

The Influence of Emotional Labor on Employee Performance through Work-Life Balance as an Intervening Variable at PT Bank Mandiri, Pamekasan Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of emotional labor on employee performance through work-life balance as an intervening variable at PT Bank Mandiri Pamekasan Regency. This study contributes by clarifying the mediating role of work-life balance in the context of banking services. A quantitative approach was used with a saturated sampling technique involving 54 front-line employees. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The results showed that emotional labor had a positive and significant effect on employee performance and work-life balance, while work-life balance also had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. In addition, work-life balance mediated the relationship between emotional labor and employee performance, which implies the importance of emotional management and work-life balance in improving sustainable employee performance.

INTRODUCTION

The banking sector plays a strategic role as one of the main drivers of the Indonesian economy. Through its intermediary function, banks collect funds from the public in the form of savings, checking, and time deposits, then distribute these funds to productive sectors in the form of loans. This function makes banks a key driver in maintaining financial stability while driving national economic growth. To optimally fulfill this role, quality human resources are crucial, as they are a key pillar in maintaining the productivity, stability, and sustainability of the banking sector.

In the banking sector, human resources require not only technical skills but also interpersonal skills to build relationships with customers. Employees, especially those who interact directly with customers, such as customer service, tellers, and sales staff, represent the company's image, reflecting the quality of its services. Therefore, effective human resource management is a crucial factor in ensuring service quality. The success of human resource management is reflected in employee performance. According to Nurdin et al. (2023), performance is the extent to which work results are achieved, measured based on an employee's competencies and responsibilities. Meanwhile, Mathis & Jackson (2010) emphasize that performance is the result of an individual's work that reflects their contribution to organizational goals.

Employee performance is a crucial indicator in assessing organizational effectiveness. Data from the Financial Services Authority (OJK, 2024) shows that national banking credit grew by 10.39%, followed by a 4.48% increase in third-party funds. This growth indicates increasing activity and workload in the banking sector, particularly for service-line employees. They are not only required to achieve financial targets but also to maintain service quality. In such stressful conditions, psychological factors such as emotional labor, interpersonal communication skills, and work-life balance become crucial aspects that can influence performance.

The concept of emotional labor was first proposed by Hochschild (1983) as an individual's effort to manage their feelings so that they are expressed through facial expressions and gestures in accordance with the demands of the work environment. Grandey (2000) added that emotional labor encompasses employees' efforts to adjust their internal emotions to align with the expressions expected by the organization. In the context of public services such as banking, employees must always appear friendly and professional even under pressure. If this is not managed properly, it can lead to emotional exhaustion and decreased work motivation.

Several studies have shown that emotional labor has varying impacts on performance. Alsakarneh et al. (2023) found that emotional labor can improve performance if managed strategically. However, Wi & Yi (2012) and Kim et al. (2017) demonstrated the negative impact of emotional labor on job satisfaction and performance. In the banking context, high emotional pressure often leaves employees feeling psychologically exhausted, potentially reducing concentration and work effectiveness. Therefore, employees' ability to maintain emotional balance is crucial for maintaining work performance.

Another factor influencing performance is work-life balance Hudson (2005) explains that work-life balance describes a relatively balanced level of satisfaction between one's professional role and personal life. Employees who can maintain this balance tend to be more productive and experience lower stress levels (Greenhaus et al., 2002; Rahmawati, 2016). Conversely, an imbalance between work and personal life can lead to burnout and reduce work motivation. Several studies by Lukmianti et al., (2020); Udin, 2023; and Wibowo et al. (2025) showed that work-life balance has a positive impact on employee performance. However, other findings by Saputri & Handayani (2024) indicate that this impact is not always significant, but depends on the level of employee engagement and organizational support.

These phenomena demonstrate that emotional labor and work-life balance mutually influence each other and impact employee performance. Therefore, this study is important to analyze the extent to which emotional labor and work-life balance affect the performance of Bank Mandiri frontline employees in Pamekasan. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of human resource management science and provide practical guidance for management in formulating strategies to improve employee performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Labor

Emotional labor is defined as an individual's efforts to manage and display emotions to meet job demands (Hochschild, 1983). This demonstrates that work requires not only technical skills but also emotional skills in interacting with others. According to Ashforth & Humphrey (1993), emotional labor is part of impression management, namely regulating emotional expressions to align with organizational display rules, such as showing friendliness and patience to maintain the company's image. Grandey (2000) adds that emotional labor is carried out through two approaches: surface acting (displaying appropriate expressions without feelings) and deep acting (adjusting feelings to match the required expressions). Based on this opinion, emotional labor can be understood as an invisible but important emotional work process in shaping positive interactions, organizational image, and employee job satisfaction (Rajak et al., 2023). Emotional labor indicators according to (Hochschild, 1983) consist of two aspects: deep acting and surface acting. According to Grandey (2000), factors that influence emotional labor include two main factors, namely personal factors (such as personality and emotional intelligence) and organizational factors (such as work culture and rules of expression).

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is a state in which a person is able to create a harmonious balance between professional obligations and personal life (Hudson, 2005; Greenhaus et al., 2002). This balance is not only related to time management, but also includes attitudes and commitment in prioritizing work and personal life (Rahmawati, 2016). Ramdhani & Rasto (2021) emphasize that work-life balance functions as a strategy to maintain harmony between professional and personal

obligations and minimize conflict. Therefore, work-life balance can be defined as a state in which a person is able to maintain a balance between work and personal life, thereby maintaining productivity and well-being. Employees who live a balanced life are generally happier, more focused, and more productive. According to Hudson (2005), work-life balance can be measured using three indicators: time balance, engagement balance, and satisfaction balance.

Employee Performance

An employee's performance is a measure of how effectively and efficiently they carry out their assigned tasks and responsibilities. According to Mathis & Jackson (2010), performance is the result of an individual's work in carrying out their duties to support organizational goals. Nurdin et al. (2023) added that performance is not only measured by the work completed, but also by how knowledge and skills are applied to achieve the best results. Ratnasari et al. (2020) explain that performance is a record of the results of carrying out work tasks within a certain time period, which reflects the contribution to organizational goals. In accordance with this, Silaen et al. (2021) and Tsauri (2014) explain that performance reflects the quality and quantity of an individual's work output related to the tasks they carry out. Based on the opinions of these experts, employee performance can be defined as work output measured by the quality, quantity, efficiency, and effectiveness of task implementation in relation to achieving organizational goals. This study measures employee performance using four indicators adopted from Mathis & Jackson (2010) Ratnasari et al. (2020): quantity, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Relationship between Work Discipline, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Performance

Rajak et al. (2021) noted that emotional labor has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, with the dimensions of "surface acting" and "deep acting" improving service quality and job satisfaction, which in turn positively impact performance. Alsakarneh et al. (2023) and Kamassi et al. (2020) confirmed that emotional labor, through proper emotion management, which contributes to maintaining professionalism and increasing work effectiveness, has a significant impact on performance, especially in the banking sector, which requires intensive interaction with customers. However, contrary to these findings, studies by Kumari & Aithal (2022) and Wi & Yi (2012) suggest that excessive emotional labor can negatively impact performance, as it leads to emotional exhaustion and reduces work quality.

H1: Emotional labor has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Wibowo et al. (2025) noted that work-life balance has a positive impact on employee performance. Similarly, Lukmianti et al. (2020) and Kumari & Aithal (2022), also showed that work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on performance, with a balance between work and personal life making employees more productive and satisfied at work. Destry & Ramdhani (2021) emphasized that work-life balance can improve performance by reducing fatigue

and increasing concentration at work. In accordance with these findings, Udin (2023) and Ardansyah (2023) explained that a good work-life balance plays a crucial role in increasing work efficiency and reducing stress levels. Research by Arifin & Muharto (2022) also showed that employees with a good work-life balance are more effective due to high emotional stability. Research by Mardiani & Widiyanto (2021) and Nasution & Harahap (2023) adds that a balanced work-life balance significantly increases employee loyalty, engagement, and performance. Therefore, the better the balance between work and personal life, the greater the positive contribution employees make to productivity and the achievement of company goals.

H2: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Lee & Lee (2023) noted that emotional labor affects employees' work-life balance: the higher the demands on controlling and expressing emotions according to organizational standards, the greater the potential for work-life imbalance. Furthermore, Shetty (2021) emphasized that excessive emotional pressure from work demands can trigger stress and emotional exhaustion, disrupting an individual's ability to spend valuable time with family or pursue personal activities. Similarly, Hofmann & Stokburger-Sauer (2017) found that intense emotional labor often forces employees to display emotions that conflict with their internal psychological state, hindering the achievement of work-life balance. Therefore, emotional labor tends to negatively impact work-life balance, especially when employees lack effective stress management and emotion regulation strategies.

H3: Emotional labor has a positive and significant effect on work-life balance.

Research by Rajak et al. (2021) and Alsakarneh et al. (2023) shows that emotional labor significantly influences employee performance, where the ability to manage emotions effectively can improve work results. However, Lee & Lee (2023) found that high demands for emotional control can disrupt employee work-life balance, as psychological energy is drained in maintaining emotional expression according to organizational standards. Meanwhile, Destry & Ramdhani (2021) demonstrated that work-life balance plays a crucial role in improving performance by reducing stress and increasing concentration. Thus, in the banking context, work-life balance acts as a mediating variable that bridges the influence of emotional labor on employee performance, where a good work-life balance can mitigate the negative impact of emotional stress on work performance.

H4: Emotional labor has a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work-life balance.

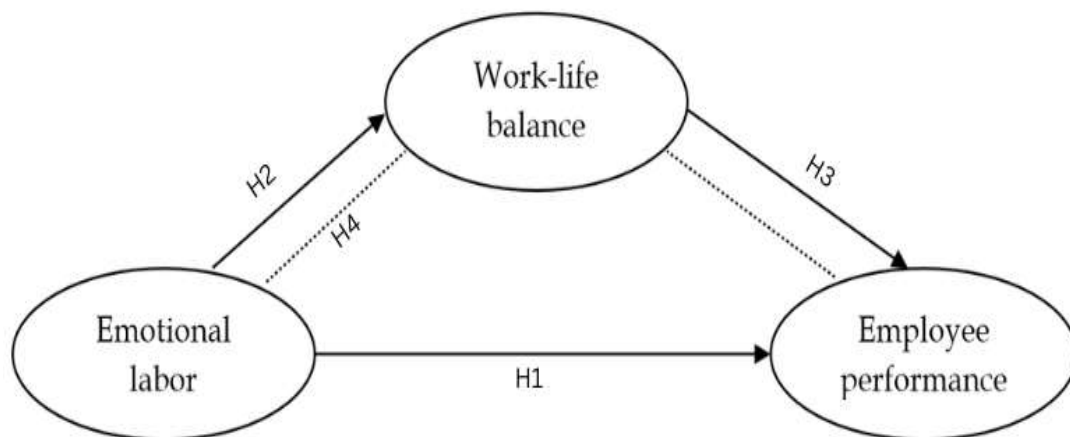


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative research method. The object of this study is PT Bank Mandiri in Pamekasan Regency, which consists of three branches: KCP Pamekasan, KCP Pamekasan Kota, and KCP Pamekasan Waru. The study population consisted of 54 employees who held customer service, teller, and sales positions. Sampling was carried out using saturated sampling, meaning the entire population was included in the sample. The measurement scale used in this study was a Likert scale from 1 to 5, and data were collected through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Data analysis in this study was carried out using descriptive analysis and PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) analysis with SmartPLS software version 4.0. Data analysis included external model testing, which consisted of convergent validity testing and reliability testing. The internal model was then tested using R-squared testing and significance testing. The research methodology explains the type of research, data collection methods, and data analysis. There is no need to define the assumptions used in the research methodology.

RESEARCH RESULT

Respondent Characteristics

The respondent characteristics used in this study included age, gender, highest level of education, position, and length of service. Based on the statistical analysis, the most dominant respondent characteristics in this study for each classification were as follows: age: >35 years (61.1%), gender: male (79.6%), highest level of education: Bachelor's degree (92.6%), position: sales (68.5%), and length of service: 1-5 years (64.8%).

Results of Outer Model and Inner Model Analysis

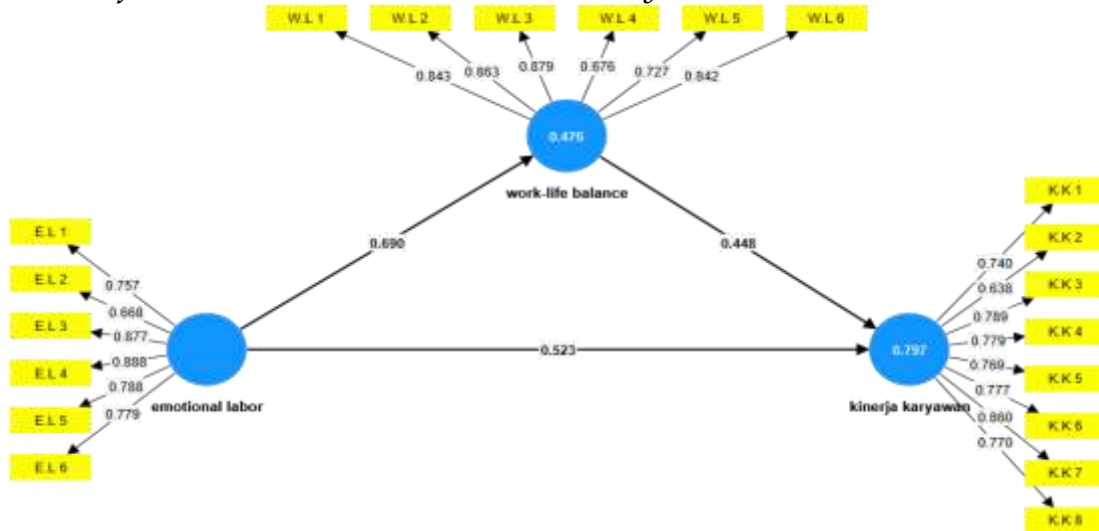


Figure 2. uji measurement model

Table 1. outer loadings

	EL	WL	KK
E.L 1	0,757		
E.L 2	0,668		
E.L 3	0,877		
E.L 4	0,888		
E.L 5	0,788		
E.L 6	0,779		
W.L 1		0,842	
W.L 2		0,865	
W.L 3		0,881	
W.L 4		0,667	
W.L 5		0,732	
W.L 6		0,843	
K.K 1			0,743
K.K 2			0,642
K.K 3			0,788
K.K 4			0,778
K.K 5			0,767
K.K 6			0,779
K.K 7			0,861
K.K 8			0,765

Source: Data processed by SmartPLS 4.0 (2025)

According to Hair et al. (2017), an indicator is considered valid if its value is >0.70, but a value between 0.4 and 0.7 is still acceptable, provided the AVE value is >0.50 and the composite reliability value is >0.70. The test results showed that the outer loadings for each variable in this study were >0.40, indicating that all variables in this study can be considered valid.

AVE is used to measure how much of the indicator's variance is explained by the construct. According to Hair et al. (2017), composite reliability is used to

measure the reliability between indicator blocks and their constituent constructs in a SEM model. According to Hair et al. (2017), composite reliability is defined as >0.70 . Table 2 shows that all four variables have composite reliability values >0.70 . Therefore, the proposed variables meet the requirements for the composite reliability test.

Cronbach's alpha was used to support the results of the composite reliability test. A Cronbach's alpha value >0.70 is considered adequate. Table 2 shows that all four variables have Cronbach's alpha values >0.70 . In addition, the proposed variables meet the criteria of Cronbach's alpha test.

Table 2. Composite Reliability, Cornbach's Alpha, AVE, R-Square, Q- Square

Variables	Composite Reliability	Cornbach's alpha	AVE	R-Square	Q-Square
Emotional labor	0,912	0,882	0,634		
Work-life balance	0,918	0,892	0,654	0,476	0,257
Employee performance	0,919	0,899	0,589	0,797	0,423

Source: Data processed by SmartPLS 4.0 (2025)

Table 2 shows that the R-square value of the emotional labor variable on work-life balance is 0.476, indicating a moderate to strong correlation between these variables. This means that 47.6% of the variation in the work-life balance variable can be explained by emotional variables, while the remaining 52.4% may be influenced by other factors outside the variables considered in this study. The R-square value of the emotional labor and work-life balance variables on employee performance is 0.797, indicating a strong relationship between these variables. This means that 79.7% of the variation in employee performance variables can be explained by emotional labor and work-life balance variables, while the remaining 20.3% may be influenced by other factors outside the variables considered in this study. Table 2 also shows the Q-square value for the work-life balance variable of 0.257, which is greater than 0 (zero), indicating that the construct model has a predictive power of 25.7%. The Q-square value for the employee performance variable is 0.423 and is also greater than 0 (zero), indicating that the construct model has a predictive power of 42.3%.

Hypothesis Test Results

The influence between the studied variables was tested. Variables were considered influential if their P-values were <0.05 . Table 3 shows that the P-values for the influence of emotional labor on employee performance were $0.000 < 0.05$, confirming that emotional labor has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. The P-values for the influence of work-life balance on employee performance were $0.000 < 0.05$, confirming that work-life balance has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. The P-values for the influence of emotional labor on work-life balance were $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that emotional labor has a positive and significant influence on work-life balance.

The magnitude of the indirect effect coefficient on the P-values for the influence of emotional labor on employee performance through work-life balance was $0.002 > 0.05$, confirming that work-life balance significantly mediates the influence between emotional labor and employee performance.

Table 3. Direct and Indirect Influence

Influence between variables	Original sample	P-values	description	Conclusion
Emotional labor - employee performance	0,523	0,000	≤0,05	Hypothesis accepted
Work-life balance - employee performance	0,448	0,000	≤0,05	Hypothesis accepted
Emotional labor - Work-life balance	0,690	0,000	≤0,05	Hypothesis accepted
Emotional labor - Work-life balance - employee performance	0,309	0,002	≥0,05	Hypothesis accepted

Source: Data processed by SmartPLS 4.0 (2025)

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Emotional Labor on Employee Performance

Research findings on the influence of emotional labor on employee performance at PT Bank Mandiri in Pamekasan indicate a positive and significant effect. The better employees can control and express their emotions according to job demands, the better their performance.

Based on descriptive research findings from respondents' responses, this influence falls into the "very high" category. However, one respondent disagreed with the statement that they always handle customer inquiries professionally under various circumstances. This may be because employees such as tellers, customer service representatives, and sales representatives are often under significant pressure from customers due to complaints and also have high sales targets to achieve. In these situations, employees sometimes feel emotionally exhausted and struggle to maintain a positive attitude throughout the day. Furthermore, some respondents answered "undecided." In general, those who answered "undecided" described their situation as inconsistent, making them unsure whether to agree or disagree with the statement. Sometimes they can control their emotions well, but on certain days when work piles up or problems arise, employees struggle to manage their feelings. Those who answered "agree" and "strongly agree" indicated that they were able to behave professionally when interacting with customers and coworkers, and controlled their facial expressions due to their familiarity with various workplace situations. Overall, these results indicate that emotional control is an important skill for bank employees. When employees are able to control their emotions, the work environment becomes more positive, which directly impacts employee performance. This is in line with research Alsakarneh et al. (2023) and Kamassi et al. (2020), which showed that emotional labor has a positive impact on employee performance. Therefore, employees who can effectively control their emotions increase work effectiveness and encourage optimal work performance.

The influence of Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance

This study shows that work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. This suggests that work-life balance can improve employee concentration, motivation, and enthusiasm.

Based on the study's descriptive findings, respondents' responses fell into the "very high" category. However, one respondent disagreed with the statement that they had sufficient time for both work and personal activities. This was because they often worked overtime, especially at the end of the month when targets had to be met. Many employees left late and even took work home with them, reducing their personal time outside of work with their families and increasing burnout. Several respondents answered "undecided," indicating an inconsistent situation. They sometimes managed their time well, but during stressful periods, finding a balance between their personal and work lives was often difficult. Respondents who answered "agree" and "strongly agree" believed they were capable of finding a balance between work and personal life. PT Bank Mandiri in Pamekasan Regency provides support facilities for its employees to maintain mental health, such as group sports activities, religious services, and a family-friendly work environment. This helps them feel refreshed and motivated to return to work. This finding is consistent with studies by Lukmianti et al. (2020), Arifin & Muharto (2022), Awaludin et al. (2025), and (Udin, 2023), which confirmed that work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on performance.

The Influence of Emotional Labor on Work-Life Balance

Research results show that emotional labor has a positive and significant impact on work-life balance. This means that employees who are able to manage their emotions well at work also tend to have a better work-life balance.

Based on the descriptive results of the study, respondents' responses fell into the "very high" category. However, not all respondents felt the same way. One respondent answered "disagree." These respondents stated that the demands of always appearing friendly, patient, and professional often left them feeling stressed. After a day of suppressing emotions at work, they felt exhausted and found it difficult to enjoy time with their families. Respondents who answered "undecided" may be in a middle ground, sometimes managing to maintain balance, but on certain days, such as when experiencing high pressure related to tasks and targets, their emotional state carries over to their homes. Meanwhile, those who "agree" and "strongly agree" describe employees who are accustomed to managing their emotions well, understand the boundaries between work and personal life, and have strategies for calming down after work hours. These results align with Lee & Lee (2023), who confirmed that emotional labor has a positive impact on work-life balance. These findings suggest that successfully managing emotions at work plays a crucial role in maintaining work-life balance. Employees who are able to manage work stress are more likely to maintain harmonious relationships outside the office.

The Influence of Emotional Labor on Employee Performance through Work-Life Balance

The research results show that work-life balance acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between emotional labor and employee performance. This finding indicates that emotional labor not only directly impacts employee performance but also indirectly through improved work-life balance. In other

words, an employee's ability to manage emotions, maintain self-expression, and display a professional attitude in the workplace helps create a balance between work and personal life demands, which in turn positively impacts performance.

Empirically, the effect of emotional labor on work-life balance has been proven significant, as has the effect of work-life balance on employee performance. This indicates that employees who are able to manage their emotions adaptively—particularly through deep acting—tend to experience lower levels of work stress, have better emotional control, and are able to manage their time and energy more effectively. This condition allows employees to harmoniously fulfill their work and personal roles, thus supporting sustainable performance improvement. This phenomenon is relevant to the context of Bank Mandiri employees in Pamekasan Regency, where the demands of excellent service require employees to consistently display positive emotions towards customers. Employees who are able to manage these emotional demands well not only appear professional at work but are also better able to maintain the quality of their personal lives, thereby minimizing emotional exhaustion. Respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the work-life balance indicator reflect employees who have successfully balanced the emotional demands of work with their personal needs, thus impacting the consistency and quality of their performance.

Thus, work-life balance functions as a mediating mechanism that explains how emotional labor can improve employee performance. This means that effective emotional management will be more optimal in improving performance when accompanied by a good work-life balance. This finding emphasizes the importance of organizations in supporting emotional labor management through policies that encourage work-life balance, so that employee performance can be continuously improved. This section allows you to describe your research findings academically. You may not enter figures related to your statistical tests here; instead, you should explain those numbers here. You should structure your discussion with academic support for your studies and a good explanation according to the specific area you are investigating.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study shows that emotional labor has a positive and significant impact on employee performance at PT Bank Mandiri Pamekasan Regency. Employees' ability to manage and express emotions professionally has been shown to improve work quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. Furthermore, work-life balance also has a positive and significant impact on employee performance, confirming that the balance between work and personal life demands plays a crucial role in maintaining focus, motivation, and productivity.

The study's results also confirm that emotional labor has a positive and significant impact on work-life balance. Employees who manage their emotions well tend to be better able to manage work stress and maintain harmony in their personal lives. Furthermore, work-life balance has been shown to mediate the effect of emotional labor on employee performance, indicating that emotional labor not only has a direct impact on performance but also has an indirect effect through improved work-life balance. Therefore, effective emotional management

will be even more optimal in improving performance when supported by a good work-life balance.

Based on these findings, PT Bank Mandiri management is advised to develop human resource policies that support the management of emotional labor and work-life balance, such as emotional intelligence training, stress management, and supportive leadership. Furthermore, organizations need to consider workload management, time flexibility, and employee wellness programs to maintain work-life balance and sustainably improve employee performance. For future research, it is recommended to add other variables such as job stress, organizational support, or work engagement, as well as expand the sample and number of respondents to strengthen the generalizability of the research results.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study is limited by its scope and number of respondents, which focused only on PT Bank Mandiri in Pamekasan Regency. Therefore, the results cannot be fully generalized. Furthermore, the use of quantitative methods with questionnaires was not able to deeply explore the emotional dynamics and subjective experiences of employees. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the object and sample size, use a mixed methods approach, and add other variables such as work stress, organizational support, work engagement, or leadership style as mediating or moderating variables to enrich and strengthen future research models.

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