**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY
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(IJEPC)**www.ijepe.com**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, WORK
ENVIRONMENT WITH EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AMONG
ACADEMICIANS IN MALAYSIA: AN OVERVIEW**

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Abstract:

This conceptual paper examines the relationship between Emotional intelligence (EI), work-life balance (WLB) and work environment on employee performance among academicians in Malaysia. The academic profession faces multifaceted challenges, including heavy workloads, research demands, and familial responsibilities, making EI, WLB and work environment vital for their success. This conceptual article examines the relationship between EI, WLB, and performance, synthesizing findings from existing literature and presenting a conceptual framework tailored to Malaysian academicians. Through a review of theoretical and empirical studies, this study synthesizes existing literature to explore how these factors influence performance. By synthesizing insights from existing literature and theoretical frameworks, findings indicate that high EI, effective WLB and work environment significantly enhance employee performance. Recommendations include implementing EI training programs and institutional policies promoting WLB to optimize academic outcomes. This study aims to provide insights for institutions to improve policies and support mechanisms that enhance academic staff performance and well-being.

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**Keywords:**

Emotional Intelligence, Work-Life Balance, Working Environment, Performance, Academicians

Introduction

Employee performance is a critical factor in achieving institutional goals, particularly in the education sector. The academic profession requires a balance of intellectual rigor, emotional resilience, and effective time management. As Malaysia's higher education system evolves to produce well-rounded and entrepreneurial graduates, the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015 2025 emphasizes the need for educators to enhance both their technical expertise and interpersonal skills to support this goal.

However, the increasing demands on educators and other civil servants may take a toll on their well-being. A recent screening has revealed that 44,901 civil servants in Malaysia are at high risk of mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidal behavior. According to Dr. Zaliha Mustafa, these findings come from the Public Service Psychological Health Digital Profiling System (MyPsyD), which screened 975,780 civil servants between March 1 and December 31, 2024. The results indicate that 4.6% of those assessed may require further support or intervention (Bernama, 5 February 2025). Poor work-life balance and lack of proper regulation of emotional intelligence may contribute to these problems (Nair et al., 2023).

The academic profession is naturally challenging, requiring individuals to manage various roles and responsibilities. In Malaysia, academicians face specific challenges due to high expectations in research, teaching, and administrative tasks. These pressures have increased as global benchmarks and rankings push Malaysian universities to compete internationally (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2018). As a result, many academicians experience stress, burnout, and lower job satisfaction, which negatively impacts their performance and well-being (Hassan et al., 2020). The challenge of maintaining work-life balance can negatively affect individuals, society, organizations, and even the nation as a whole (M.K.I et al., 2023).

While employee performance has been widely studied in Western countries, research on task performance among academicians in Malaysia remains inconclusive. Hence, this study tries to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), work-life balance with performance among academicians in Malaysia.

Problem Statement

Many academicians struggle with stress, job dissatisfaction, and burnout due to emotional demands, work-life conflicts, and unsupportive work environments (Ali et al., 2023). While previous studies have examined these factors individually, limited research explores their combined impact on academic performance in Malaysia. This paper aims to fill this gap by analyzing the relationships among emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and work environment and their influence on performance.

The Star (2025) reported that the findings of the Psychological Health Digital Profiling System (MyPsyD) conducted on Malaysian public service officers showed that this figure represents 4.6 per cent of the 975,780 civil servants who participated in the MyPsyD screening between March 1 and Dec 31, 2024 were found to be at high risk of mental health issues related to depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicidal behaviour. Competition among universities, along with changes in global policies and societal views on higher education, has increased challenges in the education industry. Closer connections between university students, educators, and industry have led to significant changes in university lecturers' work patterns (Tasleem et al., 2023)

Rising stress and pressure, along with changes in university structures, highlight the need to understand the factors that influence academics, including emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and the work environment (Bell et al., 2012; Narasuci & Noermijati, 2018; Nurzaman & Amalia, 2022). In other words, academicians need various types of intelligence, including intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence, as these factors influence their work performance (Nurzaman & Amalia, 2022). Furthermore, the work environment that refers to the physical factors surrounding employees that can influence how they perform their assigned tasks (Narasuci & Noermijati, 2018) Similarly, work-life balance among academicians is essential for overall well being and maintaining good work performance (Mhd Hakri & Wan Pa, 2024). As a result, this paper tries to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence, work-life balance and work environment on employee performance among academicians in Malaysia.

Research Question

1. How does the emotional intelligence affect employee performance among Malaysian academicians?
2. How does work-life balance influence employee performance?
3. How does the work environment affect employee performance?

Research Objective

1. To examine the effect of emotional intelligence influence on employee performance.
2. To analyze the influence of work-life balance on employee performance and identify effective strategies that organizations can implement to enhance both.
3. To analyze the effect between the work environment and employee performance and identify key environmental factors that significantly influence performance.

Literature Review

There are 4 points that will be discussed in this literature review which are overview of employee performance, emotional intelligence, work-life balance, work environment.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is defined as "the level of success employees achieve in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities" (Rachmaliya & Efendy, 2017). In other words, performance is the work quality and output of an employee, which impacts organizational productivity. It plays a crucial role in achieving organizational goals, so employers strive to motivate their employees to perform at their best (Tamunomiebi & Oyibo, 2020).

Emotional Intelligence and Performance

Emotional intelligence has been widely studied as a predictor of job performance across various professions. Salovey and Mayer (1990) were the first to define Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and appropriately express emotions (Peter & Mayer, 1990).

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been interpreted and measured in various ways. According to Peter and Mayer, (1990), EI comprises four dimensions: emotional perception, emotional facilitation, emotional understanding, and emotional regulation. Lam & Kirby, (2002) stated that Emotional Intelligence is an effective tool for predicting employee performance, as it helps understand and manage employees' emotions to estimate their productivity. Employees equipped with high EI are better positioned to manage workplace challenges, collaborate effectively with colleagues, and adapt to changing environments.

Understanding these mechanisms can help organizations create targeted strategies to improve emotional intelligence among employees. This paper aims to examine the connection between emotional intelligence and employee performance.

Table 1: List Of Previous Studies on Emotional Intelligence

No	Author(s)	Title	Journal	Year
1.	Shyue Chuan Chong, Mohammad Falahat & Yin Su Lee	Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance of Academicians in Malaysia	International Journal of Higher Education	2020
2.	Hong Chunzi, Nurhafizah Zainal, Sujatha Balakrishna and Nor Nazeranah Omar Din	Emotional intelligence and organizational performance among managers in manufacturing companies in Beijing, China	International Journal of Business and Economy (IJBE)	2023
3.	Osama Khassawneh, Tamara Mohammad , Rabeb Ben-Abdallah and Suzan Alabidi	The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Educators' Performance in Higher Education Sector	Behavioral Science	2022
4.	Alberto Quílez-Robres, Pablo Usan, Raquel Lozano-Blasco, Carlos Salavera	Emotional intelligence and academic performance: A systematic review and meta-analysis	Thinking Skills and Creativity	2023
5.	Md Mehedi Hasan Emon, Saleh Ahmed Jalal Siam, Md. Al-Noman Siddique	Exploring The Link Between Emotional Intelligence And Academic Performance Among Bangladeshi Private University Students	Malaysian Mental Health Journal (MMHJ)	2023
6.	Rozita Cheraghi, Naser Parizad, Vahid Alinejad, Mehri Piran and Laleh Almasi	The effect of emotional intelligence on nurses' job performance: the mediating role of moral intelligence and occupational stress	BMC Nursing	2025
7.	Juma. H. Uledi, Mariane Mgombere & Ramadhani Selemani	Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Performance of Public Servants in Tanzania Local Government Authorities	International Journal of Scientific and Management Research	2025
8.	Zhang, An & Mohamed Nasir, Nor Saidi	Emotional Intelligence and Knowledge Sharing as Predictors of Employee Performance in the Commercial Banks of Guangdong province, China	Uniglobal of Journal Social Sciences and Humanities	2025

Work-life balance and Performance

In today's fast-paced work environment, achieving a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life known as work-life balance (WLB) is crucial for both employee well-being and organizational success. Work-life balance is an important concern for employees in both government and private sectors today (Wolor et al., 2020). Despite the increasing emphasis on work-life balance initiatives, many organizations struggle to implement effective strategies that enhance employee performance.

Similarly, research by Shaari et al. (2022) examined the correlation between work-life balance and employee performance in a Malaysian manufacturing company. According to Dua and Se (2020), work-life balance involves actively participating in and finding fulfillment in both professional and personal roles. Additionally, a study focusing on working women in West Malaysia by Abd. Latif et al. (2023) demonstrated a significant positive relationship between work-family balance and job performance.

The research emphasized that satisfaction balance is a major contributor to job performance, highlighting the importance of personal fulfilment in professional settings.

Table 2: List Of Previous Studies on Work-Life Balance

No.	Author (s)	Title	Journal	Year
1.	Miebaka Dagogo Tamunomiebi and Constance Oyibo	Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance: A Literature Review	EJBMR, European Journal of Business and Management Research	2020
2.	Christian Wiradendi Wolor, Destria Kurnianti, Siti Fatimah Zahra,S Martono	The Importance Of Work-Life Balance On Employee Performance Millennial Generation In Indonesia	Journal of Critical Reviews	2020
3.	S.Roopavathi, Dr.K.Kishore	The Impact Of Work Life Balance On Employee performance	Journal of Interdisciplinary Cycle Research	2020
4.	Mezaluna Mezaluna, Jurana Jurana, Abd. Pattawe, Latifa Latifa	The Effect Of Work-Life Balance And Workload On Employee Performance	International Journal of Environmental, Sustainability And Social Science	2024
5.	Egit Fahri Gunawan, Sudarmiatin, Madziatul Churiyah	The Effect of Work-Life Balance and Compensation on Employee Performance Through Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable	International Journal of Business, Law and Education	2024
7	I Komang Oka Permadi, I Komang Suryadnya Diputra, Putu Ari Pertiwi Sanjiwani	The Effect of Work-Life Balance and Workload on Job Satisfaction to Affect Nurse Performance	Ekonomis: Journal of Economics and Business	2023

Work Environment and Performance

Among the various factors affecting employee performance, the work environment plays a crucial role. A clean, healthy, and comfortable workplace encourages employees to feel at ease and stay motivated in their tasks. Conversely, a less supportive work environment can reduce comfort and enthusiasm, affecting overall performance (Anggraini, 2024). The company should provide a positive and comfortable work environment to boost employee morale. A healthy and supportive workplace encourages productivity and motivation, helping employees work more efficiently and effectively (Thamrin & Riyanto, 2020). It includes the physical space, tools, and work methods that influence both individual and group tasks. A supportive environment creates a sense of security, allowing employees to work efficiently. When employees feel comfortable in their workplace, they are more engaged and make better use of their time.

Similarly, a study by Narasuci and Noermijati (2018) found that a work environment that is unsafe, uncomfortable, dirty, noisy, and has poor coworker relationships can make employees feel bored, unmotivated, and uneasy at work. As a result, their tasks may be neglected and not completed properly.

Based on the above discussion the present study attempts to investigate the role of EI, WLB, work environment and employee performance in the context of academicians in Malaysia. As far as our knowledge goes, this is a pioneering study on the contextual ground

Table 3: List Of Previous Studies on Work Environment

No.	Author (s)	Title	Journal	Year
1.	Muhammad Thamrin, Setyo Riyanto	The Effect of Work Motivation, Work Environment, and Work Life Balance on Employee Performance at PT. AngkasaPura I (Persero) Sultan Aji Muhammad SulaimanSepinggan Airport - Balikpapan	IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences (IOSR-JDMS)	2020
2.	Ninik Anggraini	The influence of work environment and work motivation on employee performance	Journal of Economics and Business Letters	2024
3.	Adi Hansah	The Influence of Workload and Work Environment on Employee Performance	Siber International Journal of Digital Business (SIJDB)	2025
4.	Bezisokhi Laoli, Famahato Lase, Eka Septianti Laoli	Improving Employee Performance: A Study of The Influence of Motivation Sincerity Discipline and Work Environment	International Journal Of Contemporary Studies In Education	2024
5.	Gu Zhenjing, Supat Chupradit, Kuo Yen Ku, Abdelmohsen A. Nassani, Mohamed Haffar	Impact of Employees' Workplace Environment on Employees' Performance: A Multi-Mediation Model	Front. Public Health	2022

Source: Author's

Methodology

This conceptual paper synthesizes findings from recent empirical studies (2020-2025) to explore the impact of the emotional intelligence, work-life balance and work environment on employee performance. By analyzing various research outcomes, the paper identifies common themes and influential factors.

The literature review focused on identifying relevant studies by examining peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and credible industry reports. The primary databases used for the search were Web of Science, Scopus, Elsevier, and Emerald Insight. The keywords used in the search included "emotional intelligence," "work-life balance," "work environment," "performance," and "employee performance." The selection criteria focused on studies published between 2020 and 2025, peer-reviewed articles, and research related to emotional intelligence, work-life balance, work environment, and employee performance. Studies that did not focus on these topics, articles published before 2020, non-peer-reviewed sources, and research not available in English were excluded.

An initial search was conducted using selected keywords and databases. The search results were screened by reviewing titles and abstracts to identify relevant studies. Full-text articles were then assessed to ensure they met the inclusion criteria. Studies that offered valuable insights into emotional intelligence, work-life balance, work environment and employee performance were included in the literature review. Finally, the conceptual framework developed from the literature review explores how emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and the work environment impact employee performance.

Conceptual Framework

This study proposes a framework linking emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and work environment to employee performance.

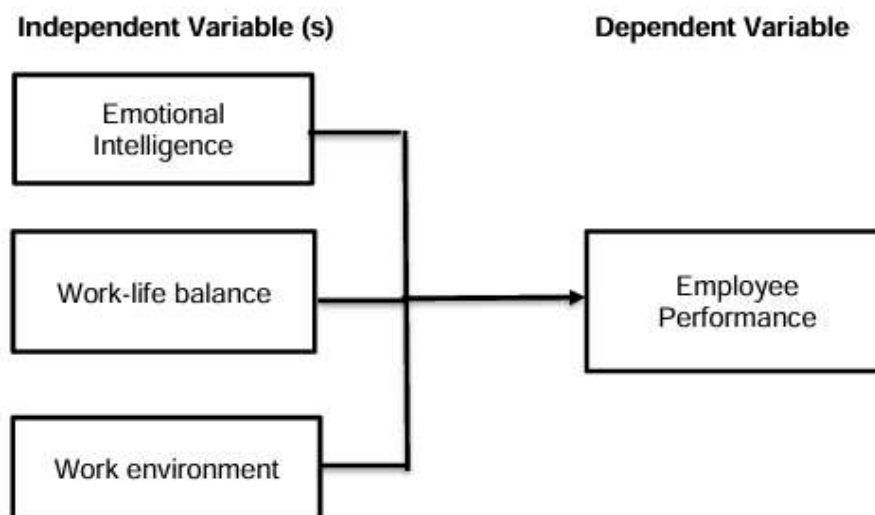


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's

Finding And Discussion

The findings from the literature review highlights the crucial factors that impact performance of academicians significantly influenced by three key factors: emotional intelligence, work-life balance and work environment (Bell et al., 2012; Narasuci & Noermijati, 2018; Nurzaman & Amalia, 2022).

The review shows that emotional intelligence helps with adaptability, stress management, and relationships, leading to better performance. The analysis shows that both the physical and psychological aspects of the work environment play a key role in employee performance (Fatma et al., 2023). Also, maintaining work-life balance is important to prevent burnout and keep employees engaged. The link between work-life balance and employee performance highlights the importance of organizations supporting employee well-being. On the other hand, maintaining work-life balance improves both employees' quality of life and the organization's overall effectiveness (Tamunomiebi & Oyibo, 2020).

Strategies such as flexible work schedules, mental health support, and a positive work environment play a key role in improving well-being and productivity. Flexible work schedules allow employees to balance personal and professional responsibilities, reducing stress and increasing job satisfaction. Mental health support, such as counseling services and stress management programs, helps individuals cope with challenges and maintain emotional well-being. A positive work environment, where employees feel valued and supported, encourages motivation, teamwork, and overall efficiency. A supportive work environment also boosts motivation and efficiency. Hence, these strategies create a healthier and more productive workplace. Additionally, a lack of good relationships among coworkers can create a negative work environment, affecting employee performance. Employees in a supportive workplace tend to perform well, while those in an unsupportive environment may feel unmotivated, tired, and less productive (Hansah, 2025).

Together, these factors highlight the need for well-rounded strategies to enhance academic performance. The combined impact of these factors highlights the need for holistic institutional strategies to improve academic performance.

Conclusion

This study shows the significance of emotional intelligence, work-life balance, work environment and performance. The conceptual framework reveals the direct relationship between these three variables (emotional intelligence, work-life balance, work environment) with employee performance. Indeed, this conceptual paper suggested that the survey results will address issues involving between emotional intelligence, work-life balance, work environment with employee performance among the academicians in Malaysia. Hence, some suggestions for future research are to study other variables involved. This study underscores the critical role of emotional intelligence in enhancing job performance among Malaysian academicians. By fostering EI, higher education institutions can address many of the challenges faced by educators and create a more supportive and effective academic environment.

Future studies should explore the long-term effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee performance across various industries and cultural contexts. Investigating the role of technology in facilitating or hindering work-life balance, especially in remote work settings, would provide valuable insights.

Contribution Of the Study

This study on the relationship between emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and work environment on employee performance among academicians in Malaysia provides several key contributions.

First, in terms of theoretical contribution, this study enhances existing literature by integrating emotional intelligence, work-life balance, and work environment as key factors influencing academic staff performance. Additionally, this study helps universities develop policies that promote a balanced work-life culture, reducing burnout and increasing job satisfaction among academicians. It also encourages institutions to foster a positive work environment that supports collaboration, motivation, and efficiency.

For practical contribution, this study is expected to provide insights for academic leaders on how emotional intelligence training can improve adaptability, stress management, and teamwork, ultimately leading to better performance.

Overall, this study offers valuable insights for universities, policymakers, and academic staff by identifying key factors that influence performance and well-being in Malaysia's higher education sector.

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