



Original Article

The Role of Job Satisfaction in Mediating the Effect of Workload on Employee Performance

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Abstract: This study investigates the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between workload and employee performance. The research focused on employees working in four- and five-star hotels in the Kuta Badung area. Using the Slovin formula, a sample of 155 hotel employees was selected through simple random sampling. The collected data were analyzed using path analysis and the Sobel test to examine the proposed relationships. The findings revealed several key outcomes. First, workload positively and statistically significantly impacted employee performance, suggesting that higher workloads are associated with improved performance. Second, workload also positively influences job satisfaction, indicating that employees may find satisfaction in challenging work environments. Third, job satisfaction was found to positively and significantly affect employee performance, suggesting that satisfied employees tend to perform at higher levels. Finally, the study confirmed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workload and employee performance, underscoring its critical role in this dynamic. These findings have important implications for hotel management. They suggest that managers create more effective employee service systems to optimize workload distribution and enhance job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved performance. However, the study has limitations, primarily due to the small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Future research could address this by expanding the sample size and geographic scope, providing deeper insights into the relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Workload; Job satisfaction; Job performance



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1. Introduction

Effective management is crucial for organizations to regulate and oversee all operations. Management encompasses coordinating human and other resources, with companies utilizing advanced tools that require skilled human resources for optimal functionality. Human resource management involves a systematic process that

supervisors implement to recruit, retain, and develop qualitative and quantitative employees to enhance organizational effectiveness and efficiency in achieving corporate objectives. Management is often correlated with organizational performance, defined as the outcome of a process measured over a specified period based on predetermined agreements (Yuliantini and Suryatiningsih, 2021). Performance encompasses not only the results but also the work process itself. Employee performance can be influenced by various factors, including workload (Ritonga, 2018). Workload refers to the tasks that must be completed within a designated timeframe (Sugiarti et al., 2021). Workload analysis examines the time required to fulfill work obligations under normal circumstances (Hasnah et al., 2018).

However, employee performance is not solely determined by workload; job satisfaction plays an equally significant role. Job satisfaction reflects an individual's positive or negative feelings toward their work, potentially fostering a greater affinity for their responsibilities (Anggraini, 2021). It encompasses an employee's attitude towards various aspects of their job and is a critical factor in evaluating performance (Azhari, 2020). Previous research on the relationship between workload and employee performance has yielded inconsistent results. Studies conducted by Nabawi (2019), Sugiharjo and Aldata (2018), and Diana (2019) suggest a significant positive correlation between workload and employee performance. Conversely, other research has indicated a significant negative impact of workload on employee performance (Johari et al., 2018). This study aims to investigate workload's direct and indirect effects on employee performance through various mediating factors.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Employee Performance

Performance is critical in organizational psychology and human resource management (Johari et al., 2018). It refers to an individual's or group's willingness to perform tasks effectively and achieve desired outcomes according to their responsibilities (Sinambela, 2016:483). Employee performance is the result of efforts made by employees to accomplish their tasks and targets based on their duties (Setiawan, 2021). Various factors influence employee performance, including internal employee factors, internal company environmental factors, and external environmental factors (Diana, 2019). Measuring employee performance is crucial for determining organizational success, as the overall performance of an organization depends on its employees' performance. Higher salaries can improve employee performance, which is a key factor in achieving organizational goals (Jalal and Zaheer, 2017). Several indicators of employee performance have been identified in various studies. These include quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, work commitment (Neksen et al., 2021), communication, promptness, capability, initiative, understanding of main duties, work speed, work accuracy, and cooperation (Syahputra and Jufrizen, 2019; Nabawi, 2019). Organizations should consider these indicators when evaluating employee performance.

2.2. Workload and Employee Performance

Workload refers to the amount of work an employee is expected to complete within a given period under normal circumstances (Nabawi, 2019). It is determined by the number of tasks, time and energy required, and the employee's ability to meet job demands (Sugiharjo and Aldata, 2018). Workload is measured using job targets, working conditions, and work scale (Sugiarti et al., 2021). The three main indicators of workload are time load, mental effort load, and psychological stress load (Sembiring, 2022). Research has shown that excessive workload leading to long working hours can negatively impact employee performance by affecting well-being at work and home (Imam et al., 2011). Glaser et al. (1999) found a negative relationship between workload and performance, although their study had limitations due to a small sample size. Matthews (1986) expanded on this research and concluded that reducing job stress is the only solution to mitigate turnover intention. Chao et al. (2015) found similar results in a study of healthcare workers in rural areas. Interestingly, organizations that perform exceptionally well may experience higher levels of employee dissatisfaction due to factors such as feeling undervalued, unfair workload distribution, or frustration with underperforming colleagues. These issues can lead to resignations, lower task commitment, or reduced performance levels (Lucas, 1999). However, some studies have found contradictory results. Johari et al. (2018) reported that workload does not significantly impact work performance or outcomes among teachers. Similar findings were reported by Fan and Smith (2017) and Pourteimour et al. (2021). Based on these empirical results, it can be hypothesized that:

H1. Workload has a negative effect on employee performance.

2.3. Workload and Job Satisfaction

Maintaining an appropriate employee workload is crucial for optimal productivity. An insufficient workload may lead to feelings of idleness, while an excessive workload can result in exhaustion, discomfort, and dissatisfaction. Finding a balance and setting appropriate workload standards is essential for ensuring employees can perform their best without feeling overwhelmed (Rajan, 2018). Job satisfaction is the degree to which an individual has a positive emotional response towards their job. It encompasses general and specific elements, including overall work enjoyment,

salary, colleagues, job security, management, and personal growth and development (Jalal and Zaheer, 2017). Workload is considered the most important determinant of job satisfaction. Employees who perceive their workload as appropriate tend to be more satisfied than those who feel it is too high or too low. Increased life and work satisfaction helps reduce feelings of burnout and individual failure, promoting proper teamwork through office atmosphere and communication (Arslan and Acar, 2013). Empirical research has shown that a high workload significantly reduces employee job satisfaction (Harahap and Ferine, 2023). Tentama et al. (2019) found that workload significantly affects employee job satisfaction at universities and is one of the factors that can reduce employee job satisfaction. Based on these empirical results, it can be hypothesized that:

H2: Workload has a negative effect on employee job satisfaction.

2.4. Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance: A Literature Review

Job satisfaction is an employee's internal emotional state towards their work, influenced by external factors. When individuals join an organization, they bring their past experiences and aspirations, which shape their job expectations. The level of satisfaction derived from their job is determined by how well these expectations align with the rewards provided (Sinambela, 2016:303). Zahara and Hidayat (2017) describe employee job satisfaction as an emotional response to work based on perceived achievement and fulfillment. Various indicators of job satisfaction have been identified in the literature. Ritonga (2018) suggests that satisfaction with salary, job tasks, superiors' attitudes, co-workers, and career advancement opportunities are key indicators. Sugiarti et al. (2021) further propose that fair compensation, appropriate placement according to skills, and work severity are also important indicators of job satisfaction. The relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance has been extensively studied. Springer (2011) suggests that managers can improve employee performance by implementing strategies to increase job satisfaction. Several studies have found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and performance (Chen and Silverthorne, 2005; Fisher, 2003). For instance, Aftab (2012) reported a positive relationship between job satisfaction and job performance in a study of 335 mid-level banking sector employees. Similarly, Iqbal et al. (2012) found a positive impact of job satisfaction on work performance among 251 university respondents. Edwards et al. (2008) also confirmed these variables' positive and significant relationship.

A more recent study by Hsieh (2016) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and performance across public, private, and non-profit sectors. The results indicated a bidirectional impact, with job satisfaction exerting a stronger influence on employees than job performance. Further supporting this relationship, Indrayani et al. (2023), Kazmi and Javaid (2022), and Turek (2022) all reported that job satisfaction has a significant positive effect on employee performance, particularly among millennial employees. The literature also suggests that job satisfaction may mediate the relationship between workload and employee performance. Pindek et al. (2019) argue that high workload can hinder employee performance, indicating that the relationship between workload and performance may not be direct. Several studies have demonstrated an inverse relationship between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance (Jalal and Zaheer, 2017; Springer, 2011). Consequently, job satisfaction is proposed as a mediator in mitigating the negative effects of workload on employee performance (Jalal and Zaheer, 2017; Syamsudin et al., 2023). Based on these findings, two hypotheses can be formulated:

H3: Employee job satisfaction positively affects employee performance.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workload and employee performance.

3. Materials and Methods

The research methodology employed in this study is a quantitative associative analysis, which involves using numerical data to quantify relationships between variables and test hypotheses regarding causal effects. This approach is suitable for estimating robust quantitative relationships and determining the strength and direction of associations between multiple variables. Specifically, this study aims to examine the relationships among three key variables: the independent variable, workload (X); the mediating variable, job satisfaction (M); and the dependent variable, employee performance (Y). The research focuses on employees working in four- and five-star hotels in the Kuta Badung area, a popular and well-established tourist destination in Bali, Indonesia. The target population consists of 450 hotel employees, and to ensure that the sample is representative of the population, the Slovin formula was applied with a 10% margin of error, resulting in a total sample size of 155 employees. This sample size is considered sufficient for drawing meaningful statistical inferences based on the characteristics of the population.

To select the sample, purposive sampling was used, which allowed the researcher to choose participants based on specific criteria relevant to the study. Only permanent employees with at least one year of work experience were included in this case. This criterion was established to ensure that the participants had sufficient knowledge and familiarity with the work environment, which is crucial for providing reliable responses related to workload, job satisfaction, and performance. Data for the study were collected through three primary methods: observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observation was used to gather contextual information about the work environment,

while interviews provided qualitative insights into employees' experiences with workload and job satisfaction. The questionnaires, which were the primary data collection tool, were designed to gather quantitative data on all three variables. The questions were structured on a Likert scale, enabling respondents to express the degree of agreement or disagreement with various statements regarding their workload, job satisfaction, and perceived performance.

Path analysis was employed for data analysis to test the proposed relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Path analysis is a statistical technique that allows for examining direct and indirect relationships among variables in a model, providing insights into the strength and direction of the effects. Additionally, the Sobel test was applied to assess the significance of job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between workload and employee performance. This test evaluates whether the indirect effect of workload on performance through job satisfaction is statistically significant. Overall, this research methodology combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively understand the dynamic relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance in the hospitality industry.

4. Results

The results of this study indicate that all research instruments used to measure the key variables—workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance—demonstrate strong validity and reliability, as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Result of Construct Validity and Reliability

Variable(s)	No. Items	Validity		Reliability	
		Coef. Correlation	Decision	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Employee Performance (Y)	1-10	> 0.30	Valid	> 0,60	Reliable
Workload (X)	1-6	> 0.30	Valid	> 0,60	Reliable
Job Satisfaction (M)	1-6	> 0.30	Valid	> 0,60	Reliable

Table 1 shows the correlation coefficient values for all variables exceed 0.30, suggesting moderate to strong relationships among the variables. Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha values for all instruments are above the threshold of 0.60, which is considered an acceptable level of internal consistency. These findings confirm that the measurement tools are both valid and reliable, ensuring that they are suitable for examining the relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance in the context of this study. Consequently, the instruments can be confidently used to draw meaningful conclusions about the factors influencing employee performance in the hospitality industry.

Table 2. Result of Hypothesis Testing (Model 1)

Variable(s)	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-statistic	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6,202	2,768		2,241	0,029
Workload	0,820	0,162	0,533	5,056	0,000
Job Satisfaction	0,635	0,177	0,378	3,588	0,001
R Square	0,710				

Dependent variable: Job performance

The results presented in Table 2 reveal that the regression coefficient for the workload variable is 0.820, indicating a positive relationship with employee performance and a significance level of <0.05. Similarly, the regression coefficient for the job satisfaction variable is 0.635, showing a positive influence with a significance value of the t-test <0.05. These findings suggest that both workload and job satisfaction significantly impact employee performance when considered individually. Furthermore, the R Square value of 0.710 indicates that changes in workload and job satisfaction can explain 71% of the variation in employee performance, while the remaining 29% is attributed to other factors not included in the model.

Table 3. Result of Hypothesis Testing (Model 2)

Variable(s)	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-statistic	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6,368	1,964		3,243	0,002

Workload	0,647	0,089	0,706	7,251	0,000
R Square	0,498				

Dependent variable: Job Satisfaction

The results presented in Table 3 highlight the significant impact of workload on job satisfaction. The regression coefficient for the workload variable is 0.647, which is both positive and statistically significant, with a significance value of ≤ 0.05 . This suggests that as workload increases, job satisfaction also tends to improve. Additionally, the R Square value of 0.498 indicates that workload accounts for 49.8% of the variance in job satisfaction, demonstrating a substantial influence. However, the remaining 50.2% of the variation in job satisfaction is attributed to other factors not captured in the current model, indicating the presence of additional influences that affect employee satisfaction.

Table 4. Result of Hypothesis Testing (Model 3 – Mediating Effect)

Path Analysis	Direct Effect (Coefficient)	Indirect Effect (Coefficient)	Total Effect
X→Y	0,820	0,410	1,230
X→M	0,647		0,647
M→Y	0,635		0,635

The findings presented in Table 4 provide valuable insights into the relationship between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The results of the Sobel test indicate that workload directly and significantly impacts employee performance. In addition to this direct effect, the analysis reveals that workload influences job satisfaction, subsequently affecting employee performance. Notably, including job satisfaction as a mediating variable amplifies the total effect of workload on employee performance, increasing the regression coefficient from 0.820 to 1.230. This suggests that job satisfaction plays a critical role in enhancing the impact of workload on performance, acting as a mediator in this dynamic relationship.

5. Discussion

The study investigated the relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance. The findings revealed several key insights:

5.1. Effect of Workload on Employee Performance

The results indicated a significant positive relationship between workload and employee performance (coefficient = 0.820, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that increased workload leads to improved employee performance, contradicting the conventional workload theory. The findings align with Jalal and Zaheer (2017), who reported a significant positive influence of workload on employee performance. However, these results contradict previous studies that found negative associations between workload and performance (Beehr et al., 2000; Cox-Fuenzalida, 2007; Cox-Fuenzalida and Angie, 2005; Putri et al., 2022).

5.2. Effect of Workload on Job Satisfaction

The study found a significant positive relationship between workload and job satisfaction (coefficient = 0.647, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that higher workloads are associated with increased job satisfaction. These findings are consistent with recent studies by Sembiring (2022), Hasibuan et al. (2022), and Nurhasanah et al. (2022). However, they contradict earlier research that reported negative correlations between workload and job satisfaction (Inegbedion et al., 2020).

5.3. Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job satisfaction was found to have a direct positive influence on employee performance (coefficient = 0.635). This supports the hypothesis that higher job satisfaction leads to improved employee performance. These results are consistent with previous studies that have reported positive and significant effects of job satisfaction on employee performance (Suardi, 2019; Firmansyah and Darmawan, 2021; Anggraini, 2021).

5.4. Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

The study revealed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workload and employee performance. Workload exhibited direct (coefficient = 0.820) and indirect (coefficient = 0.410) effects on employee performance through job satisfaction, resulting in a total effect of 1.230. This suggests that when coupled with high job satisfaction,

appropriate workload can lead to improved employee performance. These findings are supported by recent studies (Hasibuan et al., 2022; Nurhasanah et al., 2022) that have reported indirect effects of workload on employee performance through job satisfaction. These results challenge conventional theories about workload and performance, particularly in the context of the private corporate sector. The findings suggest that employees in this sector may be better equipped to manage higher workloads due to job market pressures and societal expectations. Further research is needed to explore these relationships' underlying mechanisms and potential moderating factors.

6. Conclusions

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the complex relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance in the private corporate sector. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the results reveal a positive and significant relationship between workload and employee performance. This suggests that increased workload can lead to improved performance, challenging traditional assumptions about the detrimental effects of high workloads. The study also found a positive association between workload and job satisfaction, indicating that employees may derive satisfaction from managing higher workloads. Job satisfaction emerged as a crucial factor in employee performance, with a direct positive influence observed. This reinforces the importance of maintaining high levels of job satisfaction to enhance overall employee performance. Furthermore, the study uncovered the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between workload and employee performance. This mediation effect suggests that appropriate workload, when combined with high job satisfaction, can significantly improve employee performance.

These findings challenge conventional theories about workload and performance, particularly in the context of the private corporate sector. The results indicate that employees in this sector may be better equipped to handle higher workloads, possibly due to job market pressures and societal expectations. This adaptation to increased workloads could be attributed to enhanced time management skills, improved efficiency, or a sense of accomplishment from meeting challenging targets. However, it is important to note that these findings contradict previous studies that reported negative associations between workload and performance or job satisfaction. This discrepancy highlights the need for further research to explore the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that influence these relationships. Future studies should investigate the potential moderating factors, such as organizational culture, individual differences, or industry-specific characteristics, that may explain these contradictory findings.

The study's results have significant implications for management practices in the private corporate sector. Organizations may need to reconsider their approach to workload allocation and job design, recognizing that when managed effectively, higher workloads can lead to improved performance and job satisfaction. However, it is crucial to strike a balance and ensure that workloads remain within reasonable limits to prevent burnout and maintain long-term employee well-being. In conclusion, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing evidence for the positive relationships between workload, job satisfaction, and employee performance in the private corporate sector. The findings challenge conventional theories and highlight the need for a more nuanced understanding of these relationships. Future research should explore the underlying mechanisms, potential moderating factors, and long-term effects of increased workloads on employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Additionally, practical implications for management practices and organizational policies should be further investigated to optimize workload allocation and enhance employee performance while maintaining high levels of job satisfaction.

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