Determinants of Female Leaders' Careers in the Public Sector: The Moderating Role of Work-life Balance

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the determinant factors that influence the career of female leaders. The determinant factors in question are divided into internal factors, namely self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, while external factors include social support and work-life balance. This study involved 150 respondents, and the criteria were female employees with echelon II, III, and IV positions in SKPDs within the scope of the NTB Provincial government. The data collection technique was a questionnaire analyzed using the Smart-PLS application. The results of this study indicate that self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and work-life balance have a positive and significant effect on women's career maturity. Work-life balance can only moderate the influence of self-efficacy on women's career maturity. However, work-life balance has not been able to moderate the impact of emotional intelligence on career maturity, and it does not moderate the influence of social support on women's career maturity.

Keywords: Self-Efficacy, Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, Work-life Balance, Career Maturity
JEL Classifications: M12, M51, H11, J28

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resource development, including women's resources, has become a severe concern in recent decades. As a researcher in human resources, especially women, I believe this issue must remain a prominent and serious concern. Several researchers have examined some barriers to women's career maturity and success. Alhalwachi and Mordi (2022) argue that women are sometimes considered problematic in the world of work because they are often stereotyped or considered less committed to their job due to their different needs with men who tend to need more leave due to childbirth or childcare due to their dual roles. In line with this, Richard et al. (2023) state that organizational and community responses to issues related to gender equality depend on how peaceful a culture of gender egalitarianism develops in the community.

In Indonesia, the issue of gender equality and providing equal opportunities for women to work and occupy strategic positions in organizations is still found to be gender biased. Auspurg et al. (2017) revealed that there are still gender bias practices against women in the world of work, such as wage differences, unequal career path opportunities between women and men, and the perception that women are weaker than men. The effect of such systemic barriers on greater scalability, rooted in society and the workplace in general, has a more adverse impact on women's career advancement (Pillay-Naidoo and Nel, 2022).

Differences in external conditions and perspectives on certain genders that develop in organizations and society in Indonesia make the process of career maturity of women at work more difficult compared to male workers, especially in the public or government sector. Based on staffing data quoted from the NTB Provincial Government data, shows the distribution of female employees in the public sector in the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), which is spread across all SKPDs of the NTB Provincial Government, totaling 8341 employees. The majority

of female employees serve in certain functional positions, as many as 6364 employees, and the last position held by female employees is the position of Administrator, with as many as 57 employees. Descriptively, this data shows that the number of women involved in public sector organizations in NTB province is relatively high and shows equal opportunities and involvement for women working as employees in the SKPD of NTB province. However, only a few can occupy strategic positions, namely echelons II, III, and IV.

Based on the above description of the issue of gender in public sector organizations and data related to the distribution and number of female employees in the SKPD of NTB province, it is interesting to understand how the role of external determinant factors such as social support, and work-life balance as well as internal determinant factors such as self-efficacy and emotional intelligence on the career maturity of female employees at the leadership level (Echelon II, III and IV) who work in the SKPD of NTB province.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Career Maturity
Super first introduced the term career maturity in career development theory. According to Super (Coertse and Schepers, 2004), career maturity can be defined as how an individual can complete specific career development tasks required according to his current developmental phase. According to González (2008), the two leading theories of career maturity from Crites (1981) and Super et al. (1992) both divide career maturity into two dimensions, namely attitudinal and cognitive dimensions. Career maturity consists of a continuous developmental process and presents characteristics that are specifically identified and are essential traits for career development (Zunker, 2006). High career maturity is measured by self-knowledge, the ability to choose work, and the proper steps for the desired career (Lau et al., 2021). According to Thompson et al. (1981), individuals are considered to have high career maturity, meaning that they have fulfilled four dimensions of career maturity. Career Planning, Exploration, Decision Making, and World of Work Information are dimensions (Lau et al., 2021).

2.2. Work-Life Balance
Darcy et al. (2012) stated that life balance is a general term for organizational initiatives that aim to improve employee experiences in work and nonwork areas. Riyanto et al. (2021) explain that work-life balance includes control, achievement, and employee satisfaction. Greenhaus et al. (2003) revealed that those with more time for family than work have a higher quality of life. This shows how work-life work has a positive impact not only on workers' personal lives but also on their level of performance in the organization. According to Fisher et al. (2009) said that life balance consists of four aspects, namely (1) Improvement of Personal Work Life, (2) Interference with Personal Life with Work, (3) Improvement of Personal Life with Work, and (4) Interference with Work with Personal Life.

2.3. Self-Efficacy
Bandura (1997) defines it as a person's belief in his or her abilities that will influence him or her in reacting to certain situations and conditions. Schultz and Schultz (2013) view it as a feeling of adequacy, efficiency, and ability to cope with various life problems. Ren et al. (2021) proposed that generalized self-efficacy may significantly impact an individual's behavior or activities, effort expended, and thoughts and reactions. Hackett and Betz (1981) further extended Bandura's self-efficacy theory, suggesting the role of expectations as a dimension of self-efficacy, and found that career choices and decisions were constrained due to low self-efficacy expectations. This results in anxiety and avoidance of career pursuits. This means that the better people perceive their self-efficacy, the more aligned they will be with their career advancement in the world of work.

2.4. Emotional Intelligence
Emotional intelligence (EI) is a collection of skills, potential, and non-cognitive expertise that influences a person's ability to deal with environmental problems (Cascio et al., 2017). Boyatzis et al. (2000) define EI as "competencies that form self-awareness and management, and social awareness and skills correctly at the right time and with sufficient frequency to be effective in certain situations." Koubova and Buchko (2013) and Oden et al. (2015) further emphasized that intelligence enables individuals to manage their emotions and stress to be productive and adapt optimally to changes. Organizational intelligence involves understanding oneself and managing relationships with others. Mehta and Singh (2013) classify it as the ability of individuals to have personal and social competencies to build effective relationships.

2.5. Social Support
Social support is an interpersonal exchange characterized by emotional concern, instrumental assistance, provision of information, or help. Interpersonal relationships that protect individuals against the negative consequences of stress require social support. Social support impacts an individual's sense of calm, self-confidence, and feeling cared for (Hapsari et al., 2021). Sarafino and Smith (2014) stated that social support is the actions and perceptions of others who support them to get comfort, attention, and assistance. The dimensions of social support are divided into five main dimensions, namely: (1) emotional (the ability to receive comfort and security from other people during times of stress, thus making someone feel cared for), (2) network (being part of a group that has the same interests). (3) self-esteem (reinforcement of other people's feelings about competence). (4) natural (help offered so someone can solve it), and (5) informational (providing advice regarding solutions to a problem) (Chiu et al., 2015). Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study, which tests the influence of self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and social support on career maturity by using the work-life balance variable as a moderator.

2.6. Hypothesis
H1: Self-efficacy has a positive impact on career maturity in women

H2: Emotional intelligence has a positive impact on women's career maturity

H3: Social support has a positive impact on women's career

maturity

H4: Work-life balance moderates self-efficacy's influence on women's career maturity

H5: Work-life balance moderates the influence of emotional intelligence on women's career maturity

H6: Work-life balance moderates the influence of social support on women's career maturity.

3. METHODS

This research uses associative quantitative methods. This research involved 150 respondents. This research focuses on female employees who hold echelon II, III, and IV positions in the NTB Provincial Government. Research data was collected through questionnaires, which were then analyzed using the SEM method with the Smart-PLS application. The dominant characteristics of respondents in this study were 30-40 years old at 38%. Most respondents' education is at strata 1 with married status and an average tenure of 10-20 years.

Figure 2 shows that all statement items from each variable have a value >0.7, so they are declared valid.

Based on the Table 1 above, the AVE value for all variables is >0.5, so it is said to be valid. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for all variables are >0.6, so they can be declared reliable.

Figure 3 shows the structural model of the path coefficient calculation results with Smart PLS 3.0. Furthermore, hypothesis testing is carried out on each path coefficient using the rule of thumb for testing the structural model: the relationship between variables considered to have a significant effect has a probability of $\alpha = 0.05$.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the Table 2, it can be seen that H1, H2, H3, and H4 are accepted because the $P < 0.05$. At the same time, H5 and H6 are rejected because the $P > 0.05$.

**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework
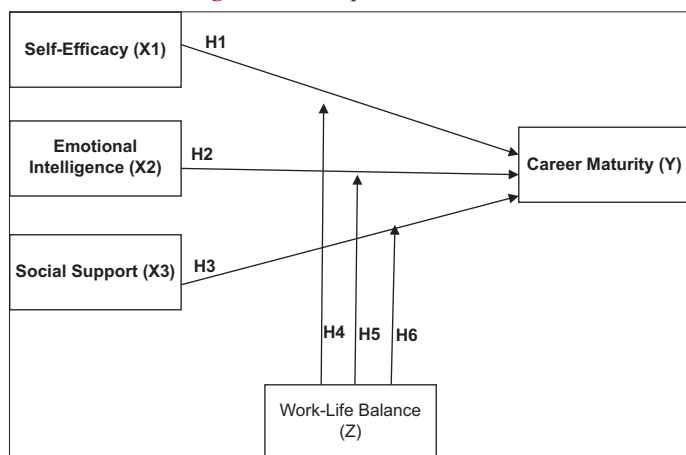
Based on the hypothesis test, H1 results proved that there is a positive and significant influence on career maturity. The research findings show that most respondents involved in this study have a high level of Self-Efficacy. This illustrates how female employees understand and believe they can carry out their roles and duties at work and build a positive perception of work. According to Ormrod (2003), self-efficacy is a person's judgment of their abilities. Lahey (2004) defines self-efficacy as the perception that a person can do something meaningful to achieve his or her goals. Bandura (1997) explains that perceived self-efficacy is an individual's belief regarding whether they can successfully perform the behaviors required to achieve specific outcomes, directly affecting individual behavior.

Female employees' high level of self-efficacy has encouraged their career maturity process, where research findings show that female employees feel confident that their abilities and competencies will lead them to achieve their desired goals or careers. According to Hackett and Betz (1981), the better people perceive their self-efficacy, the more it will align with their career progress in the world of work. Crites (1981) states that career maturity is the readiness of individual attitudes and competencies to choose the right career. This study's findings align with those of Jianchao et al. (2022), who state that a higher level of self-efficacy will increase one's career maturity. This means that Self-efficacy has a positive effect on career maturity. The same findings were also conveyed in research conducted by Maurer (2021), which showed that someone with a high level of self-efficacy would have a better career maturity tendency because it is related to their ability and confidence in their competence.

Based on the hypothesis test results, H2 proved a positive impact on EI and Women's Career Maturity. The research findings show that female employees have a high level of Emotional Intelligence, especially those related to managing personal and other people's emotions, building self-motivation, and building positive interactions and relationships with others, especially in their work environment. Female employees have a high level of self-control, which allows them to distinguish and set aside personal problems and not interfere with their performance level at work. In addition, the level of understanding of the condition of the work environment and interpersonal relationships between employees also shows a high score from female employees. This provides an understanding of how high the Emotional Intelligence level of female employees is. EI is a collection of non-cognitive skills, potentials, and expertise that influence a person's ability to cope with environmental conditions and pressures (Cascio et al., 2017; Suryatni et al., 2023).

A high level of Emotional Intelligence can improve the process of achieving career maturity, especially for female employees, because it is related to the ability to manage and control emotions so that employees with high levels of Emotional Intelligence can always find solutions to the problems they face and maintain a high level of productivity. With the ability to manage good emotional intelligence, employees will be able to make good decisions regarding their careers. Thory (2016) found that someone with a high level of emotional intelligence will be more able to improve

Figure 2: Outer loading
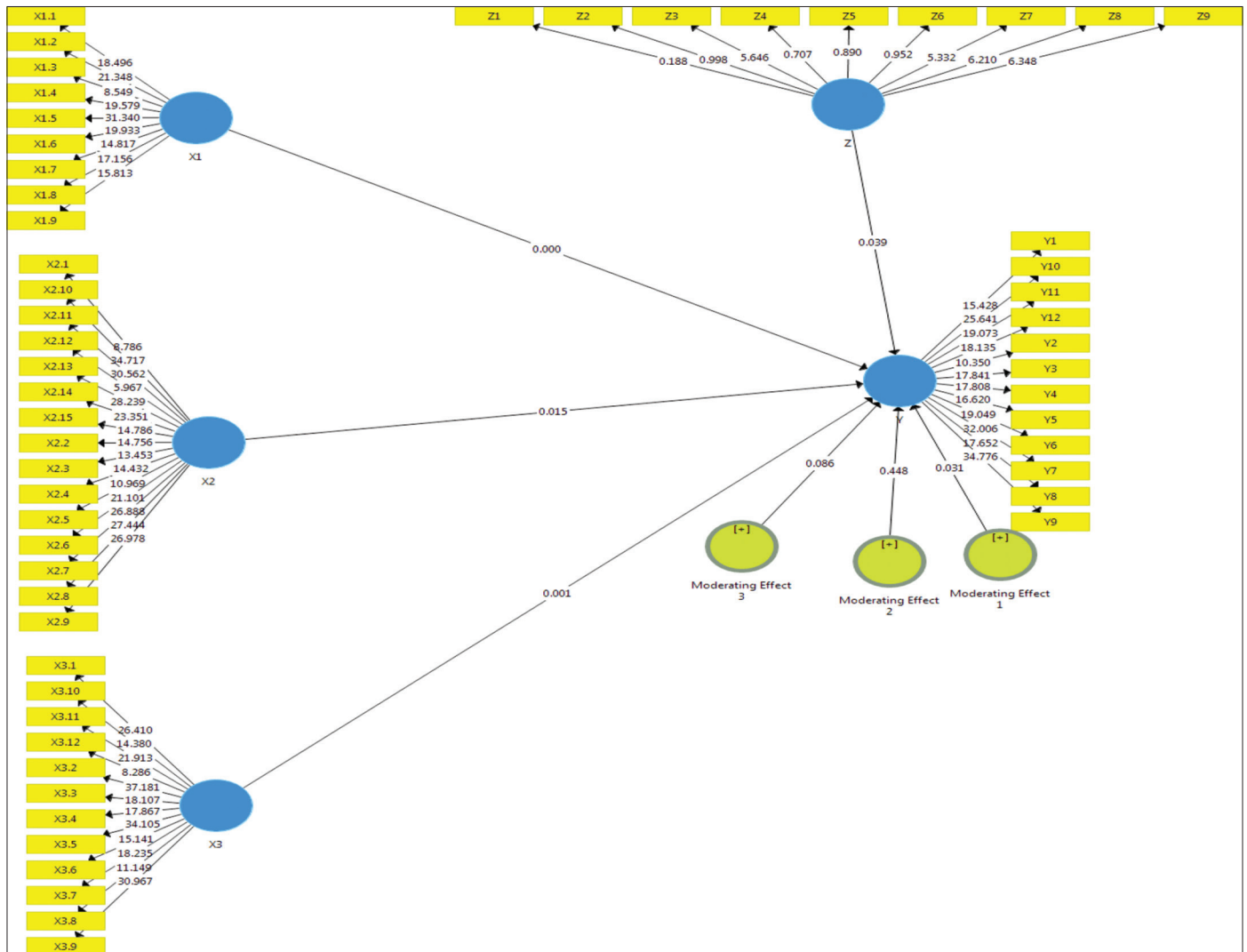
work performance and better career development. Coertse and Schepers (2004) found that career maturity can be defined as how an individual can complete specific career development tasks required according to his current developmental phase. Career maturity consists of a continuous developmental process and presents characteristics that are specifically identified and are essential traits for career development (Zunker, 2006). This study's findings align with research by Kurniawati (2021) and Alhempi et al. (2024), which state that emotional intelligence positively and significantly affects career maturity. The study's results explain that the ability to manage and control an individual's emotions will affect their level of career maturity.

Based on the hypothesis test results, H3 proved the positive impact of social support on women's career maturity. The research findings show that female employees receive high social support. This support can be seen from the study results, where most respondents feel they always get support, especially from their work environments, such as their leaders and colleagues. The dimensions of the support received are related to emotional support, such as attention, good treatment, and motivation, especially from the leadership—support related to rewards,

such as always getting appreciation for their work. Interpersonal relationships with family, relatives, friends, managers, and colleagues and exchanging resources with other people are part of positive social support (Cho, 2019).

The high level of social support felt by female employees creates a positive perception of the support they receive, which then influences the attitudinal dimensions of church career maturity related to their involvement in work, support, and motivation, and their freedom to choose and commit to their current job. The research findings also show that this feeling of support encourages female employees to develop their abilities to stay in their current jobs continually. Individuals feel calm, cared for, and loved and developed self-confidence through the social support they receive (Ebrahimi et al., 2016). Sarafino and Smith (2014) stated that social support is not limited to actions carried out by other people but also a person's perception that comfort, attention, and help are felt as support. This support encourages female employees to become more mature. Dybwad (2008) states that maturity reflects individual career development to increase capacity. Savickas (2005) states that career maturity is also called career adjustment. The research results support the study of Vizano et al. (20210) and
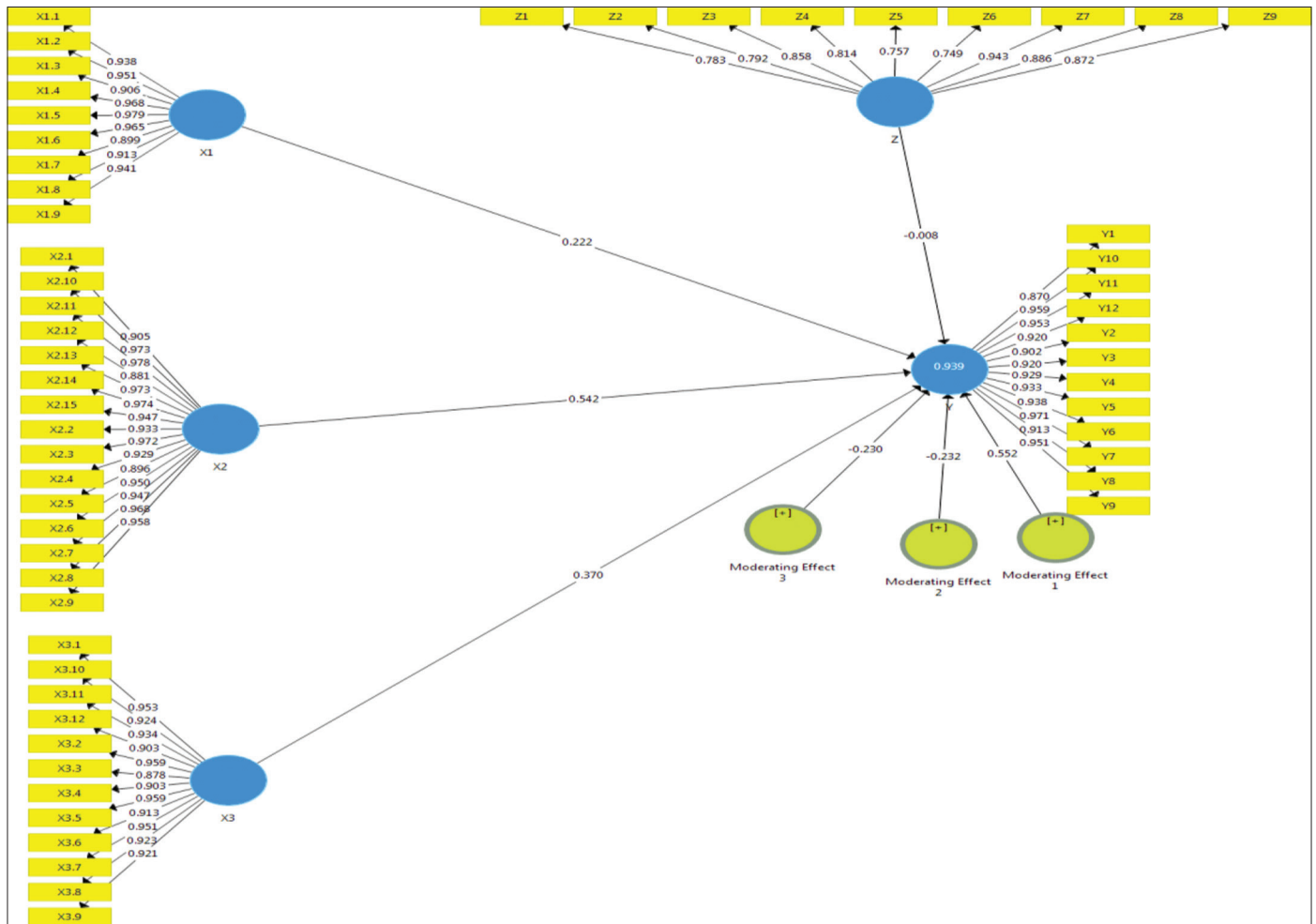
Figure 3: Model Structure

Table 1: Discriminant validity and reliability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted
X1	0.984	0.986	0.884
X2	0.992	0.992	0.895
X3	0.985	0.987	0.859
Y	0.986	0.987	0.866
Z	0.945	0.952	0.690

Li et al. (2022), who found that Social Support positively affects career maturity. The higher the level and intensity of social support from the environment around an individual will encourage the level of career maturity.

The results of the first hypothesis test (H4) show that work-life balance can moderate the effect of Self-efficacy on women's career maturity. The research findings show that female employees have an excellent work-life balance, and respondents feel that their personal lives and work go hand in hand. The balance between personal life and work shown by employees has created a positive atmosphere and vibration towards the work situation female employees feel in living their lives and work. This condition has affected the psychological factors of employees, such as Self-efficacy, which relates to a person's beliefs and attitudes towards their work and affects the career maturity of female employees

in particular. Darcy et al. (2012) state that work-life balance is a general term that describes organizational initiatives that aim to improve employee experiences in the work and nonwork fields. Al-Omari et al. (2020) explain that work-life balance includes control, achievement, and employee satisfaction.

Greenhaus et al. (2003) revealed that those who spend more time with family than with work experience a higher quality of life. Higher levels of work engagement and greater life satisfaction show how work-life balance positively impacts employees' personal life performance and their level of performance within the organization. In line with this, (Eversole et al., 2012; Virgiawan et al., 2021; and Perlow and Kelly, 2014) reveal a positive correlation between organizations and employees when flexible work policies are implemented, resulting in a better work-life balance.

The results of the first hypothesis test (H5) show that work-life balance cannot moderate the influence of emotional intelligence on women's career maturity. The research results show that a good level of work-life balance among employees cannot strengthen the influence of emotional intelligence on women's career maturity. This shows that female employees with high emotional intelligence show a professional attitude towards work and dedication to making their best contribution to the organization where they work. Because of this, external conditions such as

Table 2: Hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Influence	Original sample (O)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-values	Description
H1	X1 -> Y	0.394	3.694	0.000	Accepted
H2	X2 -> Y	0.269	2.451	0.015	Accepted
H3	X3 -> Y	0.208	3.256	0.001	Accepted
H4	Moderating effect 1 -> Y	0.175	2.169	0.031	Accepted
H5	Moderating effect 2 -> Y	−0.055	0.759	0.448	Rejected
H6	Moderating effect 3 -> Y	−0.124	1.723	0.086	Rejected

Work-Life Balance are in good condition or do not affect their professionalism at work, which will affect their career maturity. Emotional intelligence is recognizing and regulating emotions to empathize with others, build and maintain relationships, and cope with stress and difficulties (Bakare et al., 2023).

EI is the application of mental abilities to solve problems, cope with increasing demands, understand oneself and develop relationships with others (Bar-On, 2006; George et al., 2022; Selvi and Aiswarya, 2022; Koubova and Buchko, 2013; Oden et al., 2015; Mulyana et al., 2022) further emphasize that EI enables individuals to manage their emotions, manage stress, be productive under stress, and adjust optimally to changing situations in organizations. Clark (2000) defines work-life balance as the harmony of life when a person can take responsibility at work, home, and community to minimize role conflict. Fisher-McAuley et al. (2003) define work-life balance as a way for an individual to allocate time properly between work and activities outside of work.

The results of the first hypothesis test (H6) show that work-life balance cannot moderate the impact of social support on women's career maturity. The research results show that a good level of work-life balance among employees cannot strengthen the impact of social support on women's career maturity. This shows that the perception of social support, especially those sourced from the work environment, can create a commitment of female employees to their current jobs. This commitment has encouraged them to be part of the organization where they currently work and make decisions that are considered by the career they want. Furthermore, this shows how more than external conditions such as Work-Life Balance, whether in good condition or not, is needed to strengthen or even weaken the decision of female employees to stay and work in organizations that support their career development. Social support is a process in social relationships that impacts a person's well-being (Chiu et al., 2015). Social support takes the form of interpersonal relationships such as with family, relatives, friends, managers, and colleagues, as well as the process of exchanging resources with other people (Cho, 2019).

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on 150 female employee respondents with echelon II, III, and IV positions in SKPDs within the scope of the NTB Provincial government, it can be concluded that the following are:
1. Self-efficacy positively impacts the career maturity of female employees within the SKPD of NTB Province, meaning that the higher the self-efficacy, the better the level of career maturity.
2. Emotional intelligence positively impacts the career maturity of female employees in the scope of the SKPD of NTB

Province, meaning that the higher the emotional intelligence possessed, the better the level of career maturity.
3. Social support positively impacts the career maturity of female employees within the SKPD of NTB Province, meaning that the higher the social support, the better the level of career maturity.
4. Work-life balance moderates the influence of self-efficacy on the career maturity of female employees within the SKPD of NTB Province, meaning that a solid work-life balance ability will also increase self-efficacy's influence on career maturity.
5. Work-life balance does not moderate the influence of emotional intelligence on the career maturity of female employees in the scope of SKPD NTB Province, meaning that an excellent work-life balance ability does not necessarily increase the influence of emotional intelligence on career maturity.
6. Work-life balance does not moderate the influence of social support on the career maturity of female employees in the scope of SKPD NTB Province, meaning that a good work-life balance ability does not necessarily increase the impact of social support on career maturity.

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