



Workload, Work Motivation, and Work Environment on Employee Work-Life Balance

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the partial and simultaneous effects of workload (X_1), work motivation (X_2), and work environment (X_3) on employees' work-life balance (Y) at Mie Gacoan Metro, a fast-casual restaurant enterprise in Metro City, Lampung, Indonesia.

Research Methodology: A quantitative associative design was used. All 35 employees of Mie Gacoan Metro were included using saturated (census) sampling. A structured Likert-scale questionnaire (1–5) was validated for construct validity ($r > 0.303$) and reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.60$). Classical assumption diagnostics (normality, linearity, and homogeneity) were conducted prior to the multiple linear regression analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 26.

Results: Work motivation (X_2) and work environment (X_3) positively influenced work-life balance (Y), while workload (X_1) was non-significant individually; all three variables jointly predicted Y ($F = 86.306, p = 0.000$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.948$).

Conclusions: Motivation and work environment are key levers for enhancing WLB, and workload effects are mediated or moderated by these factors, emphasizing the need for integrated HR policies.

Limitations: Small sample size, cross-sectional design, and the need for additional predictors and mediation/moderation analysis.

Contributions: Demonstrates that motivation, environment, and collegial support act as compensatory resources maintaining WLB and moderating workload effects in Indonesian fast-casual restaurants.

Keywords: Restaurant Employees, Work Environment, Work-Life Balance, Workload, Work Motivation

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1. Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) is an individual's capacity to manage and integrate the demands of professional work with the needs of personal life, family, and psychological well-being. It has become one of the most consequential constructs in contemporary human resource management (HRM) theory and practice (Mulang, 2022; Waworuntu et al., 2022). As economic development accelerates and labor market participation deepens across Southeast Asia's emerging economies, the structural conditions that enable or undermine WLB have attracted growing scholarly attention (Akbar & Zona, 2025; Solihin, 2021). In Indonesia, where the food service industry has expanded dramatically in recent years, driven by urbanization, rising middle-class consumer spending, and the proliferation of branded quick-service

restaurant chains, the WLB challenges confronting restaurant employees have emerged as a particularly pressing HRM issue that has received insufficient empirical attention (Vyas, 2022).

The food service sector's characteristic operational conditions—shift-based scheduling, peak-hour service intensity, mandatory standing positions, continuous customer interaction demands, and limited scheduling flexibility—create a structural WLB challenge that distinguishes restaurant employment from most other service industry categories (Fernandes & Awamleh, 2019). Research in hospitality management consistently documents that restaurant employees experience elevated rates of work-family conflict, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intention, with workload magnitude, motivational climate, and environmental conditions identified as primary organizational-level predictors of WLB outcomes (Pertiwi et al., 2023; Syihabudhin et al., 2019).

Mie Gacoan, operated by PT Pesta Pora Abadi since 2016, has grown into Indonesia's largest spicy noodle restaurant chain, with a modern fast-casual dining concept and an affordable pricing strategy that has generated high consumer traffic, particularly among the youth. The Metro City branch operates in a competitive, high-volume service environment characterized by significant variations in customer traffic across service periods, with peak rush hours during lunch and dinner service, weekend crowd surges, and promotional event-driven volume spikes. These operational dynamics create a working environment in which workload variability, motivational management, and physical and social working conditions are active and observable HRM challenges.

Prior research on WLB determinants in the Indonesian context has generally identified three organizational-level predictors as theoretically salient and empirically operative: workload, work motivation, and work environment (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022). Workload, the quantity and complexity of tasks assigned within a given time frame, is theoretically linked to WLB through the Resource Conservation theory (Hobfoll, 2001; Nugraha & Purnomo, 2022), which posits that excessive resource depletion through overwork reduces the personal resources available for non-work life domains. Work motivation—the internal and external drives that energize and direct employee effort—is linked to WLB through Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Satria, 2021), which distinguishes intrinsic motivation (autonomy, competence, relatedness) from extrinsic motivation (reward, recognition), with their respective WLB consequences depending on the motivational intensity and regulation type. The work environment, which encompasses the physical, social, and organizational conditions surrounding an employee, is associated with WLB through Social Support Theory (House, 1981) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). These frameworks position supportive environmental conditions as resources that mitigate job demands and facilitate WLB maintenance.

Despite robust theoretical grounding, empirical findings on the relationships between these predictors and WLB in Indonesian restaurants are mixed. Megayani et al. (Megayani et al., 2023) documented significant workload effects on WLB in a corporate manufacturing setting, while Pertiwi et al. (Pertiwi et al., 2023) found that workload effects were context-dependent and moderated by available coping resources. Runtu et al. (Runtu et al., 2022) confirmed significant work environment effects on WLB satisfaction in a service context, while Andinni and Harun (Andinni & Harun, 2024) documented the interactive effects of workload, motivation, and environment. The absence of studies specifically addressing fast-casual restaurant employees in secondary Indonesian cities, who face a distinctive combination of urban WLB pressures and limited formal HRM infrastructure, constitutes the primary research gap addressed in the present study.

This study is guided by four research questions: (RQ1) Does workload significantly affect employee WLB at Mie Gacoan Metro? (RQ2) Does work motivation significantly affect the WLB? (RQ3) Does the work environment significantly affect WLB? (RQ4) Do workload, work motivation, and work environment jointly and significantly predict WLB? This study contributes empirically by providing

the first quantitative analysis of WLB determinants specifically for Mie Gacoan Metro employees; theoretically, by testing multiple competing WLB theories within a fast-casual restaurant context; and practically, by generating evidence-based HRM policy recommendations for restaurant enterprise management.

2. Literature Review

2.1 *Work-Life Balance: Conceptual Foundations*

Work-life balance is defined as an individual's ability to simultaneously satisfy the demands of work and non-work roles, maintaining an equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal, family, and self-care needs (Purwanto, 2023; Zhafirah, 2024). This construct encompasses three fundamental life domains: the work domain (professional performance, career development, and organizational commitment), personal domain (health maintenance, recreational activities, and personal development), and family domain (domestic responsibilities, relationship quality, and parenting). Zhafirah (2024) elaborates that WLB requires not merely equal time allocation across domains but rather subjective satisfaction in each—a person may achieve WLB with imbalanced time allocation if each domain receives the quality of engagement it requires.

Ramdhani and Rasto (2021) synthesized the WLB literature to identify three categories of influencing factors: individual factors (personality, emotional intelligence, coping capacity), organizational factors (workload, job design, scheduling flexibility, organizational culture), and socio-environmental factors (family demands, community obligations, social norms). Among these, organizational factors—particularly workload and work environment—are the most directly manageable through HRM policy interventions, making them the primary focus of this research (Lumi & Yosef, 2022; Parmenas, 2021). WLB deficits generate well-documented organizational costs: elevated turnover intention, reduced organizational commitment, increased absenteeism, and lower performance quality—outcomes that are particularly consequential in customer-facing restaurant environments, where staff stability and service quality are commercially critical (Akbar & Zona, 2025).

2.2 *Workload and Work-Life Balance*

Workload is defined as the total amount of physical, cognitive, and emotional effort required to complete the assigned tasks within a defined timeframe (Mahawati et al., 2021). Quantitative workload refers to the volume of tasks assigned, whereas qualitative workload refers to the cognitive or emotional complexity of those tasks. Both dimensions can independently or jointly contribute to WLB disruption: quantitative overload reduces the time available for non-work activities, whereas qualitative overload depletes the cognitive and emotional resources needed to engage meaningfully in personal domains (Akhirudin & Purnomo, 2023; Hobfoll, 2001).

In the restaurant context, workload is particularly multidimensional: kitchen staff face a physical workload (food preparation, heat exposure, repetitive motions), service staff face an emotional workload (customer interaction management, smile requirement, complaint handling), and floor supervisors face a cognitive workload (staff coordination, inventory management, quality monitoring) simultaneously. Peak service periods—when Mie Gacoan's limited seating capacity generates high customer queuing pressure—create acute workload surges that may exceed employees' resource management capacities, triggering short-term WLB disruption (Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016).

However, theoretical predictions of the effects of workload on WLB are not uniformly negative. The conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2001) predicts that moderate workloads that are perceived as manageable may have negligible or even positive WLB effects if they are accompanied by adequate resource provisioning (social support, autonomy, fair compensation). Challenge-hindrance

stressor theory (Cavanaugh et al., 2000) further distinguishes challenge stressors—workloads that are perceived as developmentally demanding and growth-enabling—from hindrance stressors—workloads that are perceived as obstructing goal achievement and growth. Challenge workloads may not disrupt WLB if accompanied by high motivation and supportive environments, potentially explaining why the effects of workload on WLB are empirically inconsistent across contexts.

Syihabudhin et al. (2019) documented significant negative workload effects on WLB at a Malang hotel, while Pertiwi et al. (2023) found that workload effects were attenuated by adaptive coping strategies among employees with high personal resources. Pitriyani and Jaya (2024) confirmed the significance of workload in predicting WLB in a combined workload-performance context. The present study's non-significant workload partial effect ($p = 0.099$) is theoretically interpretable within both the COR framework—if workload levels at Mie Gacoan Metro are within manageable bounds—and the challenge-hindrance framework—if employees classify restaurant workload as a growth-oriented challenge rather than a career-blocking hindrance.

H₁: Workload has a significant effect on employees' work-life balance at Mie Gacoan Metro.

2.3 Work Motivation and Work-Life Balance

Work motivation is defined as the internal and external forces that initiate, direct, and sustain employee behavior toward achieving work-related goals (Khaeruman et al., 2023; Septiana et al., 2023). Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan (2000)) provides the most theoretically nuanced framework for understanding motivation-WLB linkages by distinguishing three motivational types: autonomous motivation (driven by intrinsic interest, values alignment, and identity integration), controlled motivation (driven by external rewards, social pressures, or guilt avoidance), and amotivation (absence of motivational regulation). SDT predicts that autonomous motivation supports WLB by enabling employees to engage in both work and non-work activities with genuine enthusiasm, whereas controlled motivation—particularly when high-intensity and achievement-pressured—can disrupt WLB by generating an imbalanced work-investment pattern (Nuraeni et al., 2022; Tahir, 2023).

The WLB effects of motivation also operate through Maslow's 1943 needs hierarchy and Herzberg's 1959 two-factor theory. When lower-order safety and physiological needs are inadequately met—as may occur when compensation is perceived as insufficient relative to work demands—employees may be extrinsically motivated to overwork in pursuit of financial security, disrupting their WLB. Conversely, when hygiene factors (compensation, working conditions, job security) are adequate and motivators (achievement, recognition, responsibility, growth) are activated, employees can pursue excellence in both work and personal domains without sacrificing one for the other (Parmenas, 2022; Purnamasari & Riyadi, 2023).

Empirical studies in the Indonesian context support the work motivation-WLB relationship. Megayani et al. (2023) found that work stress and work motivation jointly and significantly predicted WLB at multiple companies, with motivation serving as a positive moderator of stress-WLB relationships. Puspitawati and Mujiati (2023) demonstrated that work motivation mediates the WLB-job satisfaction relationship at a Kecamatan government office, establishing motivation as an intermediate mechanism through which WLB outcomes translate into performance outcomes. Puspitawati and Mujiati (2023) confirmed positive motivation effects on WLB in a manufacturing enterprise. The present study's finding of significant positive motivation effects ($t = 2.762, p = 0.010$) aligns with this literature and extends it to the fast-casual restaurant sector.

H₂: Work motivation has a significant positive effect on employees' work-life balance at Mie Gacoan Metro.

2.4 Work Environment and Work-Life Balance

The work environment is defined as the totality of the physical, social, and psychological conditions that surround employees in their workplace and influence their behavior, attitudes, and well-being (Nandaresta et al., 2025). The physical work environment encompasses ergonomic conditions (workstation design, lighting, ventilation, noise levels, and temperature), safety infrastructure, and aesthetic qualities of the workspace. The social work environment encompasses interpersonal relationships between employees and supervisors, collegial support quality, team cohesion, communication norms, and the organizational culture. The psychological work environment encompasses perceived fairness, organizational support, psychological safety, and the degree to which employees feel valued and respected (House, 1981; Runtu et al., 2022).

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the effects of the work environment on WLB. The JD-R model distinguishes job demands—physical, psychological, and organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological and psychological costs—from job resources—physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that facilitate goal achievement, reduce demands, and stimulate personal growth. A rich resource environment buffers the negative WLB effects of high demands by providing social support, autonomy, feedback, and supervisory guidance that help employees manage work pressure without depleting personal life resources (Valentin et al., 2023).

In the restaurant context, key work environment dimensions include kitchen ergonomics (temperature management, equipment accessibility, noise reduction), service floor design (customer flow management, staff movement efficiency), supervisory leadership style (supportive versus controlling management approaches), team cohesion (cooperative versus competitive peer relationships), and organizational climate (performance pressure versus developmental culture) (Rizkita et al., 2023). Runtu et al. (2022) documented significant positive work environment effects on WLB satisfaction at Kantor Pos Manado, with social support from colleagues identified as the most influential dimension. Andinni and Harun (2024) found the work environment significantly predicted job satisfaction and loyalty through a WLB pathway in manufacturing, confirming the dual direct and indirect WLB effects of the environment.

H₃: The work environment has a significant positive effect on the employees' work-life balance at Mie Gacoan Metro.

2.5 Simultaneous Effects on Work-Life Balance

The simultaneous prediction of WLB by workload, motivation, and environment reflects the holistic and interdependent nature of organizational factors in WLB determination. The JD-R model explicitly frames WLB outcomes as the result of a demand-resource balance: workload represents primary job demands, while motivation and work environment collectively represent the resource dimensions that buffer demand effects. When resources adequately compensate for demands, WLB is maintained or enhanced; when demands outpace resources, WLB deterioration occurs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Andinni and Harun (2024) found that workload, motivation, and environment jointly and significantly predicted job satisfaction and loyalty—outcomes theoretically downstream of WLB—in the Indonesian manufacturing context. Runtu et al. (2022) confirmed the joint significant effects on WLB satisfaction in a service organization. The interactive theoretical model predicts that a high workload combined with high motivation and a rich environment may be compatible with positive WLB because motivational and environmental resources compensate for workload demands, while the same workload level with low motivation and a poor environment would generate WLB deterioration. This interaction dynamic provides the theoretical framework for interpreting the present study's finding that workload is non-significant in isolation, but the joint three-variable model achieves Adjusted $R^2 = 0.948$.

H₄: Workload, work motivation, and work environment jointly and significantly predict employees' work-life balance at Mie Gacoan Metro.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Setting

This study employs a quantitative associative research design that examines the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of the relationships among the measured variables (Sugiyono, 2019). The quantitative approach is grounded in positivist epistemology and is appropriate because the study's objective is hypothesis testing regarding the organizational-level predictors of WLB. The research was conducted at Mie Gacoan Metro, located in Yosorejo, East Metro District, Metro City, Lampung Province, Indonesia. This enterprise was selected because of its documented WLB challenges, including high-intensity service operations, shift scheduling demands, and variable customer traffic patterns, and its representative typicality of the broader fast-casual restaurant sector in Indonesian secondary cities.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The research population comprised all 35 employees of Mie Gacoan Metro, including kitchen staff, service floor staff, cashiers, and supervisory personnel. Given the small and clearly bounded nature of this population, a saturated (census) sampling technique was employed in which all population members served as respondents (Sugiyono, 2019). This approach eliminates sampling error and ensures that the findings represent the complete workforce rather than a probabilistic subset—an important consideration for an enterprise of this scale, where losing even a few respondents could substantially reduce statistical power. Of the 35 registered employees, 33 completed the questionnaires during the data collection period (94.3% effective response rate), with two respondents absent during fieldwork.

3.3 Measurement Instruments and Operationalization

Primary data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire employing a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree). Table 1 presents the construct's operationalization.

Table 1. Variable Operationalization

Variable	Construct Definition	Indicators / Items	Source
Workload (X ₁)	Volume and complexity of tasks assigned within a given timeframe	Task quantity; Task difficulty; Time pressure; Physical demand; Cognitive demand; Emotional demand (18 items)	Mahawati et al. (2021); Hobfoll (2001)
Work Motivation (X ₂)	Internal and external drives energizing and directing work behavior	Achievement orientation; Affiliation need; Power need; Intrinsic reward; Extrinsic reward; Growth aspiration (21 items)	Deci and Ryan (2000); Septiana et al. (2023)
Work Environment (X ₃)	Physical, social, and psychological conditions surrounding the employee	Physical facilities; Workplace cleanliness; Safety conditions; Peer social support; Supervisory support (10 items)	House (1981); Nandaresta et al. (2025)
Work-Life Balance (Y)	Ability to simultaneously fulfill work and non-work life domain demands	Time balance; Energy balance; Role involvement quality; Personal life satisfaction; Family time; Self-care maintenance (20 items)	Ramdhani and Rasto (2021); Zhafirah (2024)

Based on Table 1, content validity was established through an expert review by two HRM academics at Universitas Muhammadiyah Metro. Construct validity was confirmed using the Pearson product-moment correlation. All 69 questionnaire items across the four constructs exceeded the r -critical threshold of 0.303 ($n = 35, \alpha = 0.05$), confirming that all items were statistically valid measures of their respective constructs. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha: workload ($\alpha = 0.864$), work motivation ($\alpha = 0.848$), work environment ($\alpha = 0.771$), and work-life balance ($\alpha = 0.663$). The first three constructs exceeded the commonly applied threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), while WLB at 0.663 satisfied the more permissive 0.60 threshold (Ghozali, 2018), indicating adequate, though somewhat lower, internal consistency.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis was conducted in two sequential stages. In the first stage, three classical assumption diagnostics were conducted: normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov; asymptotic Sig. > 0.05 indicates normal distribution), linearity (Pearson correlation and R-squared test; $p < 0.05$ indicates a significant linear relationship), and homogeneity (Levene's test and Bartlett's test; $p > 0.05$ indicates homogeneous variance across groups). In the second stage, multiple linear regression was performed.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

where Y is work-life balance, X_1 is workload, X_2 is work motivation, X_3 is work environment, α is the intercept, β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 are partial regression coefficients, and ε is the error term. Partial t -tests ($\alpha = 0.05$) were used to test H_1 , H_2 , and H_3 . The F -test was used to assess H_4 . The adjusted R^2 quantifies the model's explanatory power. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were used to assess multicollinearity. All analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 (Ghozali, 2018).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Validity and Reliability Results

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Items	Cronbach's α	Threshold	Status
Workload (X_1)	18	0.864	≥ 0.60	Reliable ✓
Work Motivation (X_2)	21	0.848	≥ 0.60	Reliable ✓
Work Environment (X_3)	10	0.771	≥ 0.60	Reliable ✓
Work-Life Balance (Y)	20	0.663	≥ 0.60	Adequate ✓

Source: Primary data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.

Based on Table 2, all questionnaire items across the four constructs successfully passed the validity test: every item's corrected item-total correlation (r -calculated) exceeded the critical value of r -table = 0.303 ($n = 35, \alpha = 0.05$). The workload items ranged from $r = 0.328$ to 0.927, work motivation items from $r = 0.311$ to 0.943, work environment items from $r = 0.320$ to 0.922, and WLB items from $r = 0.339$ to 0.934.

4.1.2 Classical Assumption Test Results

The normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) applied to the model's residuals returned a significance value exceeding 0.05, confirming that the residuals were normally distributed and that the parametric regression inference was valid. The Normal P-P Plot corroborated this finding, with data points closely tracking the

diagonal reference line throughout the distribution range, indicating minimal systematic deviation from normality.

Table 3. Linearity Test Results (Pearson Correlation)

Relationship	Pearson r	p-value	R ² (%)	Conclusion
X ₁ → Y (Workload)	-0.029	0.870	0.09	Non-linear relationship
X ₂ → Y (Work Motivation)	0.536	0.001	28.77	Linear relationship ✓
X ₃ → Y (Work Environment)	0.609	<0.001	37.21	Linear relationship ✓

Source: Primary data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26

Table 4. Homogeneity of Variance Test Results

Variable	Levene Stat.	Levene p	Bartlett Stat.	Bartlett p	Conclusion
Workload (X ₁)	0.077	0.782	0.184	0.667	Homogeneous ✓
Work Motivation (X ₂)	16.96	0.202	21.76	0.140	Homogeneous ✓
Work Environment (X ₃)	0.55	0.462	0.340	0.559	Homogeneous ✓

Source: Primary data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26

Based on Table 3, the linearity test revealed an important structural characteristic of the data: workload (X₁) exhibited no significant linear relationship with WLB ($r = -0.029$, $p = 0.870$, $R^2 = 0.09\%$), whereas work motivation ($r = 0.536$, $p = 0.001$, $R^2 = 28.77\%$) and work environment ($r = 0.609$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 37.21\%$) showed significant positive linear relationships. This pattern provides an important context for interpreting the regression results. Based on Table 4, all homogeneity tests returned significance values above 0.05 for both Levene and Bartlett tests across all three predictors, confirming equal variance across variable groups and validating the regression assumptions.

4.1.3 Multiple Linear Regression Results

The regression coefficients are presented in Table 5. The estimated equation is as follows:

$$Y = 48.745 - 0.138X_1 + 0.228X_2 + 0.428X_3$$

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients (n = 33)

Variable	B	Std. Error	β (Std.)	t	Sig.	VIF
Constant	48.745	10.188	–	4.785	< .001	–
Workload (X ₁)	-0.138	0.081	-0.279	-1.702	0.099	1.568
Work Motivation (X ₂)	0.228	0.082	0.512	2.762	0.010*	2.001
Work Environment (X ₃)	0.428	0.188	0.361	2.273	0.031*	1.474

Dependent variable: Work–life balance (Y). Adjusted R² = 0.948; F = 86.306; p = 0.000. *p < 0.05. All VIF values were < 10 (no multicollinearity).

Source: Primary data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26

Based on Table 5, the constant (48.745) represents the theoretical WLB baseline when all the predictors are equal to zero. The workload coefficient ($\beta_1 = -0.138$; $\beta_{std} = -0.279$) was negative but non-significant ($p = 0.099$), indicating a directionally negative workload-WLB relationship that did not reach conventional significance thresholds. The work motivation coefficient ($\beta_2 = 0.228$; $\beta_{std} = 0.512$) was positive and significant ($p = 0.010$), establishing motivation as the most powerful individual predictor

by standardized coefficient. The work environment coefficient ($\beta_3 = 0.428$; $\beta_{\text{std}} = 0.361$) was positive and significant ($p = 0.031$). All VIF values were substantially below 10 (1.568, 2.001, and 1.474, respectively), confirming the absence of multicollinearity. The model's Adjusted R^2 of 0.948 indicates exceptional explanatory power.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 H_1 : Effect of Workload on Work-Life Balance

The partial t -test for workload yields $t = -1.702$ ($p = 0.099 > 0.05$), leading to non-rejection of H_0 and rejection of H_1 : workload does not exert a statistically significant partial effect on WLB at Mie Gacoan Metro. The negative coefficient direction ($\beta_1 = -0.138$) is theoretically consistent with COR theory's prediction that workload depletes resources available for personal life; however, this depletion effect is insufficient to reach significance at the 5% threshold.

Several theoretical explanations account for this nonsignificant finding. First, COR theory's resource-adequacy hypothesis suggests that moderate workloads remain within employees' manageable resource boundaries—the level at which workload demands can be absorbed without threatening personal domain functioning. Restaurant employees who have developed efficient operational routines, strong team coordination, and coping competencies through experience may perceive the workload as taxing but manageable rather than overwhelmingly disruptive. Second, challenge-hindrance stressor theory (Cavanaugh et al., 2000) proposes that workloads perceived as growth-enabling challenges generate positive engagement that can coexist with maintained WLB, consistent with the restaurant context, where service performance achievements can provide intrinsic satisfaction. Third, the linearity test finding ($r = -0.029$, $R^2 = 0.09\%$) indicates virtually no linear relationship between workload and WLB in this sample, suggesting that any workload-WLB relationship may be curvilinear (moderate workload neutral, extreme workload disruptive) rather than linear.

This finding is consistent with Pertiwi et al. (2023), who documented context-dependent workload effects attenuated by coping resources, and aligns with the broader theoretical insight from the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) that workload alone is an insufficient predictor of WLB outcomes; it is the demand-resource balance that determines WLB, not demand level in isolation.

4.2.2 H_2 : Effect of Work Motivation on Work-Life Balance

The partial t -test for work motivation yielded $t = 2.762$ ($p = 0.010 < 0.05$), supporting H_2 : work motivation significantly and positively affects WLB. The standardized coefficient ($\beta_{\text{std}} = 0.512$) establishes motivation as the most influential individual predictor of WLB in terms of the standardized effect magnitude. This result confirms that higher work motivation is associated with improved WLB among Mie Gacoan Metro employees in Bandar Lampung.

The mechanism through which motivation enhances WLB is multifaceted. From an SDT perspective, employees whose motivation is primarily autonomous—grounded in genuine interest in their work, alignment between work activities and personal values, and intrinsic satisfaction with service quality—are better equipped to engage intensely with work responsibilities without generating the resentment and exhaustion that characterize controlled motivation. Autonomous motivation enables adaptive time and energy management: highly motivated employees proactively organize their work activities to maximize efficiency during work hours, reducing residual work stress that would otherwise spill into personal time. From a needs-hierarchy perspective, employees whose motivational needs are substantially met through their work—including achievement recognition, collegial belonging, and growth opportunity—experience work as a fulfilling rather than depleting life domain, reducing the perceived trade-off between work investment and personal life quality.

This finding is consistent with Megayani et al. (2023), who documented positive motivation-WLB rela-

tionships across multiple organizational contexts, and with [Puspitawati and Mujiati \(2023\)](#), who found that motivation positively moderated WLB's effect of WLB on job satisfaction. For Mie Gacoan Metro management, this result carries important practical implications: investing in employee motivational conditions—through recognition programs, competency development opportunities, performance-based incentives, and meaningful participation in service quality improvements—is predicted to generate measurable WLB improvements that lead to lower turnover, higher service quality, and stronger organizational commitment.

4.2.3 *H₃: Effect of Work Environment on Work-Life Balance*

The partial *t*-test for the work environment yielded $t = 2.273$ ($p = 0.031 < 0.05$), supporting *H₃*: the work environment significantly and positively affects WLB. The unstandardized coefficient ($\beta_3 = 0.428$) was the largest of the three predictors, confirming the work environment as the strongest unit-for-unit WLB predictor. This result establishes that better work environment conditions are associated with substantially higher WLB scores among Mie Gacoan Metro employees.

Social support from colleagues—identified as the dominant work environment indicator by item-total correlation analysis—emerged as the primary mechanism through which environmental conditions affect WLB in this study. Social Support Theory ([House, 1981](#)) identifies four functional support types: emotional support (expressions of empathy and care), instrumental support (practical task assistance), informational support (guidance and advice), and appraisal support (feedback enabling self-evaluation). In the restaurant context, all four support types are operationally relevant: colleagues who cover for absent team members (instrumental support), share workload management strategies (informational support), provide encouragement during service rushes (emotional support), and offer constructive performance feedback (appraisal support) collectively create an environmental buffer that reduces the personal resource cost of demanding service work. This buffering effect—the ability to face demanding service conditions with social backing—directly enhances WLB by preventing resource depletion when demanding work must be navigated without collegial support.

The JD-R model ([Bakker & Demerouti, 2017](#)) further explains this result: a rich social resource environment transforms the demand-resource equation by providing employees with relational capital that sustains motivation, reduces job-related anxiety, and facilitates effective coping. [Runtu et al. \(2022\)](#) documented comparable findings at a Manado service organization, confirming that supportive work environments are significant predictors of WLB satisfaction. [Andinni and Harun \(2024\)](#) provide corroborating evidence from the Indonesian manufacturing context. The consistent cross-context replication of the work environment-WLB relationship strengthens confidence in its generalizability and underscores the strategic importance of environmental management as a WLB intervention lever.

4.2.4 *H₄: Joint Effect on Work-Life Balance*

The *F*-test yields $F = 86.306$ ($p = 0.000 < 0.001$), providing overwhelming support for *H₄*: workload, work motivation, and work environment jointly and significantly predicted WLB. The Adjusted $R^2 = 0.948$ indicates that the three predictors collectively explain 94.8% of the variance in WLB, an exceptionally high explanatory power value for a social science study with a small sample ($n = 33$).

The joint significance of all three variables, despite the non-significance of workload in isolation, is theoretically interpretable within the JD-R demand-resource balance framework. The model captures a demand-resource interaction that individual predictor analysis cannot: workload (demand) combined with work motivation and work environment (resources) creates a full demand-resource configuration that determines WLB outcomes. When motivation and the environment are high, the negative workload effect (demand) is compensated for, maintaining WLB. When motivation or the environment is low, even a moderate workload can generate WLB disruption. This compensatory interaction explains why

the three-variable model achieves exceptional explanatory power, while workload alone does not reach significance; its WLB effect is conditioned on the motivational and environmental context within which it operates.

The very high Adjusted R^2 (94.8%) should be interpreted with caution, given the small sample size ($n = 33$), which may produce inflated R^2 estimates due to overfitting. Future studies with larger samples are necessary to assess the stability of this estimate. Nevertheless, the directional findings—positive significant effects of motivation and environment, non-significant workload partial effect, and significant joint model—are consistent with theoretical predictions and prior literature, suggesting that the basic empirical structure of the results is robust enough.

5. Conclusions

This study revealed that workload does not have a statistically significant effect on employees' work-life balance (WLB) at Mie Gacoan Metro. The near-zero linear correlation between workload and WLB suggests that current workload levels may be within employees' manageable coping range or that the effects of workload are non-linear and mediated by motivational and environmental resources. In contrast, work motivation and work environment significantly and positively influence WLB, with motivation emerging as the strongest individual predictor. Collectively, workload, motivation, and environment explain 94.8% of the variance in WLB, demonstrating that motivational and environmental resources can effectively compensate for job demands, enabling employees to maintain a balanced integration of professional and personal life domains.

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Author Contributions

DA conceptualized the research framework, supervised the data analysis, and provided critical revisions. AJ collected, processed, and analyzed financial data and prepared the initial manuscript draft. AR contributed to the interpretation of results, validated calculations, and assisted in manuscript revisions. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript for submission.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study. This research was conducted independently, and no financial or personal relationships influenced the results or interpretation of the findings.

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