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The Influence of Work Stress and Workload on Employee Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency

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Abstract: This study aims to identify and analyze the effects of work stress and workload on job satisfaction and employee performance, the effect of job satisfaction on employee performance, and the influence of work stress and workload on employee performance mediated by job satisfaction at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency. A descriptive-verify research design was employed, utilizing the PLS analysis method. The results indicate that the work stress variable obtained a total score of 3,267 (mean: 272), falling into the "very low" category, while the workload variable obtained a total score of 2,747 (mean: 275), also falling into the "very low" category. Conversely, the job satisfaction variable obtained a total score of 5,892 (mean: 655), falling into the "high" category, and the employee performance variable obtained a total score of 7,850 (mean: 654), also falling into the "high" category. These findings demonstrate that employees at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency experience low levels of work stress and workload, yet exhibit high levels of job satisfaction and performance in carrying out their duties. The study results indicate that work stress and workload have a significant negative effect on the job satisfaction of employees at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency.

Keyword: Work Stress, Workload, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a crucial aspect of an organization, playing a role in managing, developing, and optimally utilizing human potential to achieve organizational goals. In an era of globalization and increasingly fierce competition, organizations are required to possess high-quality, productive human resources capable of adapting to change. According to Mangkunegara (2017). One factor influencing employee performance is work stress. According to Mangkunegara (2017), work stress is the feeling of pressure experienced by employees when dealing with their work. Work stress can arise from high work pressure, role conflict, or job demands that exceed an employee's capabilities.

Job satisfaction is also a significant variable influencing employee performance. Robbins and Judge (2017) state that job satisfaction is an individual's general attitude toward their work, wherein a person with a high level of job satisfaction demonstrates a positive attitude toward that work.

Employee performance refers to the work results achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. According to Mangkunegara (2017), performance is defined as the qualitative and quantitative work outcomes achieved by an employee while performing their duties in accordance with their assigned responsibilities. Employee performance serves as a crucial indicator for assessing an organization's success in achieving its goals.

Lumrania et al. (2026) demonstrated that workload has a significant negative effect on job satisfaction and a direct impact on employee performance, with job satisfaction shown to mediate this relationship. Furthermore, research by Tyas and Prasetyo (2026) found that workload has a significant positive effect on employee performance through job satisfaction, whereas work stress has a positive but non-significant effect on both job satisfaction and employee performance.

Febriyanto et al. (2023) also demonstrated that workload has a positive and significant effect on both job satisfaction and employee performance, thereby reinforcing the idea that proper workload management can enhance performance by boosting job satisfaction. Meanwhile, research by Buulolo et al. (2021) indicated that work stress significantly affects employee performance, implying that the stress experienced by employees can directly influence their performance levels. Furthermore, studies by Putri (2024) and Saada & Kartika (2026) revealed that work stress influences job satisfaction—which in turn impacts employee performance—thereby demonstrating an indirect relationship mediated by job satisfaction.

Furthermore, research by Hidayat et al. (2026) found that work stress has a significant negative effect on employee performance, whereas job satisfaction has a significant positive effect on employee performance.

METHOD

The subjects of this study are the employees of the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat. The research focuses on the work stress and workload experienced by the employees, as well as their impact on employee performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating variable. The measurement model is used to assess validity and reliability, whereas the structural model is used to test causality (hypothesis testing via a predictive model). Furthermore, Abdilah and Jogiyanto (2015) state that Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis is a variance-based statistical method designed to address multiple regression issues when specific data problems arise. Additionally, Ghazali and Latan (2015) explain that PLS is a "soft modeling" analysis method because it does not require data to be measured on a specific scale, thereby allowing for small sample sizes (fewer than 100 samples).

Data analysis was conducted in stages using descriptive statistics and Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. Descriptive statistics were used to provide an overview of the research data characteristics through mean values, standard deviations, maximum and minimum values. Subsequently, PLS-SEM analysis was employed to test the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The evaluation of the outer model was conducted through tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha, while the evaluation of the inner model was performed using the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and hypothesis testing through the bootstrapping procedure with a significance level of 5% (Ghozali & Latan, 2015; Ghazali, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The characteristics of the employee respondents at the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat, based on gender, are as follows:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Profile	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	92	57,50
	Female	68	42,50
Quantity		160	100,00

Source: Primary data, processed (2025)

Based on the table above, the total number of employee respondents from the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat is 160, comprising 92 men and 68 women. Male respondents constitute the majority at 57.50%, while female respondents account for 42.50%.

Convergent validity testing is a type of validity assessment used to evaluate the extent to which an instrument or measurement tool effectively measures the same construct. In the context of statistics and data analysis, particularly in latent variable-based models such as Partial Least Squares (PLS)—convergent validity is crucial for ensuring that the indicators or items used in the model genuinely reflect the same construct.

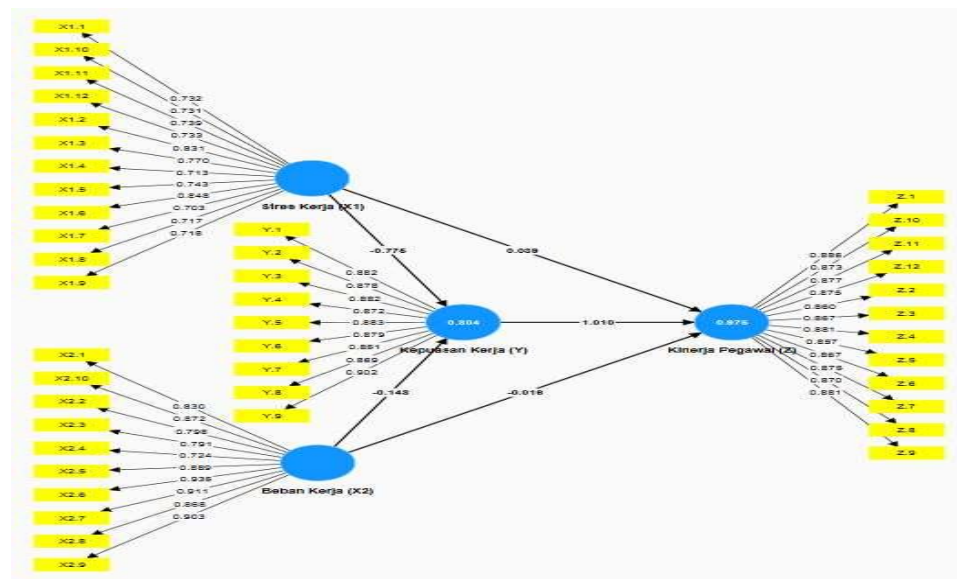


Figure. Outer Loading

Based on the outer loading values from the analysis using SmartPLS 3 (2025), all indicators for the variables Job Stress (X1), Workload (X2), Job Satisfaction (Y), and Employee Performance (Z) exhibit loading values above 0.7, indicating strong measurement of their respective constructs. Outer loading serves as an indicator of convergent validity, with an ideal value exceeding 0.70. Consequently, all indicators in this study are deemed valid and statistically significant in representing the latent variables under investigation.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is a statistical measure used to assess convergent validity in factor analysis, particularly in models such as Partial Least Squares (PLS) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). AVE measures the amount of variance in indicators or items that can be explained by the latent construct being measured. It helps evaluate how well the specified latent construct accounts for the variance of the measured indicators. AVE is used to ensure that the indicators in the model genuinely reflect the latent construct being measured and are not excessively influenced by other variables.

AVE is an important tool in statistical analysis that helps assess how well a latent construct in a model explains the variance of the indicators measuring it. By ensuring that the AVE exceeds 0.5, you can verify that the latent construct possesses adequate convergent validity and that the indicators used in the model effectively reflect the construct being measured. The AVE results are as follows:

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted Value

Variable	Value AVE	Note
Job Stress (X1)	0,720	Valid
Workload (X2)	0,711	Valid
Job satisfaction (Y)	0,716	Valid
Employee performance (Z)	0,710	Valid

Source: Smart PLS 3 (2026)

Composite reliability testing is conducted to determine the value indicating the extent to which a measurement instrument is reliable for use (Wiyono, 2011). All variables are considered reliable if their loading values exceed 0.70. The composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for each variable.

Table 3. Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha

Variable	Information	Information
Work Stress (X1)	Reliable	Reliable
Workload (X2)	Reliable	Reliable
Job satisfaction (Y)	Reliable	Reliable
Employee performance (Z)	Reliable	Reliable

Source: Smart PLS 3 (2026)

Based on Table 3 regarding Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, it can be concluded that all variables in this study—namely Work Stress (X1), Workload (X2), Job Satisfaction (Y), and Employee Performance (Z)—demonstrate very high levels of reliability. All Composite Reliability values exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70—and even surpass 0.90—indicating that the indicators for each construct are highly consistent in measuring their respective variables. This demonstrates that the indicators within each construct exhibit excellent internal correlation.

The assessment of a PLS model begins by examining the R-square for each dependent latent variable (Hair et al., 2017). Table 4.17 presents the R-square estimation results obtained using SmartPLS 3.

The R-square value for the job satisfaction variable (Y) is 0.804, or 80.4%. These results indicate that the variables Job Stress and Workload explain 80.4% of the job satisfaction variable, while the remaining 19.6% is explained by other variables outside the study. The R-square value of 0.804 is considered strong. This indicates that the research model has a strong ability to explain the increase in employee job satisfaction at the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat. Therefore, the better the Job Stress implemented by the leadership and the higher the employee Workload, the higher the employee job satisfaction will be.

Furthermore, the R-square value for the employee performance variable (Z) is 0.975, or 97.5%. These results indicate that the variables Job Stress, Workload, and job satisfaction explain 97.5% of the employee performance variable, while the remaining 2.5% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study. The R-square value of 0.975 is also considered strong. This shows that the research model has a high level of accuracy.

In the PLS-SEM analysis, the structural model in this study is evaluated based on direct effect values, also known as path coefficients. Subsequently, the path coefficients between

constructs are measured to assess the significance and strength of the relationships and to test the hypotheses.

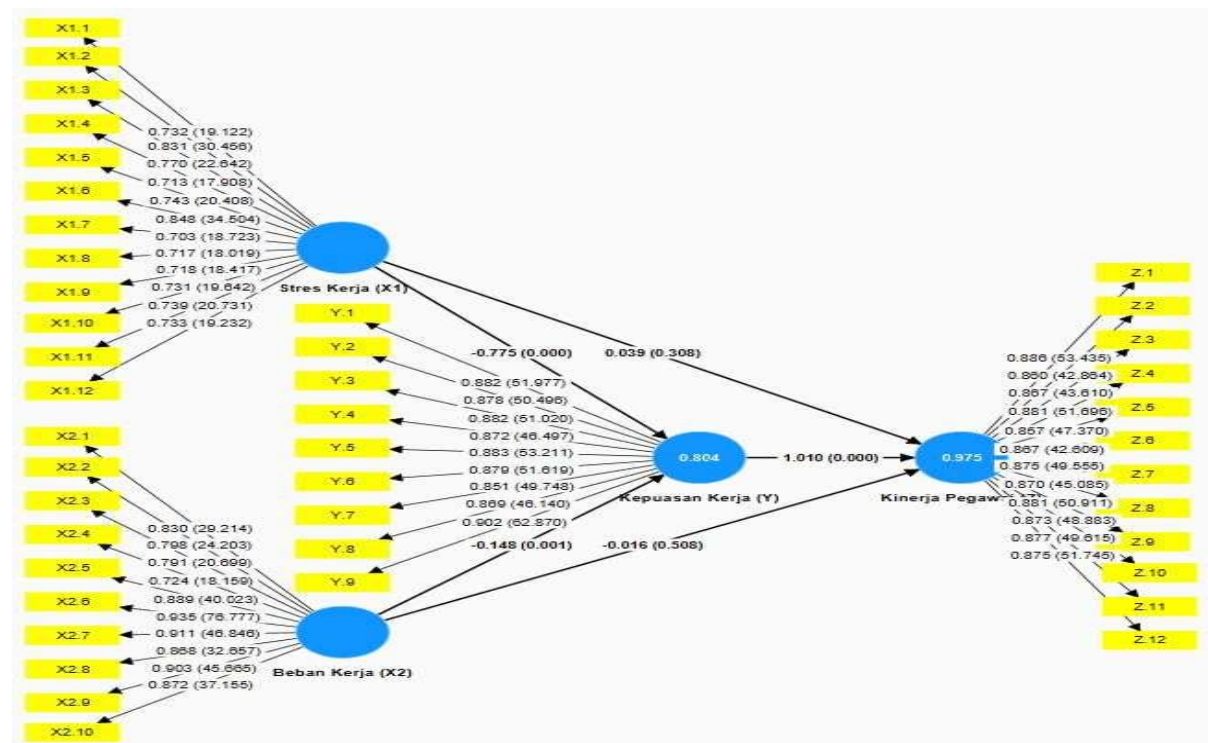


Figure 2. Bootstrapping

Tabel 4. Path Coefficient

Relationships Between Variables	Path Coefficient
Job Stress (X1) -> Job Satisfaction (Y)	-0,775
Workload(X2) -> Job Satisfaction (Y)	-0,148
Work Stress (X1) -> Employee Performance (Z)	0,039
Workload (X2) -> Employee Performance (Z)	-0,016
Job Satisfaction (Y) -> Employee Performance (Z)	1,010
Job Stress (X1) -> Job Satisfaction (Y) -> Employee Performance (Z)	-0,782
Work Load (X2) -> Job Satisfaction (Y) -> Employee Performance (Z)	-0,149

It can be observed that the path coefficient value indicates the direction and magnitude of the influence between variables in the study. A positive path coefficient value indicates a direct (positive) relationship between variables, whereas a negative value indicates an inverse (negative) relationship. The higher the path coefficient value, the greater the influence one variable exerts on another.

The test results indicate that work stress (X1) has a negative influence on job satisfaction (Y), with a path coefficient value of -0.775. This negative value implies that as the level of work stress experienced by employees increases, their job satisfaction decreases. Conversely, if work stress is minimized or kept at a low level, employee job satisfaction tends to increase. The magnitude of this coefficient indicates that work stress has a significant influence on employee job satisfaction at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency.

Furthermore, workload (X2) has a negative influence on job satisfaction (Y), with a path coefficient value of -0.148. This indicates that an increase in workload can lead to a decline in employee job satisfaction. However, the magnitude of the influence of workload on job satisfaction is relatively smaller than that of work stress. This condition suggests that work

stress is a more dominant factor influencing employee job satisfaction levels compared to workload.

Regarding the relationship between work stress (X1) and employee performance (Z), a path coefficient value of 0.039 was obtained. This value indicates a very slight positive influence of work stress on employee performance. This implies that, under certain conditions, work stress—provided it remains within reasonable limits—can encourage employees to work better and focus more on completing their tasks. However, given the very small magnitude of this influence, work stress does not contribute significantly to improving employee performance.

Meanwhile, workload (X2) has a negative influence on employee performance (Z), with a path coefficient value of -0.016. This value indicates that as the workload assigned to employees increases, their performance tends to decline, although the magnitude of this effect is very small. These conditions indicate that excessive workload can affect employees' ability to complete their work optimally.

Discussion

The research results indicate that the work stress of employees at the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat falls into the "very low" category, with an average score of 272. This condition demonstrates that employees are able to manage work pressures effectively, preventing excessive stress while performing their duties. The low level of work stress is evident in the employees' ability to complete tasks according to their capabilities, manage their time, maintain their physical and mental well-being, and effectively fulfill their job responsibilities. Furthermore, a conducive work environment and positive working relationships between supervisors and employees contribute to lowering stress levels.

These findings suggest that the organization has successfully established an effective work system, keeping the work pressure experienced by employees within manageable limits. This is significant because low work stress levels enable employees to work with greater focus, comfort, and productivity. When work stress is well-managed, employees find it easier to meet work targets and maintain the quality of their output.

Regarding the workload variable, the results show that employee workload falls into the "very low" category, with an average score of 275. This indicates that employees do not feel physically or mentally overburdened by their assigned tasks. They perceive the volume of work as being commensurate with their capabilities and the available time, allowing for successful task completion. Additionally, clear task allocation and the alignment of work with employee competencies are key factors contributing to the low workload levels.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion presented in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1. The research findings indicate that the work stress variable obtained a total score of 3,267 with an average score of 272, placing it in the "very low" category; this demonstrates that employees of the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat experience low levels of work stress while performing their duties. The workload variable obtained a total score of 2,747 with an average score of 275, also falling into the "very low" category; this indicates that the workload perceived by employees remains within their capabilities and does not place an excessive burden on them.

Furthermore, the job satisfaction variable obtained a total score of 5,892 with an average score of 655, placing it in the "high" category; this shows that employees are satisfied with various aspects of their work, including the work environment, working relationships, and the compensation received. Meanwhile, the employee performance variable obtained a total score of 7,850 with an average score of 654, falling into the "high" category; this indicates that employees demonstrate good work capabilities, discipline, responsibility, and work

engagement in carrying out their duties at the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat. 2. Work stress has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction at the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat. This means that as work stress increases, job satisfaction decreases. 3. Workload has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency. This means that as workload increases, job satisfaction decreases. 4. Work stress does not have a significant effect on employee performance at the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat. This implies that increasing work stress can influence employee performance. 5. Workload does not have a significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency.

This means that an increase in workload does not significantly impact employee performance. 6. Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency. This means that as job satisfaction increases, employee performance also improves. 7. Work stress has a negative and significant effect on employee performance through job satisfaction at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency. This means that as work stress increases, job satisfaction and employee performance will be affected. 8. Workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance through job satisfaction at the Regional Secretariat of Sarolangun Regency. This means that as workload increases, job satisfaction and employee performance will be affected.

Recommendation

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are offered: 1. The leadership of the Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat should enhance the provision of rewards and recognition for employees' work outcomes. Such recognition may take the form of praise, performance awards, or direct encouragement, helping employees feel valued and motivated, thereby enabling them to maintain low levels of work-related stress.

2. The Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat is advised to pay closer attention to the allocation of tasks based on employee capabilities and to align work targets with available completion times. This is crucial to ensure employees can work effectively, avoid feeling overburdened, and consistently maintain high-quality work output. 3. The Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat is advised to continuously evaluate its working-hour policies to ensure a comfortable working environment for employees. The organization should also prioritize a balance between work and rest periods to maintain employee satisfaction and enthusiasm in performing their duties. 4. The Sarolangun Regency Regional Secretariat is advised to increase employee involvement in various activities and relevant decision-making processes.

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