as expected for an exogenous variable.

Table 3. R Square and Q Square

	<i>R-square</i>	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Employee Engagement	0.330	67.396	52.226	0.225
Performance	0.578	84.479	52.648	0.377
Job Satisfaction	0.622	103.940	75.607	0.273
Work-Life Balance	–	68.470	68.470	0.000

3.3 Hypothesis Testing

Path coefficient analysis confirms that all three hypotheses are supported.

Work-Life Balance has a positive and significant direct effect on Performance ($\beta = 0.160$; $t = 2.898$; $p < 0.001$), although the coefficient magnitude indicates a modest influence.

Work-Life Balance also exerts an indirect effect on Performance through Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.202$; $t = 2.677$; $p = 0.007$). This indicates that maintaining a balanced schedule enhances volunteers’ perceived satisfaction, which subsequently improves performance.

Similarly, the indirect effect through Employee Engagement is significant ($\beta = 0.254$; $t = 4.438$; $p < 0.001$), showing that volunteers with balanced personal–work demands tend to exhibit higher engagement, which contributes to better performance outcomes.

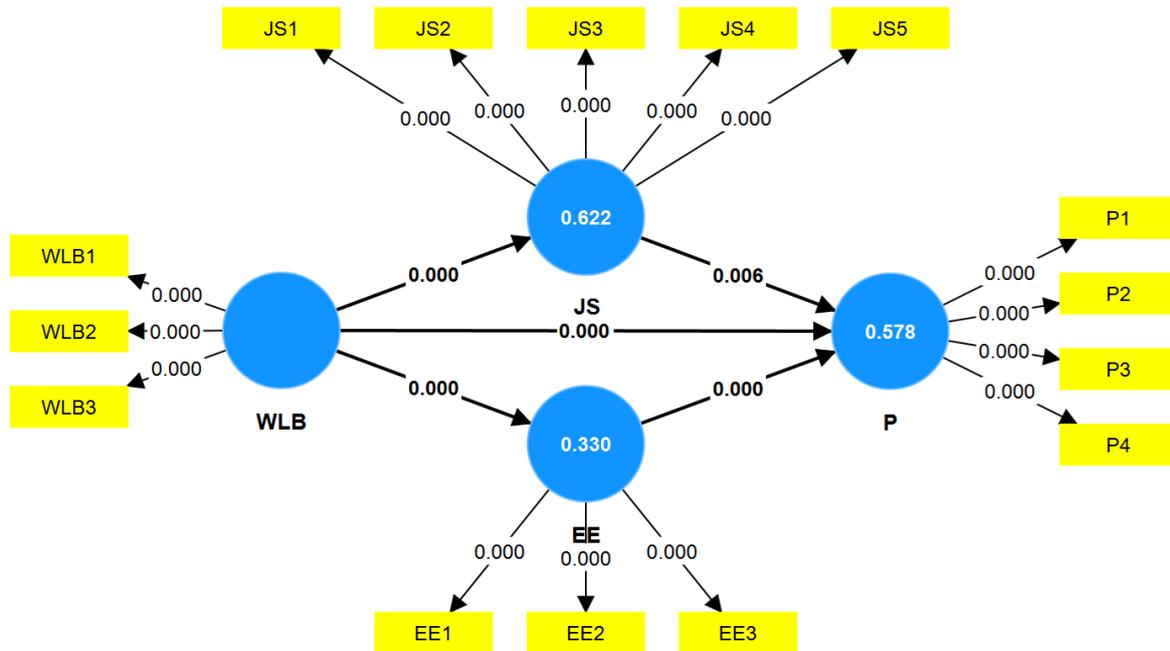


Figure 2. Inner Model

Overall, the structural model confirms that Work-Life Balance, Employee Engagement, and Job Satisfaction significantly contribute to Performance. However, the magnitude of influence is shaped by the event-based nature of paid volunteering, variations in working environments, and limited formal recognition, as indicated in prior studies (Hustinx et al., 2020; Ramos & Clary, 2021; Bidee et al., 2023). These contextual characteristics moderate the stability of engagement and satisfaction among paid volunteers.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	T-statistics (O/STDEV)	P-values	Decision
H1: <i>Work-Life Balance -> Performance</i>	0.160	2.898	0.000	Accept
H2: <i>Work-Life Balance -> Job Satisfaction -> Performance</i>	0.202	2.677	0.007	Accept
H3: <i>Work-Life Balance -> Employee Engagement -> Performance</i>	0.254	4.438	0.000	Accept

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 The Influence of Work-Life Balance on the Performance of Paid Volunteers

Based on the results obtained, Work-Life Balance was found to have a positive and significant effect on the performance of paid volunteers. This indicates that the more balanced the relationship between personal life and paid volunteering activities, the higher the level of performance displayed. These findings imply that paid volunteers who are able to maintain balance between their social responsibilities and personal lives tend to demonstrate better capability in carrying out tasks, sustaining commitment, and providing optimal contributions throughout the event.

Based on the outer loading results, the indicator with the highest contribution to the WLB construct was Involvement Balance, which reflects the psychological commitment of paid volunteers to both their role in the event and their personal lives (Subarto & Solihin, 2025). Meanwhile, the indicator with the highest mean was Satisfaction Balance, which reflects the perceived comfort and satisfaction of paid volunteers regarding their balance between volunteering and personal activities (Subarto & Solihin, 2025).

The difference between the outer loading and mean values indicates that theoretically, the ability of paid volunteers to maintain balance in their involvement (Involvement Balance) is the strongest aspect representing Work-Life Balance because it is directly related to psychological commitment and their ability to manage boundaries between social and personal responsibilities. However, empirically, Satisfaction Balance becomes the most strongly experienced aspect, indicating how satisfied volunteers feel with the distribution of their time and energy between personal life and volunteering activities. Thus, Work-Life Balance among paid volunteers is shaped not only by their ability to maintain proportional involvement but also by the sense of satisfaction and comfort with the balance they achieve (Hair et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021; Henseler et al., 2020).

For paid volunteers, flexibility in choosing event schedules becomes a major factor that helps maintain balance between their roles and personal lives. Paid volunteers have the freedom to decide which events to join, aligning with available time, academic schedules, or family commitments. Furthermore, they may choose activities that match their interests or hobbies, making participation more personally meaningful. This condition enables them to contribute without sacrificing rest time or other personal responsibilities. Such flexibility fosters a sense of autonomy and control over involvement, ultimately strengthening commitment and enthusiasm in carrying out tasks. When time balance is well managed, paid volunteers attend events physically and mentally prepared, more focused, and able to demonstrate optimal performance.

These findings are in line with the study by Park and Lee (2022), which argues that balance between individual involvement in work and personal life directly contributes to improved performance, particularly in project-based work such as paid volunteering. Zhang et al. (2021) also found that healthy work-life balance enhances individuals' sense of responsibility and attachment to their social roles, influencing emotional energy and cognitive focus during task execution. Similarly, Deery and Jago (2020) emphasized that in organizations with temporary

workers, the ability to maintain work-life balance becomes an essential indicator of performance sustainability. Rahman et al. (2023) further noted that work-life balance functions as a motivational factor that fosters intrinsic satisfaction, ultimately reinforcing individual performance in social activities.

This phenomenon reflects the reciprocal relationship between paid volunteers and organizations within the framework of social exchange theory. Individuals contribute their time and energy with the expectation of receiving social or psychological rewards from the organization, such as support, appreciation, or flexibility. When organizations provide policies that enable volunteers to maintain work-life balance, volunteers perceive this relationship as fair and mutually beneficial. As a reciprocal response, they demonstrate higher commitment, involvement, and performance (Kim & Beehr, 2022).

This principle explains why paid volunteers who feel supported in maintaining work-life balance tend to develop emotional attachment to the organization, even though their relationship is temporary or event-based. Support such as flexible scheduling, an inclusive work environment, and non-financial recognition fosters feelings of appreciation and psychological fairness (perceived organizational support), which in turn enhances engagement and performance (Kumar et al., 2023). Thus, Work-Life Balance is not merely a contextual factor but an organizational investment in productive and sustainable social relationships with volunteers.

Work-Life Balance becomes essential because volunteers participate not only for financial gain but also for self-development and social networking. When volunteering activities do not disrupt personal aspects such as studies, main employment, or social life, volunteers are more focused, responsible, and able to show high performance. Conversely, imbalance may lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, or even turnover intention. From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, imbalance indicates disruption in fair social exchange relationships, wherein volunteers feel that their contributions are not matched by organizational support (Rahman et al., 2023). Therefore, maintaining balance is not merely a managerial strategy but also a social mechanism that strengthens reciprocal relationships between organizations and paid volunteers.

4.2 The Influence of Work-Life Balance on Performance Through Job Satisfaction

The analysis showed that Work-Life Balance (WLB) significantly affects Job Satisfaction (JS), and Job Satisfaction significantly affects the performance of paid volunteers (K). These findings confirm that Job Satisfaction functions as an important mediating variable in the relationship between Work-Life Balance and performance. Furthermore, the indirect effect of Work-Life Balance on performance through Job Satisfaction was stronger than its direct effect, indicating that the positive impact of Work-Life Balance is enhanced when volunteers feel satisfied with their roles. Thus, Job Satisfaction acts as a psychological mechanism that channels the positive influence of WLB into improved performance.

These findings indicate that when a paid volunteer can maintain balance between volunteering activities and personal life, they will feel more satisfied with their role. One of the indicators with the highest contribution to the Work-Life Balance construct was Involvement Balance,

indicating that volunteers whose personal lives are not disrupted by volunteering activities tend to have higher job satisfaction.

In this variable, both factor loading and mean showed that the indicator with the highest values was Job Satisfaction itself. The similarity in results suggests that this aspect is not only the strongest dimension theoretically but also the most strongly experienced by paid volunteers. High outer loading values emphasize the theoretical contribution of job satisfaction to the overall construct, while high mean values confirm that volunteers genuinely experience this satisfaction. These results reinforce the view that job satisfaction arises from alignment between individual expectations and actual experiences, resulting in meaningfulness and emotional attachment to the organization (Lee et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2021).

The indicator with the highest loading for Job Satisfaction was Satisfaction with the Job, demonstrating that satisfaction is achieved when volunteer tasks align with their interests and skills (Subarto & Solihin, 2025). This aligns with Putra and Nugraha (2022), who emphasized that alignment between workload and individual potential creates comfort, satisfaction, and motivation to contribute optimally. For paid volunteers, job satisfaction is determined not only by financial compensation but also by value alignment, social purpose, and opportunities for self-development (Sari & Indrawati, 2023).

The findings show that Work-Life Balance influences performance through Job Satisfaction. Volunteers with balanced involvement feel more satisfied with their roles. Flexibility in choosing schedules and event types allows volunteers to align participation with personal responsibilities. When balance is achieved, volunteers feel satisfied because their volunteering activities do not create excessive pressure.

This satisfaction strengthens when volunteer roles match their interests and competencies. Volunteers with communication skills choose publication roles, while those with technical abilities choose logistics or operational roles. Proper placement creates a sense of value and intrinsic satisfaction. Work-Life Balance becomes the emotional foundation, while Job Satisfaction acts as the psychological bridge through which performance increases.

This reciprocal dynamic aligns with Social Exchange Theory. Organizational support, such as flexible scheduling, proper task assignment, and supportive work environments, generates satisfaction and emotional attachment. As reciprocal behavior, volunteers demonstrate higher commitment, dedication, and optimal performance (Kumar et al., 2023).

Satisfaction reflects reciprocity, where individuals respond to positive treatment from the organization. The greater the perceived fairness and organizational support, the higher the psychological satisfaction (Kumar et al., 2023). Job Satisfaction thus serves as an affective mechanism channeling the impact of Work-Life Balance into performance. Volunteers who feel appreciated and not burdened by rigid schedules perceive the organizational relationship as fair and meaningful, manifesting in extra-role behavior (Nguyen et al., 2023).

Volunteers often face high workload and time pressure, especially in large-scale events like the Jakarta Marathon or Asian Games. When balance is maintained, stress is better managed and performance improves (Rahman & Hidayat, 2021). This strengthens the mediation mechanism

wherein balance supports psychological satisfaction, which in turn enhances dedication and responsibility (Lee & Chen, 2022).

These findings align with Nguyen et al. (2023), who found that job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between work-life balance and performance. In line with the Social Exchange Theory perspective, balanced life conditions strengthen perceptions of organizational fairness, resulting in enhanced commitment and optimal performance.

4.3 The Influence of Work-Life Balance on Performance Through Employee Engagement

Path analysis showed that Work-Life Balance significantly affects Employee Engagement (EE), indicating a strong relationship between these variables. Employee Engagement also significantly affects performance, confirming its role as a mediator. Thus, the more balanced a paid volunteer's personal life and social activities, the higher their emotional and psychological engagement, which in turn enhances their performance.

The indicator with the highest factor loading for Employee Engagement was Dedication, while the indicator with the highest mean was Absorption. This difference indicates that Dedication contributes the most theoretically to the construct, while Absorption is more strongly experienced by volunteers. High outer loading values suggest that Dedication represents emotional involvement, whereas high mean values on Absorption illustrate the psychological state of immersion and enjoyment (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018; Hair et al., 2021).

The Dedication indicator reflects full concentration until time feels as though it passes quickly (Subarto & Solihin, 2025). For paid volunteers, this dedication often arises when they have autonomy in selecting events aligned with their interests. High mean values in Absorption show that volunteers enjoy their work, take pride in their contributions, and view the experience as personally meaningful (Schaufeli, 2021; Sari & Indrawati, 2023).

These conditions reflect how Work-Life Balance shapes high engagement. Volunteers with scheduling flexibility can align activities with personal demands, minimizing role conflicts. Balanced volunteers arrive physically and mentally prepared, develop emotional attachment to their tasks, and demonstrate a sense of belonging to the organizing entity.

These results align with Hapsari and Sutanto (2022), who found that work-life balance enhances engagement by allowing individuals to maintain harmony between personal life and professional responsibilities. Kumar et al. (2023) further demonstrated that work-life balance significantly increases engagement, which subsequently enhances performance. Rahman and Hidayat (2021) similarly found that balanced volunteers show stronger emotional attachment and higher commitment.

Engagement can be understood as psychological reciprocity between volunteers and organizations. When volunteers perceive flexibility and support, they reciprocate through higher dedication and responsibility. This mutually beneficial relationship fosters emotional attachment and strengthens loyalty. Work-life balance thus becomes the foundation for emotional and moral engagement, driving optimal performance and sustainable contribution (Zhao & Wang, 2022).

5.0 CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate that Work-Life Balance exerts a significant positive effect on volunteer performance, both directly and indirectly through Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement as partial mediators. Involvement Balance was identified as the most dominant dimension, indicating that volunteers who can manage their roles and responsibilities more effectively tend to experience higher levels of satisfaction—particularly through Satisfaction with the Job—as well as stronger psychological attachment reflected in Dedication as the leading component of engagement. These strengthened attitudinal states subsequently enhance overall performance in delivering paid volunteering tasks. The findings highlight that digital volunteer communities such as *hai.volunteer* require organizational practices that promote balanced role management, task clarity, and emotional support to sustain satisfaction, engagement, and optimal performance among predominantly young, highly educated volunteers active in flexible, media-based social work environments.

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