

THE INFLUENCE OF LIFE-FRIENDLY HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, AND JOB SATISFACTION IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY



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Abstract

In the Food & Beverage industry, which is characterized by long working hours and a dynamic work environment, maintaining a balance between work and personal life (work-life balance) poses a challenge for employees. This study aims to analyze the impact of life-friendly human resource policies on work-life balance, employee engagement, and job satisfaction. Additionally, it examines the role of employee engagement as a mediator in the relationship between life-friendly human resource policies and work-life balance. This study employs a quantitative method with a Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach, analyzing data from 183 employees at Bangor Berkembang Abadi. Data collection was conducted through an online survey using a purposive sampling technique. Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4.0 and SPSS 26 software. The results indicate that life-friendly human resource policies significantly influence work-life balance and employee engagement. Employee engagement also positively affects work-life balance and serves as a mediator in the relationship between life-friendly human resource policies and work-life balance. However, job satisfaction does not significantly impact work-life balance, suggesting that other factors, such as work flexibility and organizational support, play a more crucial role in determining employees' work-life balance. The implications of this study highlight the need for companies to implement more flexible HR policies, such as flexible work arrangements, fair shift rotations, and employee well-being support, to enhance employee engagement and work-life balance.

Keywords: Life-Friendly Human Resource Policies, Work-Life Balance, Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Food & Beverage Industry

INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalisation and increasingly fierce business competition, companies are required to have excellent human resources who are able to adapt to changes in the external environment. Therefore, research in the field of human resource management is becoming increasingly important in order to understand the dynamics and challenges faced by organisations in managing their human resources (Sari & Waskito, 2025). These social developments have increased the complexity of the relationship between work and life. The concept of work-life balance refers to the relationship between an individual's work and personal life and the point at which the demands of work and personal life are in equilibrium (Erdoğan E. & Korkmaz, 2014; Lockwood, 2003). Work-life balance also influences an employee's level of work dedication (Erdoğan E. & Korkmaz, 2014).

Although many studies have examined the direct relationship between life-friendly human resource policies (such as policies supporting work flexibility, family leave, and so on) and work-life balance, no research has specifically examined the mechanisms or processes through which these HR policies are changed or implemented, thereby producing better work-life balance for employees (Opoku et al., 2023).

Work-life balance has an impact on several organisational outcomes, indicating the need for employers to further formulate policies to help employees balance their work and non-work responsibilities (Iqbal et al., 2017). Work-life balance policies help organisations achieve better performance by ensuring employees remain productive while maintaining their well-being (Suryanto et al., 2019). The development of human resource (HR) policies that are life-friendly to utilise balanced work and non-work responsibilities is necessary because work-life balance provides benefits such as better employee morale, increased productivity, improved employee retention, and lower stress, absenteeism, and illness rates (Kabir, 2019). Previous studies have confirmed a significant positive relationship between HR policies and work-life balance (Feeney & Stritch, 2019; Gonu et al., 2023; Uddin et al., 2020). Life-Friendly Policies also demonstrate a positive association between Life-Friendly Policies and Employee Engagement. The research findings further suggest that the following five dimensions underpin this aspect of organisational life: lack of managerial support for work-life balance; perceptions of negative career consequences; organisational time expectations; the gendered nature of policy utilisation; and perceptions of unfairness by employees.

Life Friendly Policies also prove the positive correlation between Life Friendly Policies and Employee Engagement. The research findings further suggest that the following five dimensions underpin this aspect of organisational life: lack of managerial support for work-life balance; perceptions of negative career consequences; organisational time expectations; the gendered nature of policy utilisation; and perceptions of unfairness by employees with limited non-work responsibilities (Anitha., 2014). Previous research has stated that Life Friendly Policies influence employee engagement (Opoku et al., 2023).

A topic that continues to attract the attention and interest of all stakeholders, including workers, employers, policymakers, academics and trade unions around the world. While it is important for employees to carry out their job responsibilities diligently, they also have personal interests, including family responsibilities, that must be taken into account and balanced with their work (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019). High employee engagement enhances commitment among employees, which in turn reduces the intention to leave (Sandhya &

Sulphey, 2019). Empirical evidence shows positive outcomes for both individuals and organisations when employees achieve a satisfying work-life balance (Lero et al., 2019). Among these, perceived support (Maertz et al., 2007), employee engagement (Sandhya & Sulphey, 2019), and work-life balance (Gächter et al., 2013) have emerged as the three main variables.

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This study refers to organisational support policies and social support literature to further explore the influence of these factors on work-life balance (Yuile et al., 2012). However, to understand how to help individuals achieve work-life balance, further research is needed to investigate the types of policies and programmes that can increase organisational and workplace flexibility (Bailey, 1991; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002; Berg et al., 2003). Therefore, this study adds life-friendly human resource policies as one of the determinants in achieving work-life balance.

The objective of this study is to explore and analyse life-friendly human resource policies that support work-life balance in relation to job satisfaction and employee engagement. Through the application of the research findings, it is hoped that this study will contribute theoretically and serve as a practical reference for companies in developing more adaptive human resource policies to address the challenges of global competition.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Life-Friendly Human Resource Policies

Family and work are two of the most important areas in people's lives. Work-family conflict is usually considered to occur because of competition between the two areas of work and family, making it difficult for employees to coordinate the needs of their two roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Life-friendly human resource policies are policies that enable employees to balance their work and non-work roles (Yuile et al., 2012).

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance and life do not fit the universally accepted definition. Scholars have defined this concept in various ways. For example, Kirchmeyer (2002) defines the concept of work-life balance as a valuable experience both at work and at home. Clark S.C. (2000)

also defines work-life balance as the enjoyment and satisfaction derived from work and home with the least amount of conflict. Many changes in the workplace and employees' lives create challenges in balancing work life and personal life (Suryanto et al., 2019). (Suryanto et al., 2019).

Employee Engagement

Organisational support is described by Eisenberger et al. (1986) as “employees’ beliefs about the extent to which the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being’. There are two forms of employee engagement: (1) work engagement and (2) organisational engagement. Employee engagement is generally defined as the level of commitment and involvement of employees towards the organisation and its values (Setiawan & Negoro, 2023). Work engagement consists of the psychological state of task fulfilment, while organisational engagement consists of the physical, cognitive, and emotional investment of employees in their work (Saks, 2006).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a field that has been extensively researched, with studies beginning in the early 1900s. It is a topic that has received considerable attention from both researchers and practitioners (Spector, 1985). Hackman (1980) views job satisfaction as ‘an overall measure of the extent to which employees feel satisfied and happy in their work.’ They argue that this attitude persists over time, can be identified by respondents, and can be measured. Simply put, job satisfaction refers to the extent to which people enjoy their work. Job satisfaction is the level of pleasure an individual feels as a positive evaluation of their work and work environment (Widarto & Anindita, 2018).

RESEARCH METHOD

The measurement of the work-life balance variable uses the dimensions proposed by Mashavira et al. (2023), which consist of 4 questions. The measurement of the life-friendly human resources policies variable has 5 dimensions: Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, Role Model, Creative Work-Family Management, and a second-order factor consisting of 14 statements. The measurement of employee engagement consists of 3 dimensions: Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption, which comprise 17 statements. Finally, the statements on job satisfaction are taken from Sobaih and Hasanein (2020) and consist of 4 statements. There are a total of 39 questions measured in detail, which can be seen in Appendix 2 (operational variables) and Appendix 3 (questionnaire). These questions use a Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

This study collected data through an online survey distributed using Google Forms. The study focused on one company, Bangor Berkembang Abadi, using purposive sampling. The criteria for respondents were staff working at Bangor Burger. Data was collected over a three-month period from August to November 2024. The sample was obtained from Bangor Burger locations across Indonesia, with sociodemographic characteristics in this study including gender, age, occupation, and education.

This research is a quantitative study using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) method, with data processing and analysis conducted using SPSS 26 and Smart PLS 4.0 software. The researchers used factor analysis through SPSS by examining two aspects of validity, namely KMO and MSA. Good values for these two measures are above 0.5, which means that their

factor analysis is feasible to continue. Furthermore, to test reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, the closer the Alpha value is to 1, the better (Hair et al., 2014).

A total of 4 statements on work-life balance, 13 statements on life-friendly human resource policies, 17 statements on employee engagement, and 4 statements on job satisfaction were included. Thus, there are 38 valid statements ready for use in this research questionnaire. This study will also involve 213 respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents in this study consisted of 183 respondents, 68.4% of whom were female and 31.6% male, with a wide range of ages from 18 to 26 years (27.3%), 27 to 35 years (34.2%) and 36 to 44 years (24.1%). most respondents held staff positions (58.3%). For further information on the respondent profile, please refer to the appendix.

The validity and reliability of the construct were tested in accordance with the recommendations outlined by (Hair et al., 2014). The results of this study indicate that the reliability criteria are met, with construct reliability values above 0.60 and variance extraction above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014). The construct validity in this study is considered acceptable and valid because all indicators in each variable have factor loading values above 0.50. The work-life balance variable (CR=0.818; VE=0.893) meets the construct reliability criteria, as do the variables family-friendly human resource policies (CR=0.777; VE=0.962), employee engagement (CR=0.771; VE=0.972), and job satisfaction (CR=0.833; VE=0.840).

	Saturated model	Estimated model
d_ULS	0.950	1.065
d_G	1.394	1.439
SRMR	0.035	0.037
NFI	0.846	0.842
Chi-square	1228.562	1256.286

Figure 1.
Model Fit Test

Based on the results above, the model tested in SmartPLS has a fairly good fit because the SRMR value is low (below 0.08) and the NFI is close to 1. The d_ULS and d_G values are also not much different from the saturated model, which indicates that the model is acceptable.

R-square - Overview		
	R-square	R-square adjusted
Employee Engagement	0.922	0.921
Work Life Balance	0.926	0.925

Figure 2.
R Square

The results of the SmartPLS analysis indicate that the model has excellent predictive capabilities. For the Employee Engagement variable, the R-Square value of 0.922 means that

92.2% of its variability is explained by the independent variables, while Work Life Balance has an R-Square value of 0.926, indicating that 92.6% of its variability can be explained by the model. The nearly identical Adjusted R-Square values indicate that the model remains stable without overfitting. Thus, this model is very strong in explaining the relationships between variables and can be relied upon for decision-making.

The results of this study produced a path diagram T-Value, which can be seen in Figure 3 below:

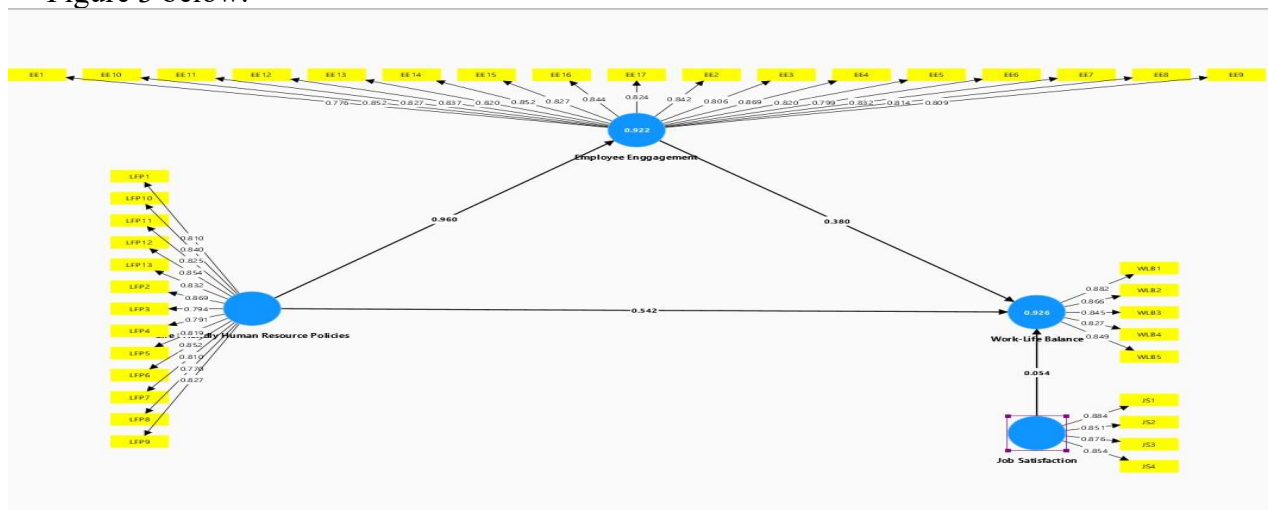


Figure 3.
T-Value

Based on Figure 3 Path Diagram T-Value above, the research model hypothesis testing can be explained as follows:

Table 1.
Research Model Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Question	T-Value	Description
H1	There is a positive influence of life-friendly human resource policies on work-life balance	3.336	Data supports the hypothesis
H2	There is a positive influence of life-friendly human resource policies on employee engagement	32.139	Data supports the hypothesis
H3	There is a positive effect of employee engagement on work-life balance	2.660	Data supports the hypothesis
H4	Employee engagement mediates the relationship between life-friendly HR policies and work-life balance	4.027	Data supports the hypothesis
H5	There is a positive effect of job satisfaction on work-life balance	0.795	Data does not support the hypothesis

The first analysis shows that life-friendly human resource policies have a direct effect on work-life balance with a t-value of 3.336 (>1.96). Furthermore, life-friendly human resource policies have a direct effect on employee engagement with a t-value of 32.139 (>1.96). Employee engagement has a direct effect on work-life balance with a t-value of 2.260 (>1.96). Employee engagement mediates the relationship between life-friendly human resource policies and work-life balance with a t-value of 4.027 (>1.96). The next analysis of the job satisfaction variable did not prove to have an effect on the work-life balance relationship with a t-value of 0.795 (<1.96).

Discussion

The results of the hypothesis indicate that life-friendly human resource policies have a significant influence on work-life balance. These findings suggest that policies designed to facilitate employee well-being not only have a positive impact on the balance between work and personal life, but can also increase employee satisfaction and performance. Life-friendly human resource policies, such as flexible working hours, adequate leave, mental health support, and family welfare programmes, provide employees with the space to better balance their work responsibilities with their personal needs. This contributes to reduced stress, increased motivation, and higher productivity. Additionally, studies indicate that improving specific work-life balance indicators, such as organisational flexibility and catering to individual staff needs, can further enhance innovative work behaviour (Sitompul et al., 2024). Therefore, it is crucial for organisations to continue adapting and implementing more inclusive human resource policies that support employees' personal needs. This hypothesis is also supported by previous research conducted by Opoku et al. (2023) that life-friendly human resource policies have a positive influence on work-life balance.

These findings are consistent with those of Mengistu (2020), who stated that flexible workplace policies affect work-life balance. These findings are also in line with Oludayo and Omonijo (2020), who stated that flexible work options help employees achieve better work-life balance, leading to higher levels of performance and commitment. These results also support the empirical survey conducted by Gudep (2019) that flexible work systems encourage and improve staff performance, and work-life balance can also benefit organisations by increasing their productivity. Once again, these findings reinforce the findings of Feeney and Stritch (2019) who state that flexible scheduling and work-life balance have a significant positive relationship.

Based on these results, the implementation of life-friendly human resource policies not only contributes to improving work-life balance but also has the potential to increase employee engagement. Life-friendly human resource policies can create a more inclusive and conducive work environment. The results are consistent with Kangure's (2014) findings that job resources encourage and increase individual employee engagement. These findings also confirm Kaewthaworn's (2019) assertion that life-friendly human resource policies, such as flexible working conditions, have a positive relationship with employee engagement. The results further confirm Yuile et al.'s (2012) conclusion that life-friendly human resource policies have a positive relationship with employee engagement. Furthermore, the results reinforce the findings of Oludayo and Omonijo (2020) that leave arrangements, flexible work arrangements, employee rest time, social support, and dependent care initiatives are factors that can predict employee behaviour outcomes, such as employee engagement. Validating

the findings of Eek and Axmon (2013) that workplace factors related to flexibility have a strong positive effect on stress, well-being, and employee engagement. Based on previous research findings (Eek & Axmon, 2013; Kaewthaworn, 2019), and current research, the hypothesis that life-friendly human resource policies have a significant influence on employee engagement is supported in this study.

The third hypothesis seeks to assess the influence of employee engagement on work-life balance in a company in the food and beverage industry. The above results suggest that management practices can improve employees' work-life balance by ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to help them engage in their work. This can be achieved by providing challenging work, career development programmes, and ensuring effective and supportive leadership at all times. The objective is to assess whether employees who are truly engaged and dedicated to their work have better work-life balance, as shown in previous studies (Aveline & Kumar, 2017; Iqbal et al., 2017; Jasmina & Miha, 2021).

Given this, increased employee engagement will result in improved work-life balance. In other words, employee engagement has a significant positive influence on work-life balance. These results reinforce the findings of Aveline and Kumar (2017) that employees who are highly engaged in their work have better family lives. This finding also confirms the proposal by Iqbal et al. (2017) that employee engagement and work-life balance are strongly correlated. Furthermore, the results of this study align with the findings of Jasmina and Miha (2021), which states that people who are highly engaged in their work are better able to successfully integrate their work and family obligations. These results also reinforce the findings of Aveline and Kumar (2017) that employee engagement is the most proximal predictor of work-family facilitation.

Thus, it can be concluded that employee engagement plays an important role in creating an optimal work-life balance. This supports the fourth hypothesis, which states that employee engagement mediates the relationship between life-friendly human resource policies and work-life balance. This mediating role shows that human resource policies that support employees' lives not only have a direct impact on work-life balance but also through increased employee engagement in their work. Previous research, as highlighted by Opoku et al. (2023), suggests that changes in employee engagement can influence the relationship between life-friendly human resource policies and work-life balance. In other words, life-friendly human resource policies will be more effective in improving work-life balance if employees have a high level of engagement in their work (Jewell, 2010).

The results of this study indicate that management at a company operating in the food and beverage industry can effectively improve employee work-life balance by implementing employee engagement strategies that support life-friendly human resource policies. Given this, company management can rely on strategic measures such as providing meaningful work, helping employees manage stress, providing job security, and offering appropriate counselling related to work issues. These steps will strengthen the relationship between life-friendly human resource policies and work-life balance, both directly and through employee engagement (Isa & Indrayati, 2023).

However, in addition to the role of employee engagement, other aspects such as job satisfaction are also considered important factors in creating work-life balance. There is a hypothesis in this study stating that job satisfaction has a positive influence on work-life balance; however, the results of this study indicate that the data does not support this

hypothesis. Previous research, as mentioned by Buonomo et al. (2024), also found that the relationship between job satisfaction and work-life balance is not significant. This study shows that job satisfaction does not have a significant direct influence on work-life balance. These findings contradict the initial hypothesis that job satisfaction has a positive impact on work-life balance. These results indicate that other factors may be more dominant in influencing work-life balance than job satisfaction (Oktosatrio, 2020). This is because work-life balance is more influenced by other factors such as work flexibility, organisational support, and stress levels, which have a greater impact in determining the balance between work and personal life (Rahman & Ali, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study shows that life-friendly human resource policies have the greatest influence on employee engagement, with a T-Value of 32.139. Life-friendly human resource policies also contribute to work-life balance ($T = 3.336$) and indirectly through employee engagement ($T = 4.027$). Employee engagement itself influences work-life balance ($T = 2.660$). Conversely, job satisfaction does not directly influence work-life balance ($T = 0.795$), indicating that other factors such as flexibility and organisational culture are more dominant. In the Food & Beverage industry, long working hours make life-friendly human resource policies more important than job satisfaction in determining work-life balance. In the Food & Beverage industry, where long working hours and a dynamic work environment pose challenges, life-friendly human resource policies are more valued than job satisfaction. Therefore, companies seeking to enhance employee engagement and well-being should prioritise HR policies that support work-life balance.

In the Food and Beverage industry, job satisfaction does not always directly influence work-life balance due to several factors. Long and irregular working hours often make it difficult for employees to maintain their work-life balance. Although they may feel satisfied with their jobs, high and dynamic work demands can interfere with their personal time. Additionally, an intensive and high-pressure work environment reduces time for rest. Many employees in this industry also value work flexibility, such as adjustable schedules or remote work options, more than mere job satisfaction. An organisational culture that supports work-life balance, such as life-friendly human resource policies, is a more important factor in achieving work-life balance.

This study provides an initial understanding of the influence of various factors on work-life balance, but it has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the study uses a sample that is not sufficiently representative to cover the entire employee population. Second, the limited sample selection may also hinder the generalisation of research results to a wider population. Third, this study focuses on a single company, which may have different characteristics and factors driving work-life balance. Finally, this study may not control for all variables that could influence work-life balance, such as stress levels, turnover intention, and mental health. Further research is recommended to expand the sample size by involving companies from various industries to increase the generalisability of the research results to a wider population. Additionally, the integration of other variables, such as stress levels, social support, and work culture, is necessary to provide a more holistic view of the factors that influence work-life balance. This broader approach is important for gaining a deeper

understanding of the various factors that influence work-life balance across different industries.

Managerial implications suggest that to achieve optimal results, companies need to adopt policies that support employee work-life balance through flexible work schedules, remote work options, and wellness programmes. This is important for improving engagement, loyalty, and productivity, while also enhancing the company's appeal to talent. In the Food & Beverage industry specifically, which often involves long and inflexible working hours, management must prioritise schedule flexibility, fair shift rotation, and equitable workload distribution, even when employee job satisfaction is already high. By doing so, companies can create a work environment that optimally supports employee well-being and productivity.

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