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High-Performance Work System and Self-Efficacy on Academic Performance: Work-Life Balance as Mediator

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Abstract

The background of the study stems from the increasing number of employee-level students facing dual role pressures between work and study, necessitating a deeper understanding of the factors influencing their academic success. This study aims to analyze the influence of high performance work system and self-efficacy on the academic performance of employee-level students in Semarang City, with work-life balance as a mediating variable. The research method used a quantitative approach with an explanatory design and involved 100 employee-level management students as respondents. Data analysis was conducted using SEM-PLS through SmartPLS. The results showed that HPWS and self-efficacy had a positive and significant effect on work-life balance and academic performance. In addition, work-life balance was shown to have a partial mediating role in the relationship between HPWS and self-efficacy with academic performance. These findings confirm that employee-level students' academic performance is influenced not only by institutional support and self-efficacy, but also by their ability to maintain role balance. This study provides a theoretical contribution by expanding the application of the HPWS concept in the context of higher education and provides a practical contribution to universities in designing learning support that is adaptive to the needs of employee-level students.

Keywords

Academic Performance, High Performance Work System, Self-Efficacy, Work-Life Balance.

1. Introduction

Academic performance is a key indicator of success in higher education, as it reflects how well the learning process develops students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Previous studies show that academic performance is influenced by a combination of cognitive and affective factors, as well as the learning environment. Hamu et al. (2023) found that motivation, learning environment support, and learning process quality significantly contribute to student academic performance. Similarly, Hutasuhut and Sari (2021) highlighted that emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy play an important mediating role in improving academic performance. These findings are supported by Ali (2017) and Efendi and Dahlia (2025), who reported that affective factors such as motivation, self-confidence, emotional regulation, and academic engagement have a positive and significant effect on academic achievement.

In Indonesia, higher education dynamics are changing due to the increasing number of working students. Management students in employee classes, particularly in large cities such as Semarang, face academic demands alongside work responsibilities and professional pressure. Evening or weekend classes, long working hours, and company performance targets may lead to fatigue, stress, and reduced learning focus. Studies on working students indicate that combining work and study can affect academic achievement, making effective role management necessary, especially in maintaining work–life balance. Talip et al. (2021) and Aysila and Kusmaryani (2025) found that work–life balance and motivation positively and significantly influence the academic performance of part-time management students.

From a human resource management perspective, the High-Performance Work System (HPWS) is a systematic approach designed to improve performance through integrated practices such as selection, training, empowerment, participation, and reward systems. Park et al. (2023) showed that HPWS can improve performance but may also create stress if not properly managed. Fragoso et al. (2022) found that HPWS positively affects individual performance, with commitment acting as a key mediator. In the Indonesian context, Nabhan (2022) demonstrated that HPWS influences employee performance through ability and motivation mechanisms. However, intensive HPWS practices may increase individual burden if they are not balanced with appropriate workload management. Although according to Murphy (2018) and Gürlek (2021), HPWS was originally developed for business organizations, its principles are increasingly relevant to higher education and can be applied as a high-performance learning system. This includes challenging curriculum design, student skill development, constructive feedback, and transparent academic reward systems. However, studies examining HPWS in the student context, especially among employee-class students as active participants in academic work systems, remain limited. Most existing research focuses on lecturers or educational staff rather than students.

Self-efficacy has also been widely recognized as a strong predictor of academic performance. Hutasuhut and Sari (2021) found that academic self-efficacy enhances students' effort, persistence, and resilience. Hardianto et al. (2024) further showed that self-efficacy significantly influences academic performance, with motivation as a mediator. However, research linking self-efficacy to working students facing simultaneous academic and work demands is still scarce in Indonesia. Work–life balance has emerged as an important variable linking system demands and individual capacity. Alghamsah et al. (2025) showed that poor role balance can reduce academic performance despite high motivation. However, the role of work–life balance as a mediator between HPWS, self-efficacy, and academic performance among employee-class management students has not been sufficiently explored. Therefore, a clear

research gap remains in integrating HPWS, self-efficacy, and work–life balance to explain academic performance in this context.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of HPWS and self-efficacy on the academic performance of employee class management students in Semarang City by considering work-life balance as a mediating variable. This study is expected to enrich the literature on the application of the HPWS concept in higher education environments and broaden the understanding of the psychological mechanisms linking self-efficacy, work-life balance, and academic performance. The results of the study are expected to provide evidence-based recommendations for universities and related stakeholders in designing learning systems, institutional support, and policies that are more sensitive to the needs of employee students so that their academic performance can remain optimal without sacrificing well-being and work-life balance.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. The Effect on Work-Life Balance

A High-Performance Work System (HPWS) refers to a set of human resource management practices designed to enhance individual capabilities, motivation, and opportunities to achieve optimal performance. These practices include training, rigorous selection, performance evaluation, reward systems, and individual involvement in decision-making. Nabhan (2022) states that HPWS contributes to performance improvement through mechanisms that strengthen individual capabilities and work motivation. In line with this, Nababan et al. (2025) demonstrate that HPWS promotes organizational innovation by increasing individual engagement and commitment. Afrida (2024) also shows that the implementation of HPWS improves engagement and performance through more structured and participatory work practices. Conceptually, HPWS principles are relevant to higher education, as they can be translated into a learning system that emphasizes support, competency development, and constructive evaluation for students.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organize and perform actions required to achieve specific goals. Mufidah et al. (2023) explain that self-efficacy is shaped by successful experiences, verbal persuasion, emotional states, and observing the success of others. In the context of higher education, self-efficacy is closely related to students' ability to manage academic tasks, regulate time, and cope with academic pressure. Fatimah et al. (2021) found that self-efficacy contributes to academic success, as students with high self-efficacy tend to be more confident, persistent, and resilient in completing academic demands. Similarly, Ratuela et al. (2022) emphasized that self-efficacy influences not only academic performance but also students' readiness for work.

H1: High-performance work system has a positive effect on work-life balance.
H2: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on work-life balance.

2.2. The Effect on Academic Performance

Effective implementation of a high-performance work system, such as fair training, appropriate compensation, and transparent performance evaluation, is believed to create a supportive work and learning environment. This indicates that better implementation of HPWS is associated with better work–life balance for both employees and working students (Nabhan, 2022). By fostering a supportive environment, HPWS not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to higher discipline and productivity. The application of HPWS practices, including clear target setting, reward systems, and continuous training, is expected to have a

positive impact on work outcomes as well as the academic performance of working students (Park et al., 2023).

Hutasuhut and Sari (2021) highlighted that academic self-efficacy plays a crucial role in enhancing academic performance by improving self-regulation, emotional intelligence, and self-management skills. Hardianto et al. (2024) emphasized that students with higher self-efficacy manage time, handle pressure, and balance multiple responsibilities more effectively, which increases diligence, persistence, and resilience, leading to better academic outcomes. Efendi and Dahlia (2025) noted that strong belief in one's abilities encourages sustained effort and reduces the likelihood of giving up when facing challenges, while Marlina (2023) argued that self-management skills, including time management and self-control, are essential for achieving higher academic achievement.

Work–life balance refers to the ability to manage work, study, and personal life demands effectively. Khateeb (2021) noted that it involves not only time management but also perceptions of well-being and minimizing role conflict. Zulkiflee et al. (2024) emphasized that work–life balance encompasses psychological balance, including satisfaction, engagement, and stress management. Ferdous et al. (2023) found that work flexibility and organizational support enhance work–life balance, which positively affects performance and well-being. For working students, maintaining work–life balance is crucial for sustaining focus and academic performance, as imbalance can lead to stress and reduced achievement.

H3: High-performance work system has a positive effect on academic performance.
H4: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on academic performance.
H5: Work-life balance has a positive effect on academic performance.

2.3. Work-Life Balance as a Mediating Variable

High-Performance Work System (HPWS) affects academic performance not only directly but also indirectly through work–life balance. Park et al. (2023) and Patria et al. (2025) explain that HPWS practices such as comprehensive training, performance appraisals, employee involvement, and supportive workplace policies enhance individuals' capacity to manage multiple roles effectively. By fostering a structured and motivating environment, HPWS reduces role conflict, stress, and inefficiencies, enabling students to allocate their time and energy more strategically. As a result, students can maintain focus on learning activities, meet academic deadlines, and achieve higher overall performance, highlighting the indirect pathway through work–life balance in translating organizational support into tangible academic outcomes.

Similarly, self-efficacy influences academic performance both directly and indirectly through work–life balance. Hutasuhut and Sari (2021) emphasize that students with high self-efficacy possess greater confidence in their ability to manage time, overcome obstacles, and sustain effort under pressure. This belief enhances their ability to balance work, study, and personal responsibilities, thereby reducing stress and promoting psychological well-being. Consequently, students with strong self-efficacy are more engaged, persistent, and capable of achieving higher academic outcomes. Work–life balance thus functions as a crucial mediating mechanism, linking individual capabilities and organizational support to improved academic performance.

H6: Work-life balance mediates the influence of high-performance work system on academic performance.
H7: Work-life balance mediates the influence of self-efficacy on academic performance.

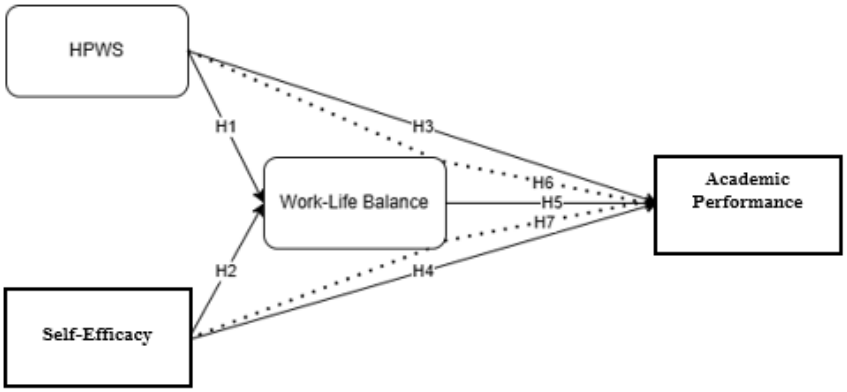

Figure 1. Research Framework

Figure 1 shows a conceptual model explaining the relationship between HPWS, self-efficacy, work-life balance, and academic performance. HPWS and self-efficacy act as independent variables that directly influence work-life balance and academic performance. Furthermore, work-life balance serves as a mediating variable that channels the influence of HPWS and self-efficacy on academic performance. This model emphasizes that student employee academic performance is influenced not only by the learning or work system implemented and students' self-confidence, but also by their ability to maintain a balance between work, study, and personal life.

3. Methods

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to examine the causal relationships among the research variables. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the effects of HPWS and self-efficacy on the academic performance of working students, with work–life balance serving as a mediating variable. The study was conducted in Semarang City and focused on employee-class management students enrolled at several universities. An explanatory approach was selected because the study aims not only to describe the observed phenomena but also to empirically test the cause-and-effect relationships proposed in the research model.

The population of this study consisted of management students enrolled in employee classes who were registered as active students at several higher education institutions in Semarang. A purposive sampling technique was employed, with specific criteria applied to ensure the relevance of the respondents to the research objectives. These criteria included students who were actively enrolled, engaged in paid employment while pursuing their studies, and had completed at least two academic semesters. Based on these criteria, a total of 100 respondents were selected as the research sample. The determination of the sample size was based on the recommendation of Hair et al. (2019), which suggests that the minimum sample size should be ten times the largest number of indicators or the number of structural paths directed at the endogenous variable.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale. The instrument was designed to assess four main variables, namely HPWS, self-efficacy, work–life balance, and academic performance. The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. The analysis procedures included the evaluation of the outer model through validity and reliability testing, as well as the assessment of the inner model using R-square and path coefficients. Mediation effects were tested using a bootstrapping procedure. Participation in the

study was voluntary, and the confidentiality of all respondent data was strictly maintained.

4. Results

Outer model testing indicates that all constructions meet the criteria for reliability and convergent validity. Based on the results in Table 1, Cronbach's Alpha values for the HPWS, self-efficacy, academic performance, and work-life balance variables are 0.902, 0.860, 0.907, and 0.908, respectively, all of which are greater than the cut-off value of 0.70. These results indicate that each indicator in the research variables has a strong level of internal consistency, thus the instrument used is reliable.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
HPWS (X1)	0.902	0.928	0.719
Self-Efficacy (X2)	0.860	0.899	0.641
Work-Life Balance (Z)	0.908	0.932	0.732
Academic Performance (Y)	0.907	0.931	0.729

The composite reliability value also demonstrated excellent standards, with a value above 0.899, indicating that the construct has high measurement stability. Meanwhile, the AVE values for each variable were 0.719, 0.641, 0.729, and 0.732. All these values were well above the minimum threshold of 0.50, indicating that more than 50% of the indicator's variance could be explained by the constructions they formed. Thus, the research instrument has good convergent validity and is suitable for use in structural model analysis.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all indicators are in the range of 1.685-2.940 or less than 5. This means that there is no multicollinearity between indicators, so that each indicator provides a unique contribution and does not interfere with the others in explaining the variables.

Table 2. R-Square

Variables	R-Square	Information
Work-Life Balance (Z)	0.707	Strong
Academic Performance (Y)	0.811	Very strong

Based on Table 2, the R-Square value for work-life balance is 0.707 and for academic performance is 0.811, indicating that 70.7% and 81.1% of the variance in both endogenous variables can be explained by the exogenous variables in the model, respectively. Thus, the structural model has strong to very strong predictive power and can explain the phenomenon comprehensively.

Table 3. Path Coefficient of Bootstrapping

Connection	Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Information
HPWS -> Work-Life Balance	0.658	12.237	0.000	Significant
Self-Efficacy ->Work-Life Balance	0.581	10.329	0.000	Significant
HPWS -> Academic Performance	0.333	4.020	0.000	Significant
Self- Efficacy -> Academic Performance	0.329	4.672	0.000	Significant
Work-Life Balance -> Academic Performance	0.490	5.050	0.000	Significant

Table 3 presents the results of the bootstrapping analysis for the structural model, showing the path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and significance levels for each hypothesized relationship. The findings indicate that all proposed paths in the model are statistically significant, as evidenced by t-statistic values greater than 1.96 and p-values below 0.05. The relationship between HPWS and work-life balance shows a strong positive effect, with a path coefficient of 0.658, a t-statistic of 12.237, and a p-value of 0.000. This result indicates that HPWS has a substantial and significant influence on work-life balance. Similarly, Self-efficacy also has a positive and significant effect on work-life balance, as reflected by a path coefficient of 0.581, a t-statistic of 10.329, and a p-value of 0.000. These results suggest that both HPWS and Self-efficacy play important roles in explaining variations in work-life balance.

Furthermore, the direct effect of HPWS on academic performance is positive and statistically significant, with a coefficient of 0.333, a t-statistic of 4.020, and a p-value of 0.000. This finding indicates that HPWS directly contributes to changes in academic performance. Likewise, self-efficacy demonstrates a significant positive influence on academic performance, with a path coefficient of 0.329, a t-statistic of 4.672, and a p-value of 0.000, confirming that self-efficacy also directly affects academic performance. In addition, the path from work-life balance to academic performance shows a strong and significant positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.490, a t-statistic of 5.050, and a p-value of 0.000. This result indicates that work-life balance plays an important role in influencing academic performance and supports its function as a mediating variable in the model. The results of the bootstrapping analysis confirm that all hypothesized relationships are supported and that the structural model demonstrates strong explanatory power.

Table 4. Indirect Effect

Mediation	Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Information
HPWS - Work-Life Balance-Academic Performance	0.323	4.548	0.000	Partial
Self-Efficacy - Work-Life Balance - Academic Performance	0.285	4.198	0.000	Partial

Table 4 presents the results of the indirect effect analysis, which examines the mediating role of work-life balance in the relationships between HPWS and academic performance, as well as between self-efficacy and academic performance. The findings show that both indirect paths are statistically significant, as indicated by t-statistic values greater than 1.96 and p-values of 0.000, which are well below the 0.05 significance threshold. The indirect effect of HPWS on academic performance through work-life balance has a coefficient of 0.323, a t-statistic of 4.548, and a p-value of 0.000. This result indicates that work-life balance significantly mediates the relationship between HPWS and academic performance. Because the direct effect of HPWS on academic performance is also significant, as shown in the path coefficient analysis, the mediation can be classified as partial mediation. This suggests that HPWS influences academic performance both directly and indirectly through work-life balance. Similarly, the indirect effect of self-efficacy on academic performance through work-life balance shows a coefficient of 0.285, a t-statistic of 4.198, and a p-value of 0.000. These results confirm that the mediating effect of work-life balance in the relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance is statistically significant. Since self-efficacy also has a significant direct effect on academic performance, this mediation relationship is likewise categorized as partial mediation.

Thus, the results in Table 4 demonstrate that work-life balance plays an important mediating role in strengthening the effects of both HPWS and self-efficacy on academic performance. The presence of significant indirect effects,

alongside significant direct effects, indicates that the influence of HPWS and self-efficacy on academic performance is transmitted through work-life balance while also remaining partially direct. The simultaneous influence of all exogenous variables on endogenous variables was analyzed using the R-Square value in SmartPLS. The results showed that the HPWS and self-efficacy variables simultaneously explained 70.7% of the variance in work-life balance (R^2 = 0.707, t= 15.698, p = 0.000). In addition, the HPWS, self-efficacy, and work-life balance variables simultaneously explained 81.1% of the variance in academic performance (R^2 = 0.811, t = 25.309, p = 0.000). Thus, the strength of the structural model in this study was in the strong to very strong category and had a statistically significant effect.

5. Discussion

The results of the study indicate that HPWS has a positive and significant effect on the work-life balance of student employees in Semarang City. This finding indicates that the better the HPWS implementation through training, empowerment, and a fair academic reward and evaluation system, the better the students' ability to manage the balance between work and study. HPWS practices provide structural support that helps students reduce role conflict, making it easier to achieve work-life balance. These results are consistent with the findings of Wattoo et al. (2020) who explained that high-performance work practices can improve role regulation, well-being, and individual adaptation to work demands.

Self-efficacy has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on work-life balance. This reflects that students with strong beliefs in their abilities are better able to balance work and academic demands. Within Bandura's (2012) theoretical framework, self-efficacy plays a role in guiding self-regulation, persistence, and stress management, enabling students to maintain a balance of activities. This study's findings align with those of Darmawan et al. (2021), which demonstrated that self-efficacy is an important predictor of role load management and success in addressing academic demands.

The effect of HPWS on student academic performance was also found to be significant and positive. The implementation of HPWS through empowerment, competency development, learning flexibility, and a reward system encouraged students to improve their learning discipline and academic productivity. Systemic support such as regular feedback, learning methods that stimulate participation, and opportunities for self-development strengthened students' ability to meet academic demands. These findings align with performance management literature, which states that high-performance work practices can improve individual productivity and work outcomes (Kaur et al., 2021).

Self-efficacy also has a positive and significant effect on academic performance. Students with high self-efficacy tend to have intrinsic motivation, resilience in the face of adversity, and the ability to organize learning strategies better. This enables them to achieve more optimal academic results despite facing work pressures. The consistency of these findings with research by Darmawan et al. (2021) reinforces the view that self-efficacy is a key psychological factor determining academic success.

Work-life balance has been found to significantly influence academic performance. Students who are able to maintain a balance between work and study demands tend to have lower stress levels, better focus, and more stable motivation to learn. These conditions directly contribute to improved learning quality and academic achievement. These findings suggest that psychological well-being is a crucial determinant in maintaining student employee academic performance (Yusnia & Nurfitri, 2025).

Work-life balance has been shown to partially mediate the effect of HPWS on academic performance. This means that HPWS not only directly influences performance through structural support but also indirectly through improving

students' work-life balance. When students perceive the learning environment and institution as providing adequate support, they are better able to manage their time and energy effectively, resulting in improved academic performance. This mediation is relevant to Yildirim (2023) and Peethambaran (2024) view that role balance helps individuals reduce the risk of burnout and improve performance.

Work-Life Balance also mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance. This suggests that students with high self-efficacy are not only able to improve their performance directly, but also through their ability to maintain a balance between work and study. Self-efficacy helps students manage role pressures, thereby maintaining their focus on learning. This finding aligns with Mushtaq et al. (2025), who stated that role balance is a key factor in reducing stress and maintaining consistent performance.

6. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that all hypotheses are statistically supported. HPWS and self-efficacy are found to have positive effects on work–life balance and academic performance, with work–life balance serving as a partial mediator in both relationships. These findings suggest that the academic performance of working students is not solely influenced by the implementation of a high-performance work system at the institutional level and individuals' confidence in their capabilities, but also by their ability to maintain a balanced integration of academic, professional, and personal responsibilities. In other words, more effective HPWS practices and higher levels of self-efficacy contribute to a stronger capacity to manage multiple roles simultaneously. Such role balance subsequently enhances the achievement of optimal and sustainable academic outcomes amid the complexity of dual responsibilities faced by working students.

Nevertheless, this study is subject to several limitations. The use of a cross-sectional design restricts the ability to capture changes in work–life balance over time, thereby limiting comprehensive conclusions regarding long-term causal relationships. Furthermore, the focus on a single geographical area constrains the generalizability of the findings, as variations in institutional characteristics, organizational culture, and academic policies may influence students' role balance and academic performance. Therefore, future research is recommended to broaden the geographical scope, employ a longitudinal design, and incorporate additional variables such as intrinsic motivation, emotional intelligence, perceived organizational support, and self-management skills to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of academic performance among working students.

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Data Disclosure Statement
The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.