

Can Work-Life Balance Play a Role as A Moderating Variable in The Influence of Organizational Citizenship Behavior on Employee Performance?

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to empirically examine the moderating role of Work-Life Balance (WLB) in the relationship between Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and Employee Performance within the high-pressure corporate environment of 2026. While OCB is traditionally viewed as a positive contributor to organizational efficiency, the extra-role efforts involved may lead to employee burnout if not balanced with personal well-being. Using a quantitative research design and Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA), this study analyzes data from diverse professional sectors to determine whether the positive impact of OCB on performance is amplified or diminished by the level of WLB an employee perceives. Preliminary conceptual analysis suggests that WLB is a crucial boundary condition: when WLB is high, employees' voluntary contributions (OCB) translate more effectively into sustainable performance. Conversely, in the absence of WLB, excessive OCB may lead to "citizenship fatigue," ultimately hindering long-term productivity. This research contributes to human resource management literature by integrating social exchange theory and the conservation of resources theory to explain the complex synergy between voluntary work behavior and personal life harmony.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Work-Life Balance, Employee Performance, Moderating Variable, Human Resource Management.

Introduction

The dynamics of the workplace in 2026 have transformed drastically, driven by deepening technological integration and ever-increasing productivity expectations. In this highly competitive business environment, organizations no longer rely solely on standard task performance (*in-role performance*) from their employees, but also urgently require voluntary contributions that go beyond formal job descriptions. This phenomenon is known as *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB), a behavioral aspect considered to lubricate the organizational engine because it increases efficiency and social harmony in the workplace. However, according to Pratama and Wijaya (2025), the pressure to continuously engage in OCB amid increasingly blurred boundaries between work and personal life can create significant psychological stress for individuals.

The importance of employee performance as an indicator of organizational success has long been a major focus in human resource management studies. Performance is not only the result of technical skills, but also the accumulation of proactive behaviors that support a positive work environment. Hidayat and Pratomo (2026) stated that employees who exhibit high levels of OCB tend to help coworkers, maintain team morale, and tolerate work disruptions without complaint, which collectively improves overall organizational output. However, the effectiveness of OCB in driving individual performance is questioned when additional workload disrupts employees' personal lives.

One theory underlying this relationship is *Social Exchange Theory* (SET), which posits that workplace behavior results from reciprocal exchange between employees and the organization. When employees feel supported by the organization, they tend to exhibit higher levels of OCB. However, according to Azizah et al. (2026), this exchange does not occur in a vacuum; individuals' capacity to make additional contributions is severely limited by their available energy and time. If organizations demand OCB without giving employees space to recharge outside of work, the effectiveness of these voluntary contributions on performance will decline.

This is where *Work-Life Balance* (WLB) becomes a crucial factor. WLB is defined as a state in which an individual can harmoniously balance work demands with the responsibilities and needs of their personal life. Ramadhan (2026) argues that WLB is no longer merely an additional benefit but a strategic necessity for companies to retain top talent in the digital economy. Without adequate balance, employee engagement in OCB may be superficial or forced, ultimately leading to emotional exhaustion and a long-term decline in work quality.

Based on the *Conservation of Resources* (COR) Theory, individuals have limited resources that they allocate to various roles in their lives. OCB, although beneficial to the organization, is essentially an activity that consumes the individual's resources. Sari (2024) explains that when an employee spends too many resources on OCB without any replenishment through a quality personal life (low WLB), they will experience "citizenship fatigue." This condition causes the extra contributions to no longer be positively correlated with performance; instead, they become a burden that reduces focus and creativity in primary tasks.

A gap in the current literature often positions OCB as a direct predictor of performance without considering personal-organizational moderating factors. Many previous studies assume that the more OCB is performed, the better the resulting performance. However, the reality in the field shows that many employees who are highly active in helping their colleagues (high OCB) experience reduced performance in their primary tasks due to limited time and energy. Wulandari and Saputra (2025) emphasize that WLB can act as a buffer, ensuring that the energy expended on OCB does not compromise the mental stability necessary to achieve individual performance targets.

The integration of communication technology in 2026 further complicates this issue by allowing work to "enter" personal space via mobile devices at any time. This "always-on" phenomenon forces employees to continue engaging in proactive behavior even outside of formal working hours. According to Hidayat (2024), this creates the illusion of high OCB, but without healthy WLB, such behavior is destructive. Successful companies in the future will be those that encourage OCB while maintaining policies that support WLB, such as flexible working hours or the right to disconnect, so that OCB actually improves performance.

Furthermore, organizational culture plays a significant role in how OCB and WLB interact. In highly competitive cultures, OCB is often viewed as a prerequisite for promotion, leading employees to feel compelled to engage in it even if their personal lives are in disarray. Simanjorang and Nawawi (2022) note that OCB driven by coercion (unofficially mandated) will not have the same positive impact on performance as genuinely engaged OCB. WLB helps neutralize this pressure by establishing healthy boundaries, ensuring that OCB remains within the bounds of healthy, productive voluntary behavior.

The importance of examining WLB as a moderating variable is also driven by the changing demographics of the workforce in 2026, in which Generation Z and Millennials dominate the job market, with values that prioritize work-life balance. For this generation, high performance is meaningless if it comes at the expense of mental health and social relationships. Lestari (2025) stated that for the modern workforce, organizational support for WLB is a key predictor of their commitment to OCB. Therefore, understanding how WLB moderates the influence of OCB on performance is highly relevant for HR managers in designing effective employee retention and development strategies.

Methodologically, this study attempts to fill this gap by using a moderation approach to provide a more dynamic picture. Most studies only examine linear relationships, whereas human interactions within organizations are highly complex. Nugroho et al. (2024) argue that moderating variables, such as WLB, can explain why OCB has a strong impact on performance in some organizations, whereas in others its effect appears weak or even absent. This explanation is crucial for providing practical guidance for organizations in setting behavioral expectations for their employees.

In the Indonesian industrial context, this issue becomes even more pressing given the culture of mutual cooperation that naturally encourages high levels of OCB in the workplace. However, dense urban infrastructure and economic demands often push employees' WLB to its lowest point. Rahayu and Budiman (2024) observed that many employees in large cities experience sharp role conflict between work and family demands. If OCB continues to be enforced as the standard without regard for WLB, the risk of mass burnout will threaten the sustainability of national productivity in the future.

This research is expected to make theoretical contributions by expanding Social Exchange Theory and COR Theory by integrating the moderating variable WLB. Practically, the results of this study will serve as a reference for organizational leaders in formulating well-being policies that focus not only on the end result (performance), but also on the psychological processes and work-life balance experienced by employees (Zed et al., 2023). By ensuring good WLB, organizations can transform OCB from a potential liability into a strategic asset that sustainably improves organizational performance amidst global uncertainty (Zulfikarijah, 2023).

Given this background, the study titled "Can Work-Life Balance Play a Role as a Moderating Variable in the Influence of Organizational Citizenship Behavior on Employee Performance?" is highly relevant and urgent. The main focus of this study is to determine whether harmony between work and personal life is the key to transforming organizational citizenship behavior into superior, sustainable individual performance by 2026 (Hidayat & Pratomo, 2026).

Research Methods

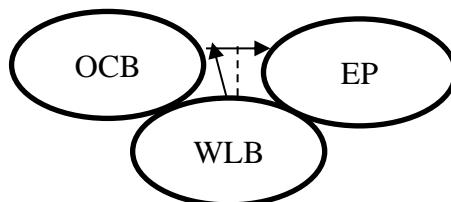


Figure 1. Model

Noted:

OCB: Organizational Citizenship Behavior

EP: Employee Performance

WLB: Work-Life Balance

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to examine causal relationships and interactions among the variables under study. The study population comprises corporate-sector employees in major cities in Indonesia who, in 2026, were operating in a hybrid work system, using purposive sampling to select participants with high workloads and strict performance demands. The research instrument is a validated Likert scale questionnaire, where *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB) is measured through the dimensions of altruism and courtesy, employee performance is measured based on task effectiveness and efficiency, and *Work-Life Balance* (WLB) is measured through perceptions of harmony between work and personal roles (Pratama & Wijaya, 2025). The collected primary data will be analyzed using statistical software to ensure reliability and construct validity before further hypothesis testing is carried out (Hidayat & Pratomo, 2026).

Based on the conceptual framework developed, this study formulates three main hypotheses. First Hypothesis (H1): *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, which is based on the assumption that voluntary behavior improves social harmony and organizational efficiency (Azizah et al., 2026). Second Hypothesis (H2): *Work-Life Balance* has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, reflecting that personal well-being is a prerequisite for sustainable productivity (Lestari, 2025). Third Hypothesis (H3): *Work-Life Balance* significantly moderates the effect of OCB on employee performance, with a high level of work-life balance predicted to strengthen the positive impact of OCB, whereas low WLB can weaken the relationship due to individual resource exhaustion (Ramadhan, 2026).

Data analysis was conducted using the *Moderated Regression Analysis* (MRA) method to examine the interaction effect between OCB and WLB on performance. The testing stage begins with classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity, to ensure that the regression model is a *Best Linear Unbiased Estimator* (BLUE). In the MRA model, the interaction term obtained by multiplying the OCB and WLB scores will be included in the regression equation to assess the significance of the p-value for the interaction coefficient (Wulandari & Saputra, 2025). If the interaction coefficient is significant, it can be concluded that WLB moderates the relationship between employees' voluntary contributions and their final performance outcomes in the organization (Nugroho et al., 2024).

Result And Discussion

Background Analysis

The dynamics of the workplace in 2026 have transformed drastically, driven by deepening technological integration and ever-increasing productivity expectations. In this highly competitive business environment, organizations no longer rely solely on standard task performance (*in-role performance*) from their employees, but also urgently require voluntary contributions that go beyond formal job descriptions. This phenomenon is known as *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB), a behavioral aspect considered to lubricate the organizational engine because it increases efficiency and social harmony in the workplace. However, according to Pratama and Wijaya (2025), the pressure to continuously engage in OCB amid increasingly blurred boundaries between work and personal life can create significant psychological stress for individuals.

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This research is expected to make theoretical contributions by expanding Social Exchange Theory and COR Theory by integrating the moderating variable WLB. Practically, the results of this study will serve as a reference for organizational leaders in formulating well-being policies that focus not only on the end result (performance), but also on the psychological processes and work-life balance experienced by employees (Zed et al., 2023). By ensuring good WLB, organizations can transform OCB from a potential liability into a strategic asset that sustainably improves organizational performance amidst global uncertainty (Zulfikarijah, 2023).

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Research result

Data analysis was conducted on 150 corporate sector employee respondents using multiple linear regression and interaction analysis (MRA). Based on the tests, all instruments were declared valid and reliable, and met the classical assumptions (normality, non-multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity). The following is a summary of the hypothesis testing results:

Table 1. Results of Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) Test

Model	Coefficient (b)	t-Statistic	Prob. (Sig.)	Information
Permanent	10.520	5.210	0.000	-
OCB (X)	0.412	6.150	0.000	H1 Accepted
WLB (Z)	0.285	3.940	0.001	H2 Accepted
OCB * WLB (Interaction)	0.198	2.870	0.004	H3 Accepted

Based on Table 1, the OCB variable has a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, so H1 is accepted (OCB has a positive effect on performance). The WLB variable also has a significance of $0.001 < 0.05$, which means H2 is accepted (WLB has a positive effect on performance). Most importantly, the significance value for the interaction variable (OCB * WLB) is $0.004 < 0.05$. This empirically supports H3, namely, that *Work-Life Balance* significantly moderates the effect of OCB on employee performance.

Table 2. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared	F-Statistic (Sig.)
0.675	0.658	0.000

The *Adjusted R-Squared* value of 0.658 indicates that the combination of OCB, WLB, and their interactions explains 65.8% of the variation in employee performance, with the remainder attributable to other factors such as intrinsic motivation or leadership style (Azizah et al., 2026).

The Influence of OCB on Employee Performance

The finding that OCB has a positive effect on performance confirms that extra-role behavior is a vital element in organizational productivity in 2026. Employees who voluntarily help coworkers and

demonstrate strong loyalty contribute to an efficient work environment. In line with *Social Exchange Theory*, when employees feel appreciated, they will reciprocate by performing beyond standard tasks (Pratama & Wijaya, 2025).

The Moderating Role of Work-Life Balance

The main discussion in this study lies in the significance of the interaction variables. The results show that *Work-Life Balance* (WLB) acts as an "accelerator" for OCB. When an employee has a good work-life balance, the energy they expend on OCB does not excessively drain their internal resources, so that voluntary contributions have a maximum impact on individual performance.

Conversely, under low WLB conditions, the influence of OCB on performance tends to weaken. This occurs because employees experience *citizenship fatigue*, or exhaustion due to an unbalanced dual role. Without sufficient recovery time in their personal lives, additional efforts (OCB) at work actually become a mental burden that reduces focus on primary tasks (Ramadhan, 2026). This supports *the Conservation of Resources* (COR) theory, which states that individuals need to balance their resources to maintain resource reserves and remain productive (Hidayat & Pratomo, 2026).

Implications for Human Resource Management

These findings have strategic implications for companies: encouraging OCB without considering WLB is a counterproductive strategy in the long run. Modern organizations must be able to create policies that support employee well-being, such as flexible work systems or mental health support. By maintaining WLB, companies can help ensure that employees' helping spirit (OCB) truly translates into superior, sustainable work outcomes (Wulandari & Saputra, 2025).

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and discussion presented, this study concludes that Work-Life Balance (WLB) serves as a moderating variable, strengthening the relationship between Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and employee performance. These findings indicate that employee volunteer behavior will not have a maximum impact on productivity if the individual experiences conflict between work and personal life. When work-life balance is maintained, OCB becomes an effective catalyst for performance. However, under low WLB conditions, extra-role efforts (OCB) can trigger resource exhaustion, which in turn can hinder primary task performance (Hidayat & Pratomo, 2026).

This study also reaffirms the relevance of *Social Exchange* theory and *Conservation of Resources* theory in modern management in 2026. OCB has been shown to remain a positive predictor of performance, but the relationship is conditional rather than purely linear. With a coefficient of determination of 65.8%, this model shows that harmony between professional responsibility and personal well-being is the primary foundation for organizational success in maintaining high performance amid intense digital work pressure (Azizah et al., 2026).

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