



## Optimization of Career Development, Work-Life Balance, and Stress Management to Improve Employee Performance in Leather Craftsman SMEs

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### ABSTRACT

This research comprehensively analyzes the impact of career development, work-life balance, and stress management on the performance of leather artisans in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The MSME sector plays a strategic role in the national economy, especially in creating jobs and contributing to GDP. However, employees in this sector often face challenges such as production pressures, limited professional development, and high workloads, which can affect performance. The quality of human resources, including low skills, is also a problem faced by leather artisans. This study employs a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to 186 employees of MSME leather assistants. The results of the study indicate that career development, work-life balance, and stress management have a significant impact on employee performance on employee performance, both part Based on these findings, this research formulates implementation strategies that include skills training programs, flexible work policies, as well as work environment-based stress management approaches that support. Training by related agencies, such as management and skills, along with the provision of facilities, such as supporting machinery, is expected to enhance production results and quality. This research provides theoretical and practical contributions and serves as a guide for MSME owners to manage human resources more effectively and sustainably.

**Keywords:** Career Development; Employee Performance; Stress Management; Work Life Balance

## 1. Introduction

In the era of globalization and rapidly developing global economic integration, the national economy no longer relies solely on large sectors and high-capital industries. One of the main pillars supporting Indonesia's economic stability is the presence of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). MSMEs have become the backbone of the economy, both in creating jobs and driving economic growth, and by developing innovative, high-value local products (Suwandi et al., 2021). One of the MSME subsectors that shows rapid growth and high competitiveness, both in domestic and international markets, is the leather craft industry. Products such as bags, shoes, wallets, belts, and leather jackets have become flagship commodities that not only reflect the quality and uniqueness of local culture but also possess high aesthetic appeal and selling value. With increasing demand from both local and international markets, this subsector offers promising economic opportunities, especially in areas with leather industry centers. However, behind this great economic potential lie several challenges that need to be addressed, particularly those related to human resource management.

One important issue that is still often overlooked in the management of MSMEs, especially in the leather craft industry, is employee career development. MSMEs, due to their small- to medium-scale businesses, tend to have a simple organizational structure. This leads to human resource management practices not being structured professionally as found in large corporations (Fitro, 2024). Career development often has not become a top priority, even though employees are a crucial asset that determines the sustainability and growth of the business. When employees are given opportunities to enhance their capacity, receive training, and have clarity on career progression, they will feel valued and more motivated in their work. This, in turn, will increase their loyalty, commitment, and performance towards the organization.

In addition to career development, the balance between work and personal life, commonly known as work-life balance, is also an important concern in the modern workplace. This concept is becoming increasingly relevant, especially in the MSME work environment, which is known for its flexibility but often has high job demands, such as strict production targets, irregular working hours, and limitations in workforce and resources. In the leather craft industry, where work demands precision, perseverance, and high creativity, the balance between work and personal life becomes very important. When employees can balance these two aspects, they will work more productively, be more focused, and have lower stress levels.

On the other hand, an unbalanced working condition can lead to various problems. Employees who constantly work under pressure and lack time for their personal lives will experience work stress (Bukara et al., 2024). Poorly managed stress can result in decreased work motivation, increased mistakes in production, declining quality of work output, and even higher absenteeism and turnover rates. This is certainly detrimental to the company, as recruiting and training new employees requires significant time and cost. Therefore, SMEs need to start paying attention to stress management aspects in their workforce management. Another factor exacerbating stress conditions in SME work environments is the lack of a structured management system, particularly in workload management, task delegation, and the creation of a conducive work environment.

Many SMEs still rely on traditional work systems that lack clear policies and procedures. As a result, employees often have to handle multiple tasks simultaneously, without systematic guidance, thereby increasing psychological pressure and physical fatigue. This imbalance, if sustained, can reduce employees' overall quality of life. In this context, employee welfare-oriented human resource management strategies become increasingly important. SMEs need to

adopt a more modern, humane management approach that focuses not only on achieving production and sales targets but also on creating a healthy, productive work environment.

One approach is work stress management, a systematic effort by organizations to identify, reduce, and manage factors that cause stress in the workplace. This strategy includes several aspects, such as allocating proportional workloads, fostering effective internal communication, providing adequate breaks, and offering social and psychological support to employees. It is also important for SMEs to begin implementing sustainable employee development programs, including technical and non-technical skill training, mentoring and coaching, and incentives and rewards. By creating a clear career development system, employees will feel they have a better future at their workplace. This not only impacts individual performance but will also strengthen the overall competitiveness of SMEs.

In the modern dynamic work world, where technological changes and consumer preferences occur rapidly, MSMEs are required to be not only productively adaptive but also in human resource management. MSMEs need to realize that investing in employees is a long-term investment that yields tangible results in improving efficiency, effectiveness, and production quality. Therefore, career development, work-life balance, and stress management are no longer choices but necessities for achieving business sustainability. Based on this explanation, it is highly relevant to examine further the relationships among career development, work-life balance, and work stress in the MSME environment, particularly in the leather craft industry. Research in this field is expected to make a real contribution, both from an academic and a practical perspective, in order to enhance the competitiveness of MSMEs by improving the quality of human resource management.

The novelty of this research lies in MSMEs in the leather craft subsector, which exhibit unique characteristics, including creative products with high aesthetic value and increasing market demand, both domestically and internationally. This study simultaneously examines the relationships among career development, work-life balance, and work stress, a topic rarely studied in the context of MSMEs, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the factors influencing employee performance. Additionally, this research highlights the challenges of human resource management in the simple, informal environment of MSMEs, including the lack of organizational structure, irregular workload management, and suboptimal career development practices. By linking aspects of modern human resource management with the context of MSME adaptation to the era of globalization and economic integration, this research provides direct practical implications for improving productivity, employee welfare, and the competitiveness of MSMEs, thus making it a new contribution both academically and practically.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Career Development**

Career development is a process undertaken by individuals and organizations to enhance employees' skills, competencies, and career progression in achieving higher work goals. Career development is defined as the process of improving an individual's work capabilities to achieve a desired career plan (Rivai & Sagala, 2016). In line with this, career development is also viewed as a self-improvement process in achieving career goals that must be facilitated by the organization (Sutrisno, 2019). Furthermore, career development is not only the individual's responsibility but also part of the organization's strategy in managing its human resources (Mu'ah, 2017). In the context of MSMEs, particularly leather craftsmen, career development can

involve training in technical skills such as design and leather crafting, as well as understanding the use of new technologies in production.

Effective career development includes mapping career paths, assessing competencies, and implementing structured coaching and mentoring programs (Noe et al., 2017). It is also important to integrate individual career planning with the organization's strategic goals to create continuity in human resource development. Empirical evidence shows that sustainable career development in the MSME sector contributes to increased productivity and employee loyalty (Handoko, 2020). In addition, well-designed career development can create job satisfaction and enhance organizational competitiveness (Hasibuan, 2020). The hypothesis test results indicate that career development has a significant effect on the performance of MSME employees.

## **2.2. Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance is defined as an individual's ability to balance work and family responsibilities while remaining engaged in non-work activities. It is also described as an individual's ability to balance professional needs with personal and family needs (Prakoso, 2023). Furthermore, work-life balance refers to the equilibrium between work and personal life in which employees can carry out both roles in proportion (Hidayatullah, 2022). From this perspective, balance is essential, yet many employees still struggle to manage work demands alongside their personal health. The hypothesis test results indicate that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

## **2.3. Work Stress**

Work stress is defined as a state of tension that creates physical and psychological imbalances, affecting an individual's emotions, thought processes, and physical condition (Gaol, 2020). Poorly managed work stress can trigger physical health problems and reduce work productivity (Ivancevich et al., 2014). Work stress may also arise from excessive workload, unclear role expectations, and interpersonal conflict in the workplace (Luthans, 2013). In addition, organizational factors, such as the work environment and leadership practices, contribute significantly to employee stress (Gibson et al., 2012). The results of the hypothesis testing in this study indicate that work stress has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

## **2.4. Employee Performance**

Systematic organizational interventions can significantly reduce the risk of work-related stress (Leka et al., 2011). Employee performance is a key indicator in evaluating the success of carrying out the tasks and responsibilities assigned by the organization. Performance is defined as the quality and quantity of work employees achieve in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to them (Mangkunegara, 2021). It includes not only work results but also behavior demonstrated during task execution (Kasmir, 2020). Employee performance is also influenced by ability, motivation, and the work environment (Afandi, 2021). In MSMEs of leather craftsmen, performance reflects the outcomes of technical skills, creativity in design, and timeliness in completing orders. Moreover, performance is shaped by objective performance evaluation systems and periodic feedback from the organization (Mathis & Jackson, 2019).

Providing rewards and recognition for employee achievements can enhance motivation and work productivity (Dessler, 2017). Continuous training and technical skill development are also necessary to maintain high performance in the long term (Bernardin & Russell, 2013). Various

empirical findings from previous studies indicate a significant relationship between career development, work-life balance, work stress, and employee performance, particularly in the context of SMEs. The results of the hypothesis testing show that career development, work-life balance, and work stress simultaneously have a positive and significant impact on employee performance. This finding is consistent with the literature, which demonstrates that these three factors individually contribute to enhancing productivity, motivation, and employee loyalty.

### **3. Research Methodology**

This research employs a quantitative approach, using a survey as the primary strategy to measure relationships among the studied variables. A quantitative design was selected because it enables the objective, measurable examination of the influence of the independent variables, career development, work-life balance, and stress management, on the dependent variable, namely, employee performance.

This study was conducted at MSMEs of leather craftsmen located in the Cibaduyut production center, an area widely recognized as a hub of the leather handicraft industry. The research subjects are employees in this sector, including those in production lines, marketing, and managerial roles. A total of 186 employees were selected as respondents through stratified random sampling. This sampling method uses stratification by job level, ensuring that all employee groups are proportionally represented in the data collection.

The independent variables in this study comprise three dimensions. First, career development (X1), which includes career clarity, self-development, and performance quality improvement (Busro, 2018). Second, work-life balance (X2), which covers time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance (Greenhaus et al., 2003). Third, stress management (X3), which includes identifying stress sources, individual coping strategies, social and organizational support, and time and workload management (Ivancevich et al., 2014). Meanwhile, the dependent variable, employee performance (Y), is measured through four primary dimensions: work quantity, work quality, timeliness, and teamwork ability.

Data collection in this research employed two main techniques. The first was a survey questionnaire designed using a five-point Likert scale, aimed at capturing employees' perceptions of the three independent variables and their own performance. Prior to distribution, the instrument underwent validity and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha to ensure measurement consistency and accuracy. In addition, direct workplace observations were conducted to document actual conditions, including employee interactions, established work patterns, and workload dynamics. These observations were intended to support the interpretation of quantitative findings and provide analytical depth.

Data analysis was conducted using path analysis to examine the magnitude of each independent variable's influence on employee performance. Hypothesis testing was carried out at a 5% significance level, meaning that decisions regarding hypothesis acceptance were based on a maximum error probability of 5%. The analysis results are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how career development, work-life balance, and stress management contribute to improving employee performance in MSMEs of leather craftsmen in Cibaduyut.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Validity Testing**

To test the validity of the items in each variable, Pearson's product-moment correlation was used between the item scores and the total score of the construct. From the validity test results

for the variables of Career Development ( $X_1$ ), Work-life Balance ( $X_2$ ), Stress Management ( $X_3$ ), and Employee Performance ( $Y$ ), they are stated to be valid, as they meet the criteria of calculated  $r$  value  $> r_{table}$  ( $n = 186, \alpha = 0.05 \rightarrow r_{table} = 0.300$ ), and the results of the calculated  $t > t_{table}$ .

#### 4.2. Reliability Test

The reliability test uses Cronbach’s alpha to assess each variable’s reliability.

**Table 1. Reliability Test**

Variable	Indicator	Cronbach’s Alpha	Explanation
Career Development ( $X_1$ )	5	0.875	Reliable
Work-Life Balance ( $X_2$ )	5	0.832	Reliable
Stress Management ( $X_3$ )	5	0.791	Reliable
Employee Performance ( $Y$ )	5	0.851	Reliable

Source: Data processed by the Researcher (2025)

Based on the reliability test results presented in the table, all research variables have Cronbach’s Alpha values above 0.70, indicating good internal consistency and reliability. The Career Development variable ( $X_1$ ) obtained the highest value of 0.875, indicating that the indicators used are very reliable in measuring aspects of career development. The Work-Life Balance variable ( $X_2$ ) has a value of 0.832, indicating high reliability in representing the balance between personal life and work. The Stress Management variable ( $X_3$ ) with a value of 0.791 falls into the reliable category; although slightly lower than the other variables, it still meets the good reliability criteria. Meanwhile, the Employee Performance variable ( $Y$ ) shows a value of 0.851, which means the employee performance indicators can be relied upon to measure this variable. Overall, these results indicate that all the instruments used in this study are suitable for further analysis, as they demonstrate good reliability.

#### 4.3. Descriptive Analysis

**Table 2. Career Development ( $X_1$ )**

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career Clarity	3.5618	0.8435
Self-Development	3.7715	0.9580
Performance Quality Improvement	2.9355	0.9893

Source: Data processed by the Researcher (2025)

Based on **Table 2**, the Career Development dimension ( $X_1$ ) shows varying results. Self-Development scores highest (mean 3.77; Std Dev, 0.96), indicating adequate training and skill enhancement. Career Clarity is fairly good (mean 3.56; SD 0.84), while Performance Quality Improvement is lowest (mean 2.94; SD 0.99), indicating it needs greater attention. Overall, career development is in the fairly good category but not yet optimal, especially in improving performance quality.

**Table 3. Work-Life Balance (X2)**

No.	Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Time Balance	3.9449	0.3557
2	Involvement Balance	3.4812	0.7447
3	Satisfaction Balance	3.2623	0.7962

Source: Data processed by the Researcher (2025)

The results show that Time Balance (3.9449; 0.3557) is good, with a consistent distribution of answers. Involvement Balance (3.4812; 0.7447) is in the fairly good category but shows greater variation in opinions, while Satisfaction Balance (3.2623; 0.7962) remains low and therefore requires attention. Overall, time management is quite good, but employee satisfaction and involvement in work-life balance need improvement.

**Table 4. Stress Management (X3)**

No.	Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Identification of Stress Sources	3.9982	0.6471
2	Individual Coping Strategies	3.2662	1.0564
3	Social and Organizational	3.0187	0.6794
4	Support Time and Workload Management	3.5094	0.9294

Source: Data processed by the Researcher (2025)

Based on the table, the Stress Source Identification dimension has the highest mean (3.9982) and the lowest standard deviation (0.6471), indicating that employees are quite capable of consistently recognizing the causes of stress. Time Management and Workload also fall into the good category (3.5094; 0.9294). However, Individual Coping Strategies (3.2662; 1.0564) and Social and Organizational Support (3.0187; 0.6794) are relatively lower, indicating a need for greater organizational support and stronger individual coping skills to manage work stress.

**Table 5. Employee Performance (Y)**

No.	Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Work Quantity	3.8700	0.7985
2	Work Quality	4.0556	0.8422
3	Timeliness	4.1065	0.9361
4	Teamwork	2.1586	0.6870
5	Discipline and Responsibility	3.9343	0.9363

Source: Data processed by the Researcher (2025)

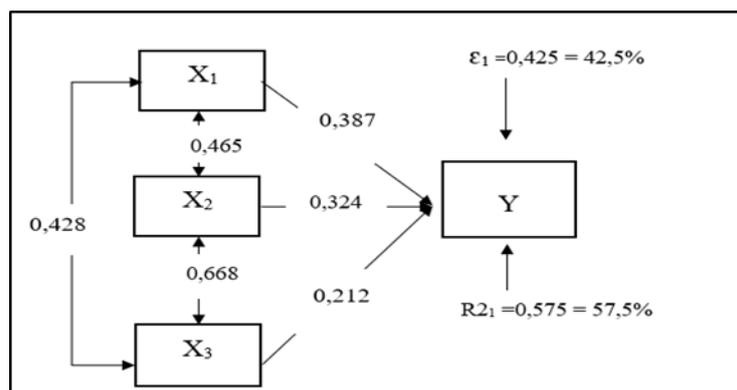
Based on the table, Timeliness (4.1065; 0.9361) and Work Quality (4.0556; 0.8422) show good performance with fairly consistent response distribution. Discipline and Responsibility (3.9343; 0.9363) also falls into the good category. Work Quantity (3.8700; 0.7985) indicates a relatively adequate work quantity. However, Teamwork (2.1586; 0.6870) has the lowest score,

indicating that teamwork is still suboptimal and requires special attention for improvement. Overall, individual performance is quite good, but team synergy remains a major challenge.

#### 4.4. Verificative Analysis

Based on the calculation results using the SPSS 26 program, the path coefficient values are obtained as described in the table below:

#### The Influence of Career Development (X<sub>1</sub>), Work Life Balance (X<sub>2</sub>), and Stress Management (X<sub>3</sub>) on Employee Performance (Y)



**Figure 1. Path Analysis Model**

Based on **Figure 1**, the path equation is obtained as follows:

$$Y = 0.387 (X_1) + 0.324 (X_2) + 0.212 (X_3) + \varepsilon$$

#### The Effect of Career Development (X<sub>1</sub>), Work-life Balance (X<sub>2</sub>), and Stress Management (X<sub>3</sub>) on Employee Performance (Y)

**Table 6. Path Coefficient Values**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.070	4.131		0.985	0.326
X1	0.549	0.079	0.387	6.989	0.000
X2	0.294	0.060	0.324	4.915	0.000
X3	0.261	0.083	0.212	3.141	0.002

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Based on **Table 6**, the path coefficients indicate that variable X<sub>1</sub> has a path coefficient of 0.387, X<sub>2</sub> has 0.324, and X<sub>3</sub> has 0.212. Among the four variables mentioned, career development has the greatest influence on employee performance, followed by work-life balance and stress management. This is because factors related to career development can directly enhance work motivation, strengthen employee commitment to the organization, and encourage improvements in professionalism in task performance.

**Table 7. The Influence of Career Development (X1), Work-life Balance (X2), and Stress Management (X3) on Employee Performance (Y)**

R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
					F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
0.758 <sup>a</sup>	0.575	0.568	3.14032	0.575	82.145	3	182	0.000

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS 26 (2025)

**Table 7** shows that the R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.575, indicating that 57.5% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the three independent variables in the path analysis model. Other factors outside the model explain the remaining 42.5%.

The Adjusted R-Square value of 0.568 indicates the coefficient of determination adjusted for the number of variables and samples, and it still shows that the model has strong and stable explanatory power. The Sig. change value of 0.000 indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, meaning that the independent variables simultaneously affect the dependent variable.

#### 4.5. Hypothesis Testing

**Table 8. Career Development Variables (X1), Worklife Balance (X2), and Stress Management (X3), Partially Towards Employee Performance Variables (Y)**

Structural Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-count	t-table	Conclusion
$\rho_{yX_1}$ (Career Development → Employee Performance)	0.387	6.989	1.66	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected. Career development has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
$\rho_{yX_2}$ (Work-Life Balance → Employee Performance)	0.324	4.915	1.66	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected. Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
$\rho_{yX_3}$ (Stress Management → Employee Performance)	0.212	3.141	1.66	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected. Stress management has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Source: Data Processed by the Researcher (2025)

**Table 9. Simultaneous Effects of Career Development (X1), Work-Life Balance (X2), and Stress Management (X3) on Employee Performance (Y)**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2430.251	3	810.084	82.145	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	1794.808	182	9.862		
Total	4225.059	185			

Notes:

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance (Y)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stress Management (X3), Career Development (X1), Work-Life Balance (X2)

Source: Data Processed by the Researcher (2025)

Based on the calculations in Table 9, the calculated F value is 82.145, where the criterion to reject  $H_0$  is if F calculated is greater than  $F_{table}$  or  $F_0 > F_{table}$ , with degrees of freedom  $v_1 = 2$  and  $v_2 = 186 - 2$  and a confidence level of 95%, the F distribution table shows that the F table value is 2.68. Since 82.145 is greater than 2.68,  $H_0$  is rejected, indicating that there is a linear relationship between Career Development (X1), Worklife Balance (X2), and Stress Management (X3), both partially and simultaneously, with the Employee Performance variable (Y). This can be interpreted as a positive and significant simultaneous effect (together) of Career Development (X1), Worklife Balance (X2), and Stress Management (X3), both partially and simultaneously on the Employee Performance variable (Y), with a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) = 0.575 or 57.5% and the influence of variables outside the model being 42.5% (error var = 0.425).

## 5. Discussion

Career development reflects the efforts of both employees and organizations to enhance capabilities, skills, and contributions in order to optimize performance in carrying out assigned tasks. The findings of this study confirm that career development plays a central role in shaping employee performance. Employees who perceive clear career paths, opportunities for training, and continuous skill development tend to be more motivated and more loyal to the organization. Conversely, the absence of structured career planning often leads to stagnation in competence, which ultimately affects productivity and work quality. This empirical result is supported by a path coefficient of 0.387 ( $t = 6.989$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a positive and significant effect. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that career development significantly improves employee performance (Manggis et al., 2018).

Work-life balance emerges as another important determinant of performance. Although employees generally reported being able to manage their time between work and personal responsibilities, their satisfaction with that balance was relatively low. This suggests that time allocation alone does not automatically translate into psychological well-being. Many employees remain insufficiently fulfilled in how work integrates with their personal lives. This condition implies the need for organizational interventions, such as flexible working arrangements, improved leave systems, and well-being initiatives, including recreational or mindfulness programs. Empirically, work-life balance shows a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.324 ( $t = 4.915$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This result aligns with prior findings that better work-life balance directly contributes to improved employee performance (Ramdhani & Rasto, 2021).

Stress management, although showing the smallest coefficient among the independent variables, remains a significant predictor of performance. Employees were generally able to identify the sources of their work stress; however, coping mechanisms and institutional support systems were not yet optimal. This gap places employees at risk of fatigue and burnout, particularly during peak production periods. Strengthening stress management programs by increasing counseling access, providing stress management training, and enhancing peer support mechanisms is essential. Statistical testing shows a coefficient of 0.212 ( $t = 3.141$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ), confirming a positive and significant relationship. This finding is in line with the organizational behavior literature, which emphasizes that effective stress management

improves concentration, emotional stability, and work output (Dessler, 2017; Luthans, 2013; Robbins & Judge, 2019).

From a performance perspective, employees demonstrated relatively strong outcomes in terms of timeliness and work quality. The primary weakness was identified in teamwork, which recorded the lowest mean score. This indicates that while individual productivity is adequate, collaborative work culture has not yet been fully institutionalized. Organizations, therefore, need to intensify team-building initiatives, strengthen cross-functional coordination, and cultivate a performance culture that values collective achievement alongside individual accomplishment.

Simultaneously, the three independent variables, career development, work-life balance, and stress management, collectively exert a significant influence on employee performance. The statistical results show an F value of 82.145 ( $p < 0.001$ ) and a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.575. This means that 57.5% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by the combined contributions of the three predictors, while factors outside the model account for the remaining 42.5%. These findings differ from previous research examining career development and work-life balance in relation to employee retention rather than performance (Nurmalitasari & Andriyani, 2021). The distinction lies not only in the dependent variable but also in the inclusion of stress management in the present study, which provides a more comprehensive explanation of the factors influencing employee work outcomes.

## 6. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that career development, work-life balance, and stress management play significant roles, both individually and collectively, in enhancing employee performance. Regarding career development, organizations should implement comprehensive strategies that encompass technical and soft skills training, structured mentoring, and fair, transparent promotion pathways. Career advancement opportunities must be supported by genuine management commitment to ensure employees feel continuously empowered and motivated.

In terms of work-life balance, companies are encouraged to develop flexible work arrangements, adaptive scheduling, and supportive leave policies. Efforts should include enhancing employees' physical and mental well-being through programs such as yoga, mindfulness training, and recreational activities. Treating work-life balance not merely as an administrative policy but as an embedded organizational culture will cultivate employee loyalty and long-term productivity.

For stress management, organizations should provide counseling services, internal or external, alongside structured training and equitable workload distribution. Strengthening workplace social support systems, such as supportive workgroups or regular employee-management discussion forums, can reduce workplace pressures. A supportive environment, coupled with healthy coping mechanisms, directly contributes to improved mental well-being, higher engagement, and better performance.

The results also confirm that teamwork remains a relatively low-performing aspect of employee performance. To address this, organizations should invest in team-building initiatives, foster a collaborative work culture, and create communication platforms that facilitate cross-departmental synergy. When employees feel valued and heard within a team, overall performance improves.

Given the simultaneous influence of career development, work-life balance, and stress management on performance, companies are strongly advised to integrate these three elements

cohesively within their human resource management strategies. Such integration will not only improve individual performance but also, collectively, create a healthy, productive, and competitive work environment capable of sustaining long-term organizational success.

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## 8. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declares that they have no financial or personal affiliations that could have influenced the research or findings presented in this article.

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