THE IMPACT OF WORKLOAD AND WORK STRESS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A JOB DEMAND – RESOURCES THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Testing the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory, this study aims to analyze the effect of workload on employee performance with job stress as a mediating variable. The research sample consists of 35 employees in the Nogo ikat weaving industry in Sanur, Bali. Data were collected through a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale, and analyzed using the SEM-PLS method with the help of Warp-PLS version 7 software. The results show that workload has a significant negative effect on employee performance, both directly and indirectly through job stress. Job stress is proven to act as a partial mediator in this relationship. The findings highlight the importance of effective workload and stress management as a strategy to maintain employee performance in traditional, high-demand work environments.

Keywords: Workload, Job Stress, Employee Performance, Warp-PLS

INTRODUCTION

The garment industry is one of the most dynamic and labor-intensive sectors in global manufacturing, especially contributing significantly to the economies of developing countries. This sector plays a crucial role in job creation, exports, and economic growth (Gereffi & Frederick, 2010). The garment industry typically involves complex global supply chains, with Asian countries such as China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Indonesia serving as major production hubs due to their labor cost advantages. In Indonesia, the garment industry is classified as a strategic sector within the development of the textile and textile product (TPT) industry. It significantly contributes to export value and employment,

particularly in densely populated regions such as West Java, Central Java, and Bali (Supriyadi et al., 2021). However, this industry also faces major challenges, including global demand fluctuations, price competition, and the need for digitalization and sustainable business practices.

With advances in technology and growing consumer demand for ethical and environmentally friendly products, the garment industry is now required to adopt more sustainable production approaches. These include energy efficiency, waste management, and the improvement of working conditions (Islam et al., 2020). Many industry players are also transitioning to digital production models to enhance flexibility and responsiveness to market demands. The transformation of the garment industry toward digitalization and sustainability is a key factor in maintaining global competitiveness. Therefore, collaboration between government, business actors, and consumers is essential to promote modernization and social responsibility in this sector.

The garment industry is known as a labor-intensive sector that demands high productivity within limited timeframes. Excessive workload, such as strict daily production targets and long working hours, is a major trigger of job stress that negatively affects employee performance (Mekonnen et al., 2022). When employees feel that job demands exceed their physical and mental capacities, it results in fatigue, reduced concentration, and work errors, ultimately lowering performance. Job stress in the garment industry is often exacerbated by unsupportive working conditions, such as poor ventilation, inadequate lighting, and authoritarian supervision (Islam et al., 2020). These factors create ongoing psychological tension, which can diminish employee motivation and morale. Other studies have shown that chronic stress contributes to a decline in work quality and increased absenteeism (Supriyadi et al., 2021). Therefore, it is crucial for garment industry management to balance workloads and provide psychosocial support to maintain employees' mental health and sustainably enhance performance.

The high workload and job stress are among the main challenges that significantly impact employee performance in the garment industry. Workers are frequently pressured to meet production targets within tight time constraints, uphold high-quality standards, and endure monotonous working conditions. These demands create psychological stress and physical fatigue that affect productivity and work quality (Hasan et al., 2023). In the context of the garment industry, sustained job pressure can reduce focus, increase error rates, and decrease work initiative and motivation. A study by Nguyen and Le (2022) found that an imbalance between workload and individual capacity leads to burnout, which is negatively correlated with employee performance. Furthermore, non-ergonomic working conditions and a lack of managerial support worsen job stress and accelerate performance deterioration (Pathak & Shrivastava, 2021). Proportional workload management and the provision of psychosocial support are essential to prevent a decline in employee performance. Interventions such as stress management programs, coping skills training, and improvements in working conditions are critical strategies for garment industry management to sustain productivity.

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, every job has unique demands and resources, and the balance between the two determines the level of stress, work engagement, and employee performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Schaufeli, 2021). From the JD-R perspective, high job demands, such as excessive workload, without adequate job resources, can trigger job stress and decrease employee performance. When job demands exceed an individual's capacity, emotional exhaustion arises, which may hinder productivity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). A study by Putra et al. (2023) indicates that uncontrolled workload increases psychological stress, negatively affecting performance. Furthermore, research by Zhang and Tang (2021) confirms that job stress is a strong mediator between workload and the decline in employee performance.

Workload refers to the amount of tasks or responsibilities that must be completed within a given time frame, which can impact an individual physically, mentally, and emotionally (Putra & Dewi, 2023). Meanwhile, Sari and Nugroho (2022) define job stress as a physical and emotional response that arises when job demands are not aligned with a worker's abilities, resources, or needs, thereby affecting health and job performance. According to Hidayah and Pratama (2023), employee performance is the output achieved by an individual based on organizational standards, targets, and responsibilities, reflecting effectiveness and contribution to company goals.

Several studies have shown that workload has a significant influence on job stress and employee performance. High workload often leads to psychological and physical pressure that disrupts emotional stability and reduces an individual's adaptive capacity. Over time, this condition triggers chronic job stress, which lowers motivation, enthusiasm, and employee productivity (Huda et al., 2021). Other studies also found that excessive workload intensity can reduce performance quality because individuals are unable to complete tasks optimally (Wijayanti & Haryono, 2022).

Ineffectively managed workload factors create tension, fatigue, and mental exhaustion, which then affect job satisfaction and worsen work outcomes (Kurniawan et al., 2023). In addition, job stress resulting from excessive workload has been shown to increase the likelihood of errors, interpersonal conflict, and absenteeism (Wibowo & Sari, 2021). A study by Nugroho and Lestari (2022) underscores that job stress acts as an important mediator in the relationship between workload and employee performance, meaning that work pressure can significantly explain declines in job performance. Management that is insensitive to employees' workload capacity only worsens working conditions and disrupts the organizational climate (Rahmawati & Arifin, 2023). Similar findings were reported by Susanti and Marlina (2021), who emphasized that increasing workload without psychosocial support accelerates job fatigue. Therefore, proportionate workload arrangements are a crucial step in creating a healthy and productive work environment (Yuliana et al., 2023).

Job stress has been identified as one of the most detrimental psychosocial factors affecting employee performance. When individuals experience prolonged work pressure that is not properly addressed, it can reduce concentration, cause physical and mental

fatigue, and hinder effectiveness in completing tasks (Saputra & Rachmawati, 2022). Poorly managed stress also increases the risk of work errors, decreases creativity, and fuels conflicts among employees (Marsono & Dewi, 2021). Research by Siregar and Amalia (2023) shows that high job stress can lead to lower work quality and a greater likelihood of delayed task completion. Moreover, excessive stress hinders employee engagement in work processes, thereby reducing commitment and responsibility to the organization (Handayani & Wijaya, 2022). A high-pressure work environment without psychological support also leads to burnout, high absenteeism, and turnover intentions (Lubis & Kurniawan, 2021).

A study by Kartika and Suharto (2023) found that job stress has a negative and significant effect on work motivation, which in turn impacts individual productivity and overall team performance. Similarly, Iswanto and Putri (2022) noted that higher stress levels are associated with less effective decision-making and reduced problem-solving abilities in the workplace. Thus, organizational management needs to develop stress-prevention strategies such as counseling, time management training, and the creation of a healthy and supportive work climate so that employee performance can be optimally maintained. Based on the foregoing, the following research hypotheses can be proposed.
H1: Workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance.
H2: Workload has a positive and significant effect on job stress.
H3: Job stress has a negative and significant effect on employee performance.
H4: Job stress mediates the effect of workload on employee performance.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a quantitative research with a causal approach aimed at examining the influence among variables, namely workload, job stress, and employee performance. The research sample consisted of 35 employees, with the study conducted at the Nogo ikat weaving industry in Sanur, Bali—one of the traditional craft centers characterized by highly demanding work. The data used included both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through the distribution of closed-ended questionnaires, while secondary data were gathered from organizational documentation and previous literature. The research instrument was a questionnaire designed using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), with indicators adopted and modified from previous studies, such as Nasrul et al. (2023) for workload, Basri et al. (2024) for job stress, and Handayani & Arda (2024) for employee performance. The collected data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach with the assistance of Warp-PLS software. Prior to interpreting the analysis results, an evaluation of the main model was conducted. The outer model was assessed to test the validity and reliability of the indicators, while the inner model was evaluated to examine the R^2 values, predictive relevance (Q^2), and Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) of the structural relationships among constructs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The analysis results using SEM-PLS with the assistance of WARP-PLS 7 software are presented in Figure 1 below..
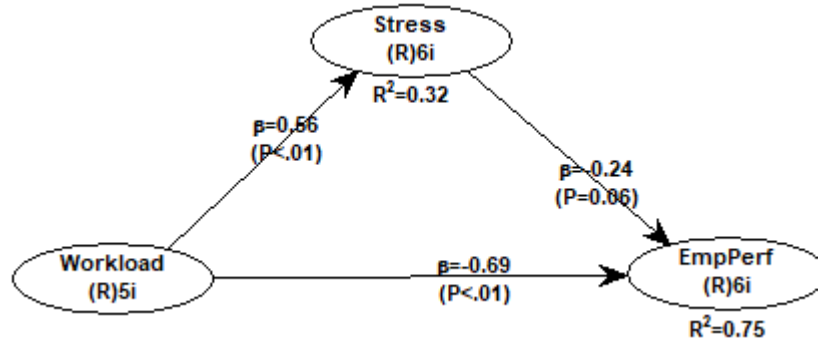

Figure 1. Full Model of Warp- PLS

Table 1. CA, CR, AVE, dan Loading factor

variables	indicators	Loading factors	P value
Workload Cronbach Alpha = 0.837 Composite Reliability = 0.885 Average Variance Extracted = 0,608	X1	0.819	<0.001
	X2	0.792	<0.001
	X3	0.853	<0.001
	X4	0.667	<0.001
	X5	0.756	<0.001
Work stress Cronbach Alpha = 0.745 Composite Reliability = 0.825 Average Variance Extracted = 0,544	M1	0.695	<0.001
	M2	0.741	<0.001
	M3	0.734	<0.001
	M4	0.680	<0.001
	M5	0.637	<0.001
	M6	0.575	<0.001
Employee performance Cronbach Alpha = 0.746 Composite Reliability = 0.826 Average Variance Extracted = 0,546	Y1	0,752	<0.001
	Y2	0.527	<0.001
	Y3	0.768	<0.001
	Y4	0.660	<0.001
	Y5	0.665	<0.001
	Y6	0.604	<0.001

Sources: Data analysis

Based on the results of the measurement model testing using Warp-PLS (Table 1), it was found that all constructs—Workload, Job Stress, and Employee Performance—met the criteria for convergent validity and construct reliability. All indicators had loading factor values above 0.50 with significance levels below 0.001, indicating that the indicators are statistically valid in reflecting their respective constructs (Chin, 1998). Specifically, the Workload variable had the highest loading value on indicator X3 (0.853), while indicator X4 had the lowest (0.667), though it still falls within the acceptable threshold. Similarly, the

indicators for Job Stress and Employee Performance had loading values above the minimum cut-off, indicating that convergent validity was achieved (Hair et al., 2021).

Regarding reliability testing, the Cronbach's Alpha values for all three constructs were above 0.70, namely 0.837 for Workload, 0.745 for Job Stress, and 0.746 for Employee Performance. These values indicate good internal consistency among the indicators within each construct (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In addition, the Composite Reliability values were also high—0.885, 0.825, and 0.826, respectively—further supporting the instrument's reliability. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values also exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), with 0.608 for Workload, 0.544 for Job Stress, and 0.546 for Employee Performance. This indicates that more than 50% of the variance in the indicators is explained by their respective constructs. With all criteria fulfilled, it can be concluded that the instrument used in this study possesses good measurement quality and is appropriate for use in the subsequent structural model analysis.

Tabel 2. Fornell Larcker criterion, VIFs, R^2, dan Q^2

Variables	WL	WS	EP	ViF's	R^2
Workload (WL)	**0.780**			1.881	
Work stress (WS)	0.488	**0.667**		1.573	0,318
Employee P (EP)	-0.676	-0.591	**0.668**	2.204	0,751
$Q^2 = 1(1 - R1^2)(1-R2^2)$ -> $= 1 - (0,682)(0,249)$ -> $= 1 - 0,169818$ -> $= 0,83018$ $= 83,02 \%$					

Sources: Data analysis

Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which states that the square root of the AVE for each construct must be greater than the correlations between that construct and any other constructs in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 2 shows that the square roots of the AVE values for Workload, Work Stress, and Employee Performance are greater than the inter-construct correlations, indicating that discriminant validity is achieved. This means that each construct is empirically and conceptually distinct from the others. This validity is essential to ensure that the constructs do not overlap with each other.

Furthermore, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all variables are below the threshold of 5 (Hair et al., 2021), indicating that there is no multicollinearity in the model. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for the Work Stress variable is 0.318, indicating that 31.8% of the variance in job stress is explained by workload. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for Employee Performance is 0.751, suggesting that 75.1% of the variation in employee performance is explained by the combined influence of workload and job stress. This value reflects a substantial predictive strength (Chin, 1998). Additionally, the Q^2 predictive relevance value of 0.83018 (or 83.02%) indicates that the model has a high predictive

capability for the endogenous variables. Overall, the model has fulfilled the requirements for both measurement and structural model evaluation, in terms of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity, as well as predictability. These findings strengthen the understanding that effective management of workload and job stress can serve as a key strategy for maintaining and improving employee performance in dynamic and high-pressure work environments.

Tabel 3. Hypothesis Testing

H	Variables	Path coef	p-values	Remarks
H1	Workload -> Employee perf.	-0.694	<0,001	accepted
H2	Workload -> Work stress.	0.564	<0,001	accepted
H3	Work stress -> Employee perf.	-0.243	0.060	accepted
H4	Workload -> W stress -> Emp perf	-0.137	0.015	accepted

Sources: Data analysis

The hypothesis testing results (using a p-value cutoff of < 0.10) indicate that all relationships between variables are significant and accepted. Workload has a direct negative effect on Employee Performance (β = -0.694; p < 0.001), meaning that high workload can reduce performance. Workload also significantly increases Work Stress (β = 0.564; p < 0.001), and Work Stress negatively affects Employee Performance (β = -0.243; p = 0.060). In addition, there is an indirect (mediated) effect of workload on employee performance through job stress (β = -0.137; p = 0.015). These findings support the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, which posits that excessive job demands have the potential to increase stress and decrease performance.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that Workload has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance, meaning that a high workload tends to decrease the quality of employee performance. From the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, workload falls under the category of job demands—work aspects that require sustained physical or mental effort and have the potential to cause job stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). When workload exceeds an individual's capacity and is not balanced with adequate job or personal resources, it can result in fatigue, reduced motivation, and ultimately a decline in performance (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). This finding is supported by studies from Karatepe (2013) and Putra & Dewi (2022), which found that high job demands negatively correlate with performance, especially in high-pressure and demanding work environments. In addition, Chen et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of organizational interventions in balancing workload with sufficient support. Therefore, management must actively manage workload to maintain both employee productivity and well-being.

The study also finds that Workload has a positive and significant effect on Work Stress, indicating that the higher the workload, the greater the level of stress experienced

by employees. Within the JD-R framework, workload is classified as a stressor-type job demand, especially when individuals face time pressure, excessive responsibilities, or complex work demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Uncontrolled workload can lead to emotional and psychological exhaustion that triggers job stress (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). This is consistent with research by Aboobaker and Edward (2019), who found that the accumulation of job demands directly contributes to mental pressure. Similarly, Wahab et al. (2020) confirmed that high workload disrupts work-life balance and exacerbates job stress. Additional studies by Lu et al. (2021) and Permatasari & Sutanto (2023) further reinforce that stress increases significantly when heavy workloads are not accompanied by adequate social support or job resources. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to redesign work distribution and provide psychosocial support to mitigate excessive stress among employees.

The results of this study show that Work Stress has a significant negative effect on Employee Performance. This means that the higher the level of job stress experienced by employees, the more likely their performance will decline. Within the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework, job stress arises when job demands exceed the resources available to the individual, thus impairing their ability to complete tasks effectively (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Prolonged stress can lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and difficulty in decision-making—all of which negatively affect productivity (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Research by Khuong and Yen (2016) found that job stress significantly reduces performance in the service sector. Similarly, Imran et al. (2020) highlighted the negative impact of stress on work effectiveness in the public sector. Indrawati and Winarsih (2021) also showed that job stress is linked to low job satisfaction and organizational commitment, both of which worsen performance. Additional studies by Sari & Nugroho (2022), Wahyuni et al. (2023), and Zulkarnain (2021) further confirm that high psychological pressure in the workplace is one of the main causes of reduced output and work quality.

Beyond the direct effect, this study also reveals an indirect (mediated) effect of Workload on Employee Performance through Work Stress. Path analysis results show that high workload significantly increases job stress, which in turn reduces employee performance. This confirms the role of job stress as a mediator bridging the relationship between job demands and work outcomes. According to the JD-R theory, when high job demands are not accompanied by adequate resources, employees experience stress that inhibits work effectiveness (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Studies by Prem et al. (2017) and Karatepe (2013) also demonstrate that job stress is a primary pathway through which workload affects negative work outcomes. Similar findings by Aboobaker & Edward (2019) and Wahyuni et al. (2023) suggest that stress management interventions can buffer the adverse impact of workload. Research by Imran et al. (2020) and Sari & Nugroho (2022) further strengthens the evidence that job stress significantly mediates the relationship between workload and performance decline, highlighting stress management as a critical strategy in organizational settings.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications: The findings of this study reinforce the validity of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, which explains that workload, as a form of job demand, has negative consequences on performance when not balanced with adequate resources. The results support the assumption that work stress functions as a mediator that bridges the relationship between workload and employee performance. Thus, this research contributes new empirical evidence regarding the indirect mechanism by which workload affects job outcomes through stress, particularly in the context of public or high-demand organizations. Practical Implications: Practically, these findings provide direction for organizational management to focus more on workload management and stress-handling strategies. Organizations should evaluate task distribution fairly, offer time management training, and establish psychosocial support systems in the workplace. In addition, interventions such as counselling, work-life balance programs, and involving supervisors in detecting early signs of stress are essential. By effectively managing workload and reducing job stress, organizations can sustain and improve employee performance over the long term. This study may also serve as a reference in designing HRD policies that are more responsive to the pressures of modern work environments.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that workload has both direct and indirect negative effects on employee performance, with job stress acting as a mediating variable. The higher the workload, the greater the level of stress experienced by employees, ultimately leading to decreased performance. These findings enrich the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theoretical framework by explaining how job demands contribute to job stress and reduced employee performance. However, this study has several limitations. It employed a quantitative cross-sectional approach, which restricts the ability to capture the dynamic and evolving relationships among variables over time. Furthermore, the study was conducted within a single sector or organization, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research is encouraged to adopt a longitudinal design and explore multiple sectors to validate and extend these results.

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